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BOOK NOTES


Although discourse analysis methods have been used for the critical analysis of activist practice theories, the application of these methods to practice processes has remained a largely unchartered territory. A chief aim of this paper is to demonstrate the possibilities discourse analysis offers for the investigation of activist practice processes. The paper introduces a discourse model which combines poststructural discourse principles and conversation analysis methods. The model is then applied to the study of the effects of activist perspectives for service users and workers within a context of activist practice in which one of the authors has been involved as a social worker. This analysis reveals the local interactions amongst workers and service users to be considerably more complex than has been allowed within activist practice discourses.

Introduction

In many fields of social science the idea that language is merely a vehicle for expression or a conduit for ideas has been challenged as it is increasingly seen that language actively constitutes identities, relationships, institutions and social practices (Burman and Parker, 1993, p. 7; Fairclough, 1992, p. 21; Rodger, 1991, p. 64; Weedon, 1987, p. 21). The contemporary interest in
language as a site for analysis and action, while not confined to postmodern and poststructural analyses, can be largely attributed to the key assumptions of these theoretical "schools". In particular, poststructuralists refute the notion of essential realities, preferring the view that most meaning and much "reality" are made possible only through discourse (Weedon, 1987).

In this paper, we will demonstrate some ways in which discourse and conversation analysis methods can be applied to the study of activist practice processes and to the extension of activist practice theory. By practice theory we mean theory that seeks to explain practice, apply theory to practice, or develop theory from practice (Fook, 1996, p. xiv; Goldstein, 1990). We see as "activist" those models of practice that position the worker "alongside oppressed and impoverished populations" in the struggle for social justice (Leonard, 1994, p. 17; see also Fine, 1992, p. 220), and we consider that a range of feminist, radical, structural and action research models are consistent with this definition of activist practice. In our choice of analytic methods we do not attempt to build a unitary model of practice or to insist on one particular approach as appropriate to all practice. Rather we seek to demonstrate some of the possibilities that a choice of discourse analysis methods offer for highlighting the contingencies and complexities that are present within social work practice and we will do so through an example of activist practice.

**Discourse Analysis and Social Work Research**

The non-use of language studies within the social sciences has been partly the result of the highly technical and obtuse character of much of the linguistic methodological literature (Fairclough, 1992), and partly due to the social science view that language is transparent. For example, in using interview data, there is a tendency to believe that the "social content of such data can be read off without attending to the language itself" (Fairclough, 1992, p. 2; see also Rojek et al. 1988, p. 118).

In addition, many activist practitioners and theorists share the view that language plays a marginal role in constructing social realities, especially in contrast to social superstructures such as capitalism and patriarchy. Very often, critical social analyzes
Assume that local relations of power, identity and change can be deduced from these broad social structures. Discourse analysis challenges such claims. From a discourse analytic perspective, the local relations of practice are not seen as merely an effect of the structural. For example, a critical social analysis would suggest that the worker is more powerful than the service user, yet, within the practice context, the service user may be able to exercise certain forms of power to which the worker has little or no access. The service user may have access to certain forms of knowledge, such as "street-wise" knowledge, or experiences, such as the experience of early parenthood or drug-addiction, which may be highly valued by those within the practice context, even if this is not esteemed in the community more generally. The value placed on this "alternative" knowledge can be a resource for the exercise of some forms of power within the practice context. Hence, in order to grasp the nuances of power, identity and change that occur in practice, analysts must attend to the local actions of the interactants, that is the workers and the service users, rather than base their analysis primarily or solely in the analysis of social superstructures.

The increasing interest in poststructural theories within the social sciences has given credence to the deployment of discourse analysis methods for the study of social work practices and policies more generally. According to poststructuralists, discourses fix norms and truths and so shape what can be written, said and even thought within particular contexts (McHoul and Grace, 1991). This approach suggests that discourses have a material existence in that they do not simply construct ideas but also the "field of objects" through which the social world is experienced (Foucault, 1977, p. 199). This is not to claim that language produces experiences such as poverty or domestic violence, but that language fundamentally shapes these experiences in delimiting what can be said, shared, thought, and even felt about them.

According to Sands (1988), during the 1970s and early 1980s there was some application of discourse analysis to the critical study of practice processes such as labeling and cross-cultural communication (see Sotomayor, 1977). However, the use of discourse analysis methods to the study of actual practice has been largely confined to clinical social work processes (see Nye, 1994;
Sands, 1988). Over the past decade there has been recognition amongst social work theorists and researchers of the relevance of poststructural theories, particularly the use of discourse analytic approaches, to investigate a range of social welfare practices and policies (see Opie, 1993, 1995; White, 1996). Poststructuralism has also been employed to critically reflect upon the representations and emancipatory claims that underpin a range of activist practice models, radical, feminist and structural, (see Featherstone and Fawcett, 1994; Leonard, 1996; Rojek, Peacock and Collins, 1988). Within activist social work, discourse analysis methods have been used to highlight and critique the philosophical foundations of practice theories, including activist practice models (see Leonard, 1996; Rojek et al., 1988). However, as yet the application of discourse analysis to the study of activist practice processes has remained largely uncharted territory. Indeed, it is ironic that despite the activist concern with “praxis”, the use of discourse analysis methods has been used mainly for exploring theory. An important purpose of this paper is to demonstrate the application of discourse analytic methods to the study of activist social work processes.

In considering the application of discourse analytic methods, we will outline two approaches to the study of language practices; that is, a poststructural approach to discourse analysis and conversation analysis. These analytic methods will then be applied to the study of power within a context of activist practice in which the first author was engaged.

Discourse Analysis: An Overview

There are a number of methods—semiotic, sociolinguistic, and conversation analytic—that can be identified as discourse analysis. Despite their diversity, these approaches share the following premises:

- that language actively constitutes or constructs social realities;
- that both written and spoken discourse are the proper objects of analysis;
- that language should be studied in its use.

Briefly, discourse analysis involves the study of stretches of spoken or written communication within their real-life situation,
concentrating on the ways in which social functions are carried out through talk or writing (see Hudson, 1980). This focus on the relationship between the text and the social context differentiates discourse analysis methods from those of linguistics and phonetics, which concentrate on the properties of language largely divorced from their communicative contexts (Nunan, 1993, p. 7, but for an exception see Sperber & Wilson 1986).

Discourse analysis covers many different aspects of communication, for example, the differences in patterns of talk between cultures and groups, the different genres that exist and their principles, while at the finer levels, in conversation analysis, it assumes that all data in communicative talk are significant and worth study, however trivial or irrelevant they may seem. In our model of analysis, we combine the insights of a poststructural approach to discourse analysis with conversation analysis approaches. We will now outline these two approaches before demonstrating their application to the study of activist social work.

Discourse Analysis: A Poststructural Approach

A basic premise of a poststructural approach is that discourses actively constitute social realities. As Fairclough (1992) asserts:

Discourses do not just reflect or represent social entities and relations, they construct or "constitute" them; different discourses constitute key entities (be they "mental illness", "citizenship", or "literacy") in different ways, and position people in different ways as social subjects (e.g. as doctors or patients), and it is these social effects of discourse that are focused on in discourse analysis. (p. 3–4)

Discourse analysis is intended to grasp how certain thoughts, feelings and actions are made possible through discourse as well as those that are precluded. In social work research, this approach can be used to draw attention to the way in which key entities, such as identities, knowledge, power, and concepts such as "need," are constructed through the organizational and social work discourses operating within specific contexts of practice (Rodgers, 1991). Of particular value to the analysis of activist practice processes are the possibilities discourse analysis allows for showing how power, powerlessness, and empowerment are
actually embodied in real-life social interaction and how these processes are constructed, managed, attempted, resisted and refused. Discourse analysis potentially enriches activist social work practice by elucidating the complexities at the local levels of social work practice, particularly the extent to which the language practices adopted by workers and service users variously shape the practice context.

When applied to the study of actual interactions, discourse methods often require a finely detailed account of language practices. A fundamental analytic requirement, then, is for access to the spoken or written text. The analysis of practice processes, requires at a minimum, audio recordings of the practice context. Discourse analysis requires that the transcription of these recordings includes not only the content but also the sound of the talk. Its incorporation of features such as voice pitch, vocal emphasis, timing and silences enhances “the interpretative possibilities” that are often excluded in social science research (Opie, 1995, p. 34).

Conversation Analysis

In our discourse analysis study of activist social work, we also incorporated conversation analysis strategies. In comparison to poststructural approaches to discourse analysis which focus on how language practices make certain understandings and actions possible, conversation analysis is more concerned with the organization of talk. It is based on the assumption that the way in which talk is organized, such as how conversational turns are accessed by different speakers and the comparative length of conversational turns amongst speakers, reveal the participants’ understanding of the social world. In social work research conversation analysis can provide a useful complement to discourse analytic approaches as it allows a fine detailed analysis of the conversational strategies utilized by both workers and service users to achieve and ‘manage’ the practice context.

A conversation analysis approach is characterized by a number of principles. Firstly, that communicative talk is a social action. In other words, people do things through their talk. For example, one person can criticize another or one can attend to another and this affects the forms of relationship that are possible. Secondly,
that communicative talk is organized and locally managed by its participants. Through their talk, individuals contribute to the construction and reproduction of specific interactional contexts. As Holstein and Gubrium (1994) describe spoken interaction:

members [i.e. participants] continuously rely upon the interpretive capacities of coparticipants in interaction to assemble and reveal a locally visible sense of order. Social structures are locally produced, sustained, and experienced as normal environments—that is, routine, taken-for-granted states of affairs. (p. 264–265)

This is not to suggest that individuals have equal power nor that they are entirely free to choose how they will interact; rather it means that the actions of individuals within local interactional contexts are vital to the ongoing achievement of those contexts.

A third principle of conversation analysis is that individuals achieve their sense of the social world not just by what they say but also by the way the talk interaction is managed. For example, power relations are exercised and managed in ways that are contextually specific. In some contexts it is those who are deemed to speak who exercise power, such as the university lecturer and the priest, while in other contexts, power is exercised by those who listen, such as the counselor. A fourth assumption is that there are general principles behind the organization of communicative talk and that these principles can be discovered. It is understood that through individual’s speech actions they reflect their understanding of social realities, such as the nature of the local interaction and local relationships and, in so doing, contribute to the ongoing reproduction of those realities. For example, the kinds of conversation actions that characterize everyday casual conversation, vary markedly from the conversational rules tacitly adhered to in conversations between professionals and service users or between intimates. Conversational analysis, therefore attempts to analyze the very detailed “collaborative practices speakers use and rely upon when they engage in intelligible interaction” for in so doing they claim to reveal the processes through which social entities and social relationships are produced (Holstein and Gubrium, 1994, p. 265).

Conversation analysis studies the conversational cues and processes through which social actors reflect and are produced by their social context (Sands, 1989, p. 149). Conversational analysts
seek to identify the speech acts that occur, such as apologizing, interrupting and so forth; to note how these acts are organized, e.g. who interrupts, who remains silent; and to consider what effect these acts have within their specific contexts. This methods allows the interrogation of the minutiae of conversational interaction; particularly the ways in which understandings about contexts and the nature of social relationships is expressed within these contexts. One way this method can be useful for social work practices is to consider the effects of activist practices processes on interactions within the practice context. Thus, one could analyze the extent to which the activist preference for egalitarian practice relations between workers and service users in reflected in the organization of talk in practice.

Conversation analysis shares with discourse analysis a key epistemological assumption, that the social world is achieved by human action rather than existing independently of it (Heritage and Atkinson, 1984). Like discourse analysis, the study of conversation involves the use of audio-tapes taken from the interactional setting under study, without editing, and including such details as hesitations, errors and pauses. The use of taped data allows for close and repeated observation of the social interactions and it also enhances the range and precision of observations that can be made (Heritage and Atkinson, 1984). Because of the degree of precision involved in the transcription and analysis of conversational tapes, the analysis is usually confined to small samples of conversation. Having outlined the features of discourse and conversation analysis, we will now demonstrate their application to the study of activist social work.

Applying Discourse Analysis to Practice

The study was grounded in an activist social work project in which the first author was involved as a project worker. (To avoid confusion between the authors of this paper and the workers in practice, the latter will be referred to as "the workers"). The project drew on a number of activist practice models and perspectives, including participatory action research, critical and feminist perspectives. Through this project, a core group of adolescent mothers were involved in examining their own and other
young women's experiences of violence, and in developing action strategies that addressed both the personal and social issues that contributed to young women's experiences of violence (see Young Mothers for Young Women, 1995; Healy and Walsh, 1997). With the permission of the project participants, the worker collected data from the project meetings in order to analyze the operations of power, identity and change from within a context of activist practice. The data corpus consisted of audio-taped recordings from meetings; field notes; and participant reflections on the process taken over a twelve month period. These data were submitted to a three-level analysis process consisting of: poststructural discourse analysis methods; conversation analysis methods; and qualitative research analysis involving the identification and comparison key themes in the fieldnotes and participant reflections on the action research project. These methods were applied to the data corpus in varying ways as the table below demonstrates. The model below indicates the interaction between the methods:

Table 1
A Model of Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Poststructural discourse analysis</th>
<th>conversation analysis</th>
<th>qualitative analysis</th>
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<td>applied to</td>
<td>applied to</td>
<td>applied to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* practice interactions</td>
<td>* transcripts of meetings</td>
<td>* fieldnotes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* practice discourse</td>
<td></td>
<td>* participant reflections</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the larger study overall, an analysis of power, identity and change within the practice context was undertaken (Healy, 1997). In this paper, we will limit our discussion to four aspects of the analysis; these are:

- the multiple effects, both liberating and constraining, of emancipatory discourses in practice;
• the tensions inherent in activist discourses between the radical egalitarian position and implicit demands for the use of worker power;
• the interactional processes that characterized the activist context, noting particularly how these differed from “everyday” conversation, despite the apparent informality of the practice context;
• how the workers enacted power, and how this use of power was both constituted and complicated by the egalitarian ethos that is central to many activist practice discourses.

Studying Practice Discourses

In our discourse analytic research, we focussed on two levels of analysis. We investigated how activist practice discourses impacted on the participants, both the workers and service users, and upon the practice processes. One part of the discourse analysis study considered the effects, both intended and unintended, of emancipatory perspectives upon the young women who participated in the project. As one element of our study we considered the impact of the critical perspectives which were raised by both the facilitators and the participants on the young women’s interpretations of their personal experiences of violence. These critical discourses made visible the links between the structural contexts of the young women’s lives, such as the effects of poverty and sexism, and their personal vulnerability to violence. Some of the young women commented that these perspectives released them from a pervasive sense of self-blame and worthlessness. In asserting the importance of these views in working with and advocating for young women, one participant stated:

Ya know, like some of the issues that we’ve brought up, I think it’s just, UNBELIEVABLE, the links that you find with the community and the media that put so much pressure on us, ya know, if they [other young women] can just THINK ABOUT THAT, then they’re not gonna come down so HARD on themselves, and thinking that they’re a total failure in the world.

While the critical perspectives facilitated through the activist process made some aspects of the young women’s experiences visible, particularly the links between the political and the personal, there were other aspects that were marginalized through
these views. For instance, although highlighting the pervasiveness of male violence towards women, these perspectives also contributed to the sense, amongst some of the participants, that there was little room for discussing positive experiences with men. As one participant put it:

You have to take a stand somewhere, but everything, every little thing, in their lives is 'oh men are bastards,' ya know . . . I wanted to get up and say 'not all guys are bastards', [but] I would’ve been killed.

For this young woman, it seemed that the perspectives aimed at highlighting the pervasiveness of male violence towards women, actually led to the silencing of some of her experiences. To point to these constraining effects in this context is not to suggest that critical perspectives will have the same effect in every context or for all participants, nor, do we argue for the abandonment of these critical views. Rather, from a discourse analytic perspective it is necessary to consider the local and multiple effects of the discourses utilized within the local contexts of emancipatory social work. Discourse analysis assists activists to recognize what emancipatory discourses allow to be said and done as well as what they marginalize within specific contexts of practice.

A second way, we used discourse analysis was to investigate the elements of activist practice processes that are emphasized and as well as those that are constrained through activist practice discourses. One aspect of the research involved an analysis of the operations of worker power in practice. Applying discourse analysis methods, we sought to uncover how power was defined in activist discourses with a particular focus on the tensions and contradictions about worker power within activist discourses.

A discourse analysis of activist practice discourses revealed two contradictory views about power. On an explicit level, activist discourses represent worker power as coercive; that is, worker power is believed to have damaging and oppressive effects for service users. For example, it is asserted that the power of the worker is used to impose middle class values upon the service (see Calder, 1995) and to depower through silencing the indigenous knowledges and capacities of oppressed people (see Fals-Borda,
1987). Because of the coercive character of worker power, activist models frequently demand that power should be constantly given away rather than held or used by the worker. The transfer of power is to be achieved via the democratic sharing of knowledge, skills, and tasks at all stages of the practice process (Moreau, 1990, p. 56-57; Mullaly, 1993, p. 173-175). Despite the profound critique of worker power, a discourse analysis approach to activist practice discourses also reveals a tension between this explicitly negative view of power and the implicit demands within these practice models for workers to use power. For example, activist workers and researchers are routinely involved in initiating practice projects and processes (Alder and Sandor, 1989; Reason, 1994); promoting participant involvement and leadership (Song, 1992; Ward and Mullender, 1991); facilitating meetings (Mathrani, 1993); raising consciousness and promoting activist attitudes (Corrigan and Leonard, 1978; Dixon, 1993; Dominelli and McLeod, 1989; Finn, 1994; Maguire, 1987; Moreau, 1990); imparting technical information and skills (Sarri and Sarri, 1992); and even initiating the sharing of power itself (Finn, 1994; Thorpe, 1992). Thus, rather than a surrender of power, what activist practice models appear to demand is a different use of power from that usually associated with the elite and hierarchical models of practice.

Yet at the same time, the processes that activists employ in enacting this different use of power have been marginalized (or even silenced) in the activist canon because signs of difference, particularly differences in power, are associated with inequity and hierarchy (Healy, 1996; Phillips, 1991). This means that to acknowledge one's use of power in practice is to risk the charge that one's work is not activist after all. On the basis of an analysis of the tensions within the activist practice models, this study was aimed at testing the explicitly negative view of power and finding ways of excavating a number of hidden dimensions of power in activist practice, particularly, the productive character of worker power. We then turned to another method of language analysis, conversation analysis, in order to examine the specific operations of power within the activist social work project.
Conversation Analysis of Practice

A superficial observation of the talk produced in the practice context would suggest that there was a high degree of equity between workers and participants, particularly in comparison with the hierarchical and distant relations often associated with traditional or orthodox practice. For example, the language used was informal in that there was little use of professional jargon, and considerable use of slang or casual words and phrases. This use of informality can be considered to approximate to the ideals typically promoted in activist social work practice discourses (Rodger, 1991, p. 66).

Yet, while the conversation that occurred amongst workers and service users within the practice context was certainly informal, a fine grained analysis of these interactions revealed significant differences from “natural” or “everyday” talk. Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson identify a number of principles in the organization of everyday conversational turn-taking which, according to Fairclough (1992), can be summarized as:

(i) the current speaker may select the next speaker;
(ii) if not, the next speaker may ‘self-select’ by starting to produce a new turn;
(iii) if not, the current speaker may continue” (p. 17).

Sacks et al. (1978) note that the “current speaker selects next” mode means that “the party so selected has rights, and is obliged, to take (the) next turn to speak, and no others have such rights or obligations” (p. 13). They also note that this is the preferred mode in many conversational contexts.

In contrast to “everyday” conversation where, according to Sacks et al. (1978), there is preference for the current speaker to select the next speaker, in the practice context, there was an extreme preference for self-selection, both by workers and participants, in the group’s talk. This means that at each point where speaker transition could occur, individual participants would rapidly seize a conversational turn. This showed the participants’ strong motivation to speak, which is further illustrated by the fact that when the current speaker did select the next speaker it was common that someone other than the selected speaker took
the speaking opportunity offered to another. This indicates both a strong competition for conversational turns, greater than that typically experienced in “everyday” conversation, and demonstrates a degree of empowerment amongst the participants in this specific context of practice insofar as they were able to actively shape the interactional process, and they did so from the outset of the project.

Despite the intense competition for speaking space, over the course of the project all participants managed to obtain numerous opportunities for extended conversational turns in which to tell and critically analyze their experiences, and managed to document a collective analysis of their experiences. The core group also began to implement action strategies in relation to their own and other young women’s experiences of violence, such as through the establishment of a peer support and advocacy network for young women. However, the intense motivation of the participants to “self-select” contributed to a tension between the two goals often promoted within activist practice discourses: of privileging the participants’ voices (which it did); and of creating opportunities (often silence) for critical reflection and action (which it did not).

Conversation analysis also showed the ways in which the turn-taking process highly constrained the two workers, while they could overtly regulate the practice context, for example, they could not easily ‘select another to speak’ because the obligations to talk which this set up could be seen as a contravention of the egalitarian ethic of activist practice discourses. Nonetheless, while the workers themselves were limited in their capacity to direct the process, conversation analysis was able to show that the process was still regulated and that this was done to some degree collectively. Conversation analysis also usefully revealed some of the relatively inconspicuous ways worker power was enacted to support the activities of the project group.

Shaping the Process through Action-Reflection

An important way in which activist social workers may shape the practice context is through the introduction of action reflection cycles, as derived from the work of Freire (1972). Action-
reflection cycles have been integral to consciousness raising processes and have proven to be extremely popular in a range of activist practice models (see Dominelli and McLeod, 1989; Finn, 1994; Leonard, 1975). Through these cycles workers involve participants in identifying links between their personal experiences and their social context, particularly noting how their social and economic context has contributed to personal experiences of pain and marginalization. The action-reflection process also involves participants in the identification of action strategies which are aimed at the transformation of the circumstances that perpetuate their vulnerability. This process of critical reflection is intended to be empowering insofar as participants experience themselves as knowers and, potentially, as activists.

Conversation analysis was used to examine the effects of the action-reflection process on the organization of talk. Conversational samples were taken on six occasions (both from action-reflection cycles and other meetings) over the course of the project and their silence patterns were examined. Because the examination involved extreme attention to detail, where silences of up to a tenth of a second both within utterances and at the completion of them were examined, it was necessary to limit these samples to ten minutes each. The examination of the silence patterns confirmed the intense competition for conversational space in the non action-reflection cycles. For example, it was rare for participants to orient themselves to each other's talk and this lack of orientation was illustrated by speech actions such as, "dual" story-telling (that is a number of participants telling different stories simultaneously) and seizing brief pauses or gaps in talk as conversational opportunities. Where the workers implemented the action-reflection cycles, pauses in talk were at least triple those present at any other time and gaps after talk were at least double that present in other meetings throughout the entire project. These increases in silence during the action-reflection cycles were particularly supportive of reflection on individual experiences, since speakers did not need to compete with others for conversational space. and so could pause to collect their thoughts without such conversational breaks being seized by others as an opportunity to begin to tell their own stories or to divert the conversation away from the original speaker's talk. So, the review of silence patterns over the course of
the project also revealed that the workers' actions has a profound, though often implicit, effect on the interactional process.

Attention to the social actions involved in the conversational samples taken during the action-reflection cycles also confirms the participants' greater orientation to each others' talk, through, for example, listening attentively, referring back to the speaker's previous illustrations and this occurs more than at other times during the action-research process. One illustration of this is taken from a discussion about one young woman's experience of sexual abuse. (In the transcripts below some of the conversation analysis transcription conventions have been retained, these are: underlining indicates force of talk; ↑ ↑ depicts high pitch; >> indicates speed in talk; [ ] indicates overlap between speakers; () indicates that the content of the talk was unclear.) For the purposes of demonstrating the specific analytic concern at hand, "pauses" are gaps of over 0.5 seconds and "extended pauses" as gaps over 2.0 seconds, while commas indicate pauses under 0.5 seconds. This excerpt begins with one participant, 'Brooke' (not her real name), discussing her continuing contact with the relative who had abused her.

Brooke:
I'm still forced to talk with 'im at my mother's ↑ house ↑, cause she rings him up [PAUSE] an, umm, cause he's married and 'es got a kid now, and I'm forced to get on the phone and talk to him, an he's still [PAUSE] you know, >he's thirty-five now or something>, and he's still on the phone, he get on the phone and goes "hi honey, how are you?" [PAUSE] and I just go "ohh hi", and he goes "ohh, you know I had ta get married I couldn't wait for you forever" and sayin' all this sorta sleasy stuff to me on the phone now [PAUSE] but, >I can't say anything>, cause my mum's right behind me [EXTENDED PAUSE]

Annette: has your mum got an extension? [PAUSE]

Brooke: ahh yeh,

Melissa: get her on the phone,

Brooke: she doesn't wanna know she won't listen, she ( )

Phillipa: she doesn't [wanna know]

Sonia: she doesn't wanna know,

Brooke: ohh, she knows, she definitely knows,

Phillipa: but she doesn't wanna acknowledge it.

In this excerpt there is considerable evidence of opportunities for pausing and of focusing on one participant's talk. The participants demonstrate their attention through relevant questioning and
suggesting helpful acts, (line 10, "has your mum got an extension?"; line 12, "get her on the phone") and through supporting Brooke’s talk (lines 14 and 15, "she doesn’t wanna know").

In the context of the intense motivation amongst the participants to seize conversational opportunities for themselves this orientation towards another’s talk is quite remarkable and was assisted by worker’s use of power to initiate the action-reflection cycles. However, the workers also effected a transfer of power, insofar as the hierarchical relations of power that are said to characterize orthodox social work settings are less evident; indeed in this excerpt a number of the participants themselves were involved in facilitating the telling and analysis of one another’s experiences rather than acting only as speakers of their experience. In more orthodox social work contexts, the actions of questioning and support are often expressed only by the worker (see Sands, 1989). In this instance, conversation analysis challenges the perspective that power is an oppressive force towards a recognition of the complex operations of power in practice.

The Workers’ Implicit and Explicit Encouragement of Participants’ Talk

A further illustration of the ways in which the workers unobtrusively shaped the process in the activist context under study was through their implicit and explicit indicators of active attention to the participants’ talk. One example of these implicit indicators of active listening is that of continuers, that is, those utterances such as "uh huh", "yeh" and so forth that indicate support for, and understanding of, another’s talk (Nofsinger, 1991, p. 118).

An analysis of samples taken over the course of the project indicates that continuers were a common feature of the workers’ talk in the practice context. Indeed, in four of the six samples continuers occupy half of one worker’s conversational turns. Moreover, it would seem that her use of continuers was purposeful since she reduced her use of continuers where extended conversational turns would be inconsistent with the immediate tasks or goals of the group. For example, it is evident that in one sample she offered far fewer continuers than at any other time.
This sample was taken during a meeting organized with the participants for the purpose of planning a forum for women beyond the core group. In this instance extended conversational turns, particularly when used for the purpose of story-telling, appeared to be inconsistent with this aim. It is notable that these implicit continuers were less common in the second worker’s speech and almost entirely absent in the participants’ own talk. This may indicate that an important part of the first worker’s power of giving encouragement to participants was enacted through inconspicuous means, such as the implicit encouragement of others’ talk, rather than through the overt acts of power that are often the subject of activist practice theory.

A second way in which both workers encouraged the young women’s participation throughout the process was through the expression of explicit statements of support. Within the intense competition for conversational space these expressions of support were often used to extend the participant’s speaking space. As some participants came, over the course of the project, to express their speaking power in ways that appeared aggressive or domi-

natory, the workers sometimes used explicit continuers to counter what seemed to be deliberate attempts to silence others. The following illustration is taken from a core group gathering which occurred following a public meeting held by the participants to inform interested community members and professionals about the action research project. Again, some basic conversation analytic conventions have been included; these are: ↑↑ for high pitch; underline to indicate force; commas represent brief pauses. The excerpt begins with one young woman’s reflecting that she had felt inadequately prepared for the meeting:

Melissa: I think I’d need to better prepared next time, I kept repeating myself all the time 1
Annette: you were 2
Worker 2: it was probably a good answer 3
Annette: heheh sorry 4
Melissa: heheh I know 5
Worker 1: what did you ↑↑repeaat↑↑ 6
Melissa: oh I can’t remember, I felt like I kept repeating myself so it sounded like a good answer, and I couldn’t think of another one! 7
Group: heheh 8
In this excerpt, like the previous one, both workers and participants are oriented towards one speaker’s talk, seeking to allow her space to explore her actions and feelings. The task here is to affirm the voice of the young woman and to challenge the negative interpretation put on her talk by herself, in line 1: “I kept repeating myself all the way through,” and by others, in line 11: “stuck with one answer through the whole question, hahaha.” Worker 2 tries to reinterpret the young woman’s view of her repeating as a strength, line 4: “it was probably a good answer” and later in line 14: “you kept making a point”. Melissa seems to accept this interpretation, (lines 12, 16 and 19). The workers’ active support, as demonstrated here, is consistent with activist social work principles in that such support may counter the silencing of the marginalized both within the immediate practice context and even beyond it. It is significant too that in affirming Melissa’s voice, the workers do not overtly challenge the other participants’ derision, making their contestation implicit through their support of Melissa. This suggests a sensitivity in using power to encourage one voice without overtly criticizing or constraining the voices of others. Again this use of power by the workers in the minutiae of practice appears consistent with the egalitarian ethos, since it is used for the purpose of affirmation and empowerment rather than to reinforce their own status or authority.

It is remarkable that, even as the young women increasingly took on organizational roles in the practice context, both continuers and overt support for others remained largely absent from their talk. It seemed that the kinds of support offered by the young women and by workers for participants’ talk differed, though
each was important in assisting participants’ to find individual and collective voices about their experiences.

Review of the Analysis

We have focused on the application of discourse and conversation analysis methods to the study of the use of worker power in one context of activist practice. We have demonstrated that over the entire course of the activist practice process some differences and asymmetries in power between the workers and participants continued. Some of the key findings of our longitudinal study of worker power in this one site of activist practice include, firstly, that the talk produced in the activist process was not like ordinary conversation, in that one group of participants—in this instance, the social workers—needed to take responsibility for facilitating some dimensions of the process, particularly in managing the distribution of talk turns. Moreover, it was apparent that much of this power was enacted inconspicuously. Secondly, that during the project, and even during one meeting, the speaking opportunities could vary between periods of intense competition, and of orientation to others talk. In each situation the social workers played a different part in managing egalitarianism. The workers’ ongoing role at the implicit level of practice should not be seen as a failure to achieve egalitarian practice relations, but rather as evidence of the marginalization within the activist practice discourses of the complexities that may be present at the local levels of practice. We do not suggest that analyzes of other practice contexts would always reveal similar asymmetries, but rather that a study of the minutiae of practice can reveal greater complexity in worker and participant roles than are suggested by activist practice discourses.

Implications of the Discourse Analysis Model for Activist Social Work

So we are proposing that activist practice can gain from being studied through a combination of discourse and conversation analysis. We consider that the combination of these analytic strategies is useful for revealing the complexity and dynamism of activist practice processes. We acknowledge that the model
of analysis we propose fits uneasily with some of the key assumptions on which activist social work rests. Particularly the assumption that social superstructures such as capitalism, patriarchy and imperialism should be the primary site of analysis in understanding activist social work (see Cloward and Fox Piven, 1975; Dixon, 1993). A discourse analysis approach that is informed by poststructural theory challenges the structural/local dualism that has pervaded much of the activist practice theory. In such an approach “neither language nor social structure are monolithic; nor are they separate from one another” (Kingfisher, 1996, p. 559). In its focus on the local dynamism and complexities of practice, discourse analysis allows for an acknowledgement of practice as a different rather than inferior site of social work theorizing.

In addition, discourse analysis focuses on what activist practice “is” rather than what it should be. Discourse analysis demands that the analysis should begin in the practice settings, thus, allowing recognition of the contextual limits and possibilities for activism. In so doing, these methods draw attention to the often implicit and unacknowledged assumptions present in activist practice discourses about the kinds of contexts in which activists will work. Hence, for example, it is possible to recognize differences between emancipatory practices in the diverse settings in which social workers practice occurs (see Healy, in press). By providing tools for exposing the implicit assumptions of activist discourse, these methods yield possibilities for deconstructing and diversifying what it means to be an activist practitioner. This does not mean that activists should abandon, altogether, the utopian visions that have provided a powerful motivation for activist practice; but rather that these visions should be grounded in the specificities of practice.

While the kind of analytic methods we propose have a number of advantages for activist social work, they also have some limitations, which we will briefly outline. Firstly, they are highly technical so they are time consuming to learn and to apply. This can severely limit their accessibility to activist social work practitioners who, in many instances, are highly constrained in the amount of time they can devote to research activity.

Secondly, a typical characteristic of discourse and conversation analysis is that they require an “elaborate analysis of rela-
tively small samples of language" (Nunan, 1993, p. 86; see also
Fairclough, 1992). The focus on detail and the requirements of
accurate transcription can limit the breadth of practice processes
that can be studied. The fine detailed character of discourse an-
alytic research can reduce its appeal to funding bodies which
are often more interested in macro analysis rather than detailed
social research on the local interactions of practice. These meth-
ods may also raise concerns for social work researchers who are
concerned with grasping the breadth as well as the depth of
practice processes. In our own research we have dealt with the
problems created by the emphasis on detail by collecting a set of
conversation samples at intervals during the practice process, so
that they could be compared and contrasted. Another way to deal
with this is to be quite pragmatic about which analytic aspects to
concentrate on. In our own use of analytic methods we concen-
trated on three of the aspects of the talk: speaker selection, silence,
and supportive aspects of talk. This is not to suggest that we were
not rigorous, but rather that we made a selection of appropriate
focuses for our social work goals. A further issue is that language
analysis accounts are limited in the extent to which they can in-
corporate gesture and bodily activity. A final and important issue
for activists is that while the analytic methods we have outlined
allow for considerable focus on the local, the contextual and the
complex, they do run the risk of ignoring the broader political
processes. This tension between the local and the socio-economic
context is something which must be constantly addressed in all
social work research and particularly in activist research.

Conclusion

In this paper, we have discussed the relevance of discourse
methods to the study of activist social work practice processes
and the extension of practice theory. We have proposed a model
that combines a poststructural approach to discourse analysis
with conversation analysis. The strength of conversation analysis
is that it attends to the complexities and contingencies in the
local organization of activist practice contexts that have remained
hidden beneath the social structural explanations on which most
activists have relied. At the same time, discourse analysis can be
used to study the social context in which the detail of practice occurs and to the ways in which particular social entities and relations emerge. We acknowledge that there are a wide range of other analytic methods that have application to social work practice analysis. While we recognize the limitations of discourse methods, we would argue that these methods provide powerful tools for engaging with the local complexities and contingencies of practice. The approach to discourse study we suggest, then, is not one aimed at uncovering the "truth" about practice, but rather is one which recognizes the "conditional, changeable character of social work" (Rojek et al., 1988, p. 131).

References


The American welfare state is coming apart. In The Rhetoric of Reaction, Albert O. Hirschman explained how conservatives had used three themes to counter liberal expansion of social and economic rights: perversity, futility, and jeopardy. This essay expands Hirschman’s formulation retrospectively by identifying the liberal antecedents—adequacy, equality, and regulation—that prompted the recent conservative assault on the American welfare state. Further, the author presents three themes to thwart the conservative critique of welfare—mobility, empowerment, and restructuring. As illustrative of “proactive rhetoric”, these themes are proposed to guide future social policy in the United States.

The American welfare state is slowly coming apart. Conservative influences in social policy during the past decade have effectively banished the liberal dream of replicating the northern European welfare state in the United States. In place of incremental progress in protecting citizens against insecurities associated with industrialization and capitalism, Americans have witnessed a bipartisan effort to alter fundamentally, if not retract outright the legislation that has served as the foundation for the nation’s social policy for more than a half-century. Instead of adding benchmarks to the expansion of the welfare state, liberals have been reduced to defending the very social programs that have been the bedrock of contemporary social progress. The evidence is irrefutable. In 1989, Congress repealed Catastrophic Health Insurance, the first retraction of a social insurance program in the history of the American welfare state. During the first term of the Clinton presidency, the Health Security Act was soundly defeated. In 1996, President Clinton signed the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act, capping the expenditures for Aid
to Families with Dependent Children, devolving the program to the states, and setting time-limits on receipt of aid, the most radical change in welfare policy since the War on Poverty. Striking at the heart of the welfare state, a bipartisan panel presented three options for salvaging Social Security, each of which called for partial privatization of the program.

That this has come to pass is more a testament to the choreography of public sentiment than it is an inherent cynicism of Americans toward the needy. Indeed, as far back as the late 1970s, the President of the American Enterprise Institute had pledged to alter public philosophy so that is was more congruent with conservative precepts. During the 1980s, policy institutes from the ideological right—the Heritage Foundation, the Manhattan Institute, and the Hoover Institution—planned and executed a series of maneuvers that succeeded in reversing liberal hegemony in social policy. By the end of the decade, liberals were faced with a paradox: although Americans tended to support social welfare programs (Cook and Barrett, 1992), conservatives were defining the debate on the future of social policy. How had conservatives become so masterful at employing rhetoric in order to put public opinion to ideological service? What could this indicate for future directions in social policy?

In 1991, Albert O. Hirschman addressed such questions in *The Rhetoric of Reaction: Perversity, Futility, Jeopardy*. Having served on the Ford Foundation’s project on the future of the American welfare state, Hirschman was provoked to consider the quite profound impact of the relatively flimsy critiques of American social welfare programs which had been advanced by conservatives. In this prescient—if self-congratulatory—book, Hirschman drew on T. H. Marshall’s three stages of citizenship—civil, political, and social and economic—to assess the inordinate difficulty encountered by liberals in advancing the American welfare state into the third stage. Using historical material, Hirschman proposed that earlier progress in citizenship—attaining and defending civil and political rights—had also encountered adversity. Moreover, Hirschman concluded that conservative arguments against progressive change could be organized around three theses: perversity, futility, jeopardy. What made Hirschman’s work precocious
was his observation that these very theses characterize much of the current, conservative assault on the American welfare state.

By now the critique of the welfare state trumpeted from the political Right has a familiar ring: Rather than alleviating deprivation, welfare programs worsen dependency and contribute to a malignant underclass (it is perverse). Rather than ameliorate conditions of the poor, poverty persists despite the hundreds of billions of dollars spent on social welfare (it is futile). Rather than advance social and economic rights of the disadvantaged, social programs require the elaboration of the state, the expansion of which attenuates freedom and prosperity for all (it is jeopardy). Such arguments are not novel, contends Hirschman; they surface regularly when conservatives wish to sabotage progress.

Although he was able to identify some of sources of regressive rhetoric, such as Charles Murray (1984), Hirschman’s work is incomplete. In part, this is a result of his omitting other conservative seers, such as Peter Berger and Marvin Olasky, and the intellectual organizations that have promoted conservative philosophy during the past two decades, such as the American Enterprise Institute and the Heritage Foundation. In part, it is because the book appeared before Bill Clinton’s election to the presidency, the failure of the administration’s Health Security Act, the 1994 Republican electoral triumph that was underscored in subsequent Congressional elections, and the welfare reform legislation signed into law in 1996—events that further propelled conservatism in America. The purpose of this essay is to expand Hirschman’s outline on conservative theses advanced against the welfare state in order to identify its liberal antecedents, as well as propose a set of theses that could serve to direct future social policy.

The Liberal Antecedents of Reactionary Rhetoric

In aiming at social programs, conservatives put liberalism squarely in their sights. Two decades of sniping have clarified the specific theses that conservatives have targeted as well as the liberal counterattack. The success that conservatives have enjoyed in shaping public philosophy can be attributed to their construction and maintenance of a network of policy institutes
that has put up an incessant assault on liberalism and social welfare programs. To compound matters, the Left has consistently reverted to predictable refrains in reply to the conservative critique. Conservatives have become so proficient at this rhetorical parrying that they routinely reduce progressives to ideological caricature. This occurs because, instead of posing an alternative set of theses, liberals have found comfort in defending familiar, shopworn ideas.

Thus, the liberal antecedents to conservative rhetoric have not only provided the fuel for the Right, but they have also become a crutch for the Left—one that offers diminishing support. Probably the best indications of the conservative aptitude for this rhetorical game are the differing atmospheres that pervade the respective ideological camps. The Left, once the fount of optimism effused by the likes of Pete Seeger and Hubert Humphrey, evinces a pitiable dejection, while the Right, at one time the refuge of spoilsports like Richard Nixon, produces the spirited orneriness of P.J. O'Rourke and Newt Gingrich. During the 1960s, liberals smirked that there weren't any Republican folksongs; but since the 1980s conservatives seem to be having all the fun.

The liberalism that evolved with the New Deal and the Great Society orbited around three poles: adequacy, equality, and regulation. Adequacy was articulated by programs that assured income to those populations marginal to the labor market. Income entitlements were extended to poor workers by creation and elevation of the minimum wage and upon retirement the provision of a minimal pension through Social Security. For those outside the labor market, welfare programs, such as Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), Food Stamps, and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) guaranteed a financial floor. In the half-century following passage of the Social Security Act, non-income supports were offered, such as health care (Medicare and Medicaid), prenatal care (the Women, Infants, and Children Supplemental Nutrition Program), and housing (Section 8). Behind the adequacy thesis was a liberal assumption that providing basic supports for the poor would free them to use opportunities, such as education and work, to prosper.

Equality was a direct response to the social and income stratification of American culture according to class, race, and gender.
The redistributional impulse that at least formally taxed the rich at higher rates in order to provide benefits to workers was advanced by Progressives to ameliorate problems associated with diverging classes. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 extended social and political rights to African Americans whose opportunities were attenuated by de facto segregation. In order to encourage employers to hire and promote minorities and women, Affirmative Action was introduced. In advancing equality, liberals argued that government’s assurance of equal political rights should be extended to the economic and social sectors, as well. The ultimate objective was a society in which class, race, and gender, if not eradicated, would no longer circumscribe opportunity for entire subpopulations.

Regulation served to justify governmental intrusion into the economy in the late industrial period. During the Progressive Era, regulation was the instrument of choice to clean up corruption and exploitation in government, the production of food and drugs, commerce and banking, and working conditions for women and children (Jansson, 1993). A more central role for government in markets was sanctioned by Keynesian theory in order to avoid recession. Governmental actions to counter the Depression and defend the nation during the Second World War then the Cold War led Americans to expect federal intervention when America’s prosperity and security were threatened. During the post-war era, federal initiatives were authorized in order to keep the nation strong in the event of foreign aggression, among them the G.I. Bill, completion of the inter-state highway system, and an extensive student loan program (Newman, 1993). Much of the liberal activist agenda after 1960s—the Civil Rights Act, the ill-fated Equal Rights Amendment, the Occupational Safety and Health Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act—were justified by a broad interpretation of the regulatory role of the federal government.

Adequacy, equality, and regulation served liberalism well, effectively orienting American social policy for a half-century. The brew was sufficiently potent that even conservative presidents—Eisenhower and Nixon—conceded not only the correctness of liberally-inspired policies but also worked to extend them. By 1980 social program expenditures accounted for more than 57
percent of the federal budget and almost 20 percent of Gross Domestic Product (Stoesz, 1996). In the judgment of most observers, the welfare state had become an institutional fixture in American culture (Marmor, et al., 1990).

The Conservative Critique

The conservative challenge to liberal hegemony in social policy began with a string of policy institutes promoting conservatism as public philosophy. Think tanks, such as the American Enterprise Institute, the Heritage Foundation, the Hoover Institution, the Manhattan Institute, among others, collected resentment that had accumulated within the corporate sector, the right wing of the Republican party (as well as some disaffected conservative Democrats), and the grass-roots traditionalist movement and catalyzed a fundamental critique of liberal social policy. This ideological offensive was played-out much in the way Hirschman described.

Conservatives attacked the liberal adequacy thesis by arguing that its consequences were perverse. Rather than assure the poor of a safety-net from which they could bounce back into productive activities, welfare insidiously induced dependency, lulling economically marginal families into an underclass from which they could not escape. Charles Murray popularized this thesis in Losing Ground which appeared in 1984. Still, Murray was somewhat uncertain about how to remedy the degeneracy he attributed to welfare, so he obliquely presented his solution as "a thought experiment": "scrapping the entire federal welfare and income support structure for working-aged persons, including AFDC, Medicaid, Food Stamps, Unemployment Insurance, Worker's Compensation, subsidized housing, disability, and the rest" (1984, pp. 227–28). However elliptically presented, the suggestion of outright elimination of all welfare was breathtaking. No less astonishing was the relatively weak evidence that Murray offered to substantiate his argument.

This idea that welfare exacerbated poverty led conservative analysts to differentiate a "new" behavioral poverty from the "old" cash poverty (Mead, 1992). While the income programs of the social safety-net might be appropriate for the prudent poor,
the problem of behavioral poverty called for a more strategic response. According to Lawrence Mead (1986), the negative effects of welfare could be corrected by making receipt of benefits conditional on mainstream behavior, particularly work. Thus, welfare-to-work featured prominently in the Family Support Act of 1988; in order to receive AFDC, beneficiaries without exempting circumstances would be required to participate in education, training, or job placement services or lose their benefits. Once having found a job, recipients of AFDC were entitled to "transitional benefits", the receipt of assistance for child care, transportation, and Medicaid for a year to ease the transition to private sector employment (Stoesz & Karger, 1989).

By the early 1990s enforcing reciprocity among welfare recipients had become fashionable among state governors. Wisconsin introduced "learnfare", the requirement that children on AFDC demonstrate regular school attendance or their family would lose benefits. New Jersey promoted family planning by refusing to increase benefits for additional children born after welfare benefits were granted. Several states took President Clinton at his word for his intent to "end welfare as we know it" by introducing a time-limit on receipt of welfare, the termination of benefits being the ultimate form of conditionality. By the time the 104th Congress was prepared to "devolve" welfare to the states in a block grant, some 40 states had already received waivers from the federal government to pilot experiments. State welfare experiments and passage of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996—aka "welfare reform"—further validated the perversity thesis.

The Right also attacked the liberal equality thesis, contending that social programs were futile in the face of unalterable societal forces. Foremost, conservatives alleged that poverty had become more intractable even as public welfare expenditures increased. The more benign expression of the futility thesis portrayed class, race, and gender as "deep" structures that were simply immutable. George Gilder, for example, indicated that the interaction of race, gender, and class were too formidable to be transformed by social programs. Accordingly, his solution was to leave the poor to benefit from "the spur of their own poverty" (1981, p. 118). Brigitte and Peter Berger assumed a more assertive
stance, identifying the professional groups that arose to staff the welfare state as being the true beneficiaries: “intentionally or not, this body of laws (making up, in the aggregate, what we now know as the American welfare state) provided powerful handles for the intervention by professionals in the lives of individual families” (1983, p. 33). So equipped, human service professionals used the programs of the welfare state as instruments to disempower poor, predominantly minority families, in so doing reinforcing social stratification.

These themes blossomed in *The Bell Curve* by Charles Murray and Richard Herrnstein (1994). According to Murray and Herrnstein, low intelligence contributed to a range of social pathologies: teen pregnancy, welfare dependence, crime, unemployment, school failure, and family break-up. The reproduction of the low-IQ poor assured the growth of a “cognitive underclass”, a subpopulation that is unable to benefit from well-intentioned social programs. Rather than improve the conditions of the underclass, welfare benefits maintained the degenerate poor, assuring the replication of those with low-IQ. The growth of the irremediable underclass eventually increased the hazards for intellectuals in the society, so the “cognitive elite” sought security by walling itself off in gated communities. Yet, despite the hazard presented by the underclass, the cognitive elite has been unable to mount credible responses to the threat posed by the low-IQ poor. The result, contended Herrnstein and Murray, has been an inevitable dumbing-down of American society.

Finally, conservatives contended that excessive regulation promulgated by liberals extended the role of the federal government to the point that American society was in jeopardy. This argument evolved most vividly through the “mediating structures project” of the American Enterprise Institute (AEI). In the late 1970s, AEI commissioned Peter Berger and Richard John Neuhaus to prepare an explanation for the nation’s ills. The product, *To Empower People* (1977), theorized that the American malaise could be attributed to a pervasive alienation sensed by individuals as “megastructures” increasingly dominate social relations. The disempowering megastructures included big government, the corporate sector, big labor unions, and professional associations. The solution to this condition, Berger and Neuhaus
proposed, was the reinforcement of "mediating structures": the neighborhood, civic associations, the church, and family. Thus, began the Right's infatuation with small-town Americana. Not long thereafter, Michael Novak assumed responsibility for the "mediating structures project" and in *Toward a Theology of the Corporation* (1981) reclassified big business as a mediating structure, leaving as megastructures the institutions most closely associated with liberalism. According to Novak, the corporation was an essential feature of a three-part system of checks and balances. American culture was a trinity comprised of the economy, the state and a social culture, represented by the corporation, government, and mediating structures, respectively (Stoesz & Karger, 1992, p. 48). The authoritarian impulses of big government must be countered by a protean corporate sector and vibrant mediating structures, Novak contended. In the absence of such correctives, big government threatens civilization itself.

Having identified big government as a cultural hazard, the problem of responding to social need remained, however. The solution was proposed by the Heritage Foundation’s Marvin Olasky who suggested the revival of mediating structures extant prior to the New Deal. "The more effective provision of social services will ultimately depend on their return to private and especially to religious institutions," he averred. "Most of our 20th century schemes have failed. It's time to learn from the warm hearts and hard heads of the 19th" (1990, p. 14). By reinvigorating mediating structures, conservatives argued that the jeopardy posed by the social programs of big government could be avoided. Not surprisingly, as welfare reform proposals proliferated in various states, the more conservative governors favored replacing government welfare with voluntary, nonprofit activities, all consistent with mediating structures theory and, of course, the jeopardy thesis.

**Proactive Rhetoric**

If conservatives have invoked a reactionary rhetoric to such success, is a subsequent, proactive rhetoric conceivable? If so, the rhetoric should meet two criteria. Proactive rhetoric must address flaws in the conservative critique of social programs and do so in a way that avoids the liberal tendency to recite dated theses. The
task is not only to demonstrate the inadequacy of conservative public philosophy, but also to present a vocabulary of motive that resonates with current and projected experience.

As counterpoint to the perversity thesis (programs exacerbate poverty), a mobility thesis should be presented as a way to enhance prosperity. Conservative consequences of the perversity thesis—making receipt of welfare conditional on specific behaviors—is appealing rhetorically, but in practice it is at best ambiguous. Most research on welfare-to-work programs shows that they not only fail to vault many people into economic independence, but they also fail to save government substantial amounts in welfare expenditures (Stoesz, 1997). Research by the Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation (MDRC) reveals that the typical welfare-to-work program increases participants' income, but only by several hundred dollars annually, hardly enough to make them self-sufficient. Moreover, savings to welfare departments are modest. Because of the initial investment needed to mount a welfare-to-work program, it often takes years for agencies to recover that initial outlay and achieve net savings (Gueron & Pauly, 1991). Many welfare-to-work enthusiasts regard the Riverside, California program as a model, yet the results there are far from sanguine: “Even the Riverside program, considered to be the most successful welfare-to-work program evaluated to date, does not promise lasting results. Three years after entering the program, only 23 percent of the participants were still employed and off AFDC,” observed Randall Eberts of the Upjohn Institute for Employment Research. “Furthermore, the earnings do little to lift welfare recipients out of poverty. In California overall, only 20 percent of the participants had annual incomes above the poverty rate after three years” (1995, p. 4).

If welfare-to-work disappoints, the implications of other forms of conditionality of welfare are at least as problematic. Learnfare—the requirement that AFDC children attend school regularly or their families risk benefit reductions—requires a “bean-counting” capability that would be a bonanza to the stereotypical government bureaucrat. An evaluation of Milwaukee’s experience with Learnfare concluded that the program failed to produce the outcomes promised by proponents (Quinn & Magill, 1994). But, the imposition of time limits is most troublesome.
Findings of the Institute for Women’s Policy Research reveal that over 40 percent of AFDC mothers are either peripherally attached to the labor market, augmenting welfare with wages, or they drift in and out of welfare depending on the availability of work (Spalter-Roth, et al., 1995). LaDonna Pavetti (1995) of the Urban Institute reports that 56 percent of women leave welfare by the end of the first year, and 70 percent leave by the end of two years; however, 45 percent return to public assistance before the end of the first year off welfare, and 57 percent return by the end of two years. The imposition of time limits would put an abrupt halt to the parallel and cyclical relationship between low wages and welfare. Without public assistance many poor mothers would simply be unable to support their families (Edin & Lein, 1997).

A mobility thesis would focus attention on the aspirations of the poor and highlight their climb up the socio-economic ladder. Perhaps the best evidence of this comes from immigration research which indicates that immigrants have labor force participation rates that eclipse those of native residents (Borjas, 1990). Not only do they create more jobs than they take, but immigrants also show a net contribution to the tax base (Simon, 1989; Fix & Passel, 1994). A conceptual illustration of the mobility thesis is the Individual Development Account (IDA) proposal fielded by Michael Sherraden (1991). Noting that most welfare benefits focus on income maintenance, but that most poor families become prosperous by accruing assets, Sherraden suggests IDAs to promote upward mobility of the poor. IDAs are tax-exempt accounts providing they are spent on completing an education, buying a home, establishing a business, or supplementing a pension. An individual’s contribution to an account would be matched by an external source, such as philanthropy or government, according to the income of the account holder (Edwards & Sherraden, 1994). The Center for Enterprise Development has undertaken an $15 million demonstration of IDAs at 13 sites across the nation as the “Downpayment on the American Dream” project. Microcredit, sometimes called microenterprise, is another example of a mobility accelerating program.

An answer to the futility thesis (programs are useless) would be the empowerment of the poor. Interestingly, conservatives have been able to trump liberals with the futility thesis because of
the Left’s persistent focus on the evils of laissez faire: because capitalism skews the distribution of resources and opportunities, the victims should be provided with necessities by government outside of the market. This has justified the erection of public monopolies to serve the poor, bureaucracies that segregate the poor economically and socially from the mainstream. One of the great ironies of contemporary welfare has been the genius with which some “bleeding-heart” conservatives have diverged from the party line and exploited this opening. Noting welfare mother Kimi Gray’s courage in organizing neighbors in a District of Columbia housing project in order to expel drug users, Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, Jack Kemp, initiated a program through which tenants could buy their housing units. Secretary of Education William Bennett endorsed the school choice initiative that had been introduced to the Wisconsin legislature by former welfare recipient “Polly” Williams. In the early 1990s, Kemp and Williams teamed up to launch a conservative policy institute, Empower America.

Empowering the poor requires a deconstruction of the welfare bureaucracy while offering service recipients choice of providers. The school choice debate has generated the charter school concept, yet a comparable initiative in welfare is yet to be clearly articulated. How might empowerment be applied to welfare? Typically, welfare departments consist of two divisions: income maintenance (dispersing public assistance, Food Stamp, Supplemental Security Income benefits) and social services (providing foster care, adoption, day care, and home help services). Income maintenance could be capitated and put out to bid to private (commercial or nonprofit) financial institutions that would function as Community Development Banks (CDBs). Services offered by CDBs would include account management (including checking, savings, and the use of smart cards for access of benefits from Automatic Teller Machines and Food Stamps automatically deducted at check-out), tax preparation to optimize refunds from the Earned Income Tax Credit, counseling in use of training and education benefits, and long-range financial planning. Utilizing direct deposit, CDBs would have on reserve substantial sums that could be used for community development projects, such as microenterprise (Solomon, 1991). Members could enroll in a CDB
of their choice. Social services could be deconstructed through use of social service vouchers. Once eligible, consumers could choose among a roster of approved providers, selecting one using state-of-art technology, such as interactive television, and providing evaluations at the end of service that would be used to rate provider performance (Stoesz, 1992).

The restructuring of industrial bureaucracies rebuts the jeopardy thesis (policy subverts previous achievements). The flattening of corporate bureaucracies has proceeded with a vengeance during the past decade. Firms such as IBM, Sears, and General Motors, have laid off tens of thousands of employees in order to maximize the use of technology, shed unnecessary workers, while diverting savings to stockholders through profits and bonuses to executives via excessive compensation packages (Sloan, 1996).

Within government, restructuring was promoted by David Osborne (1988) who investigated how governors were adjusting to increasing demand for services yet diminishing federal assistance to the states. Later Osborne teamed up with Ted Gaebler (1992) to produce Reinventing Government, a book that quickly captured the attention of public administrators. Osborne then consulted with Vice-President Al Gore (1993) on the National Performance Review, a federal house-cleaning initiative that promised to eliminate 252,000 federal employees at an alleged savings of $108 billion. Thus, the industrial era edifices of the corporate and governmental sectors appear headed to the bureaucratic rendering plant.

Within this broad context of organizational transformation, experimentation in welfare provision has proceeded in the form of state welfare reform demonstrations. As noted above, most state experimentation in welfare reform is aimed at countering the perversity thesis, not restructuring welfare per se. For that very reason, state welfare reforms that reflect a preoccupation with making receipt of welfare conditional on normative behavior require further elaboration of the welfare bureaucracy. In a delectable irony that liberals might be quick to point out, such social engineering of the poor contradicts conservative precepts since it amplifies the functions and costs of government. Conservatively-inspired welfare reform thus generates a perversity of its own by expanding the public welfare apparatus.
Logically, devolution of welfare from the federal government to the states could achieve restructuring, providing governors were willing to dismantle their public welfare bureaucracies. To date few have been willing to do so for fear of angering state employee organizations and client advocacy groups. Such entropy notwithstanding, an exemplary illustration of restructuring is the Savannah-Chatham (Georgia) Youth Futures Authority (YFA). Since 1987, YFA has collapsed several categorical welfare programs, used pooled revenues to deploy "family advocates", generated a common eligibility form, and developed a paperless, electronic record system. Services are provided in a poor neighborhood and delivered by "family advocates", case managers who are assigned two per census tract and manage no more than 25 cases each. Electronic record keeping facilitates correlating case experience with social indicators so that each year YFA can determine service outcomes. While not all indicators show consistent improvement, several do, including reduction in the teen birthrate, the number of children who are behind grade in school, and the number of founded cases of child abuse (Five year report, 1994). In dispelling the "big brother" image of federal social programs, the YFA illustrates how restructuring can refute the jeopardy thesis.

Proactive Rhetoric

The theses associated with liberalism (adequacy, equality, regulation), conservatism (perversity, futility, jeopardy), and their sequel (mobility, empowerment, restructuring) are depicted in Chart 1. This scheme of rhetorical transitions suggests that liberalism defined domestic policy roughly from 1935 to 1980, and that conservatism served a similar function from 1980 until sometime early in the next century. Until they abandon their antiquated rhetoric, liberals will continue to be vulnerable to conservative barrages directed at the welfare state, such as Newt Gingrich's, whose antipathy for federal social programs has permeated the Republican party: "The decay of the welfare state . . . has reduced citizens to clients, subordinated them to bureaucrats and subjected them to rules that are anti-work, anti-opportunity and anti-property. The welfare state must be replaced, not reformed"
(1995). Liberals would be wise to recognize that an increasing number of Democrats hold reservations about governmental social programs. Ted Kennedy, speaking before the Women's National Democratic Club as early as 1988, had said, "We now stand between two Americas, the one we have known and the one toward which we are heading. The New Deal will live in American history forever as a supreme example of government responsiveness to the times. But it is no answer to the problems of today" (Broder, 1988). In the shadow of the 1994 Republican electoral triumph, "new" Democrat Al From had been more blunt: "The New Deal Era is over. It was a grand and glorious era for Democrats, but it is over. The nails are in the coffin of New Deal liberalism, and it is dead and buried. It was a great ideology while it lasted—it was the ideology that built the middle class of America—but the policies that built the middle class can no longer earn their support. And we have lost them" (Kelly, 1994). Any fantasies about President Clinton's liberal tendencies disappeared with his signing the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, ending a 60-year social entitlement for poor families.

That liberals will respond effectively to their rout at the rhetoric of conservatives cannot be predicted with confidence. Many continue to harbor the illusion that the current reversal in public sentiment is transitory; given time, Americans will revert to their modern liberal sensibilities. The "pendulum theory" of ideological transformation has been proposed with greatest gravity by Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. (1986) who noted that conservatism and liberalism oscillated in 30-year cycles. From the 1935 Social Security Act to the 1965 Great Society legislation, Schlesinger
extrapolated that the next expansion in social programs would occur after the election of an unambiguously liberal president around 1995. Instead of a resurgence of liberalism, America witnessed the (re)election of Bill Clinton who worked in consort with a conservative Congress to repeal the federal social entitlement for poor families.

As conservatives of a generation ago were confronted with disarray after the failed Goldwater presidential candidacy, so liberals today must deal with the lack of vigor inspired by their rhetoric. Certainly, socio-economic circumstance provides ample material for fashioning a new and compelling lexicon: income disparities between the rich and poor are at all-time highs; hyper-segregation intensifies in older cities; the underclass metastasizes; social programs constrict. In light of deteriorating conditions, the liberal reflex has not been to entertain a "proactive rhetoric", however, but instead to indulge in shibboleths of the past. While this may be psychologically reassuring for those who can afford to so humor themselves, it offers little succor for the millions of Americans who have been segregated from the mainstream.

Notes

1. Hirschman suggested that conservatives opposed progressive initiatives out of a fear that they would subvert earlier achievements—already secured civil and political rights. I would argue that the issue is more profound; that conservatives fear that nothing less than civilization is at stake.
2. Cleverly, Novak pulls off this sleight-of-hand in a footnote on page 5.

References

Proactive Rhetoric


Understanding the Debate Over the Privatization of Social Security

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Serious consideration is being given to the merits of privatizing Social Security. Debate over privatization and the future of Social Security gives expression to two differing value systems: the community-enhancing values of the program's defenders versus libertarian values of its critics. This article examines the implications of the debate. Areas of agreement among advocates and opponents of privatization are discussed. Special attention is paid to conflicting views about privatization and to the distributive implications of proposals to address the program's projected financing problem. In shifting much risk from government onto individuals, privatization would undermine basic Social Security protections. And it would complicate the program's financing problems and in the long run weaken political support. Moreover, many alternative benefit or tax changes can address the shortfall without weakening the moral basis of Social Security.

The January 1997 report of the 1994–96 Advisory Council on Social Security kicked-off spirited debate about the future of Social Security.¹ Rather than presenting one Social Security reform option as in the past, this Council split into three factions, each with their own set of recommendations. Moreover, for the first time, the advocates of privatizing the program succeeded in assuring that serious consideration will be given to privatization proposals—an outcome guaranteeing complex and heated deliberations.
One proposal would maintain the basic commitments and structure of Social Security. It calls for a number of minor changes and serious consideration of one major change, investing forty percent of the growing Social Security trust fund assets in the stock market via the equivalent of a passively managed index fund. The other two proposals call for the partial privatization of Social Security and the creation of individual IRA-like accounts—fundamental alterations of the program that guarantee much controversy. The most radical proposal calls for gradually transforming Social Security into a two tier scheme with the first tier providing a low flat rate benefit ($410) to all recipients and the second tier based on diverting payroll tax contributions to mandatory IRA-like accounts.

To adequately assess the potential consequences of the unusual departure of contemporary Social Security policy debate from the traditional approaches to reform, we believe policymakers, analysts and the general public need to be well-informed about 1) the origins, goals and benefits of Social Security and 2) the scope of the existing financing problem, the policy choices and their consequences.

Social Security: Origins, Goals and Protections

Today, Social Security—the Old-Age Survivors and Disability Insurance program (OASDI)—is the central institution in the American approach to social protection. But it wasn’t always this way. “Prior to the enactment of the Old-Age Insurance Program in 1935, economic security rested on the ability, discretion, and goodwill of families, charities, and government officials to supplement individuals’ actions” (Kingson and Schulz, 1997, 42). And the county poor house, now little more than an historical footnote, stood as the most feared symbol of indigence in old age.

The rapid growth of an industrializing and capitalizing economy meant that the nation could afford more social protection. Simultaneously, a changed economy placed more workers at risk of loss of income due to economic cycles, age-related obsolescence and disability (Berkowitz, 1991). At the beginning of the 20th century one group of social reformers, looking to the European experience, began to advance the social insurance approach to
economic security. Rejecting the principle of "less eligibility" arising out of the nation's poor laws traditions—the idea that the circumstances of relief should be so unpleasant as to discourage all but the most needy from seeking public benefits—the social insurance approach sought to provide widespread protection against risks considered common to industrial societies, namely income loss due to old age, unemployment, disability, survivorship and health care costs.

Unlike private insurance which protects those who can afford and choose to purchase coverage, the driving purpose behind social insurance is to provide broad protection against identifiable risks across all income groups. Private insurance emphasizes the principle of "individual equity"—that, all things being equal, rates of returns to beneficiaries should be proportional to premium payments. But social insurance—built on the belief that it is in society's interest to provide a rational means of assisting citizens to protect themselves and their families against major economic risks—emphasizes adequacy, the idea that benefits should be sufficient to meet basic needs. (By design social insurance returns must vary across income classes and cohorts, providing proportionately larger returns to those at greatest risk while simultaneously providing somewhat larger benefits to those paying more to a social insurance program. Otherwise the social adequacy goal would not be achieved.) This fundamental difference between private and social insurance led Reinhart Hohaus, actuary and Metropolitan Life Insurance executive, to observe in his now classic 1938 article that social insurance responds to society's need to provide basic protection for the citizenry:

Hence, just as considerations of equity of benefits form a natural and vital part of operating private insurance, so should considerations of adequacy control the pattern of social insurance benefits. Likewise, as private insurance would collapse if it stressed considerations of adequacy more than those of equity, so will social insurance fail to remain undisturbed if considerations of equity are allowed to predominate over those of adequacy (Hohaus, 1960).

With the exception of the state by state enactment of workman's (now called worker's) compensation laws, social insurance programs made little headway during the first third of the
twentieth century. But in the context of the economic collapse of the 1930s, the Social Security Act of 1935 was passed. Ironically, Old-Age Insurance, the program we have come to know as Social Security, was neither large nor initially very popular as it required collecting a new payroll tax and did not promise to pay out benefits until the early 1940s. In fact, Social Security did not emerge as the dominant source of public old age income protection until passage of the 1950 amendments to the Social Security Act. But even before that, beginning in 1939 when survivors and selected dependent protections were added to OAI, a pattern of incremental expansion of Social Security was established with disability insurance added in 1956, Medicare in 1965, real benefit increases in the late 1960s and early 1970s and the cost of living adjustment in 1972 (Berkowitz, 1991).

This pattern of incremental expansion came to an end in the mid-1970s as the nation’s politics changed and as Social Security began to face financing problems brought on by short-term economic downturns in the mid-1970s and early 1980s and by changing demographics. Financing amendments followed in 1977 and 1983, and today it is once again clear that legislation will be needed to address a projected shortfall. But for the first time since the implementation of the program, serious consideration is being given to proposals to privatize and/or means test OASDI, approaches which would change the nature of “Social Security as we know it,” departing radically from the principles which have guided the program since its inception.

Indeed substantial ideological differences bound contemporary Social Security debate. To some on the right, the system’s financing problems provide opportunity to tug at the foundation of social welfare in the U.S. by framing the projected financing problem as a cause of budget problems, requiring radical reform. This approach is connected to a strategy to deligitimate the program by advancing the argument that Social Security is undermining savings and the well-being of future generations. Moreover, they often argue, Social Security is just one part of a larger, homogeneous entitlement problem, which includes Medicaid, Medicare, Medicaid and other entitlement spending.

Proponents of the existing program generally suggest that the projected shortfall can be addressed through a reasonable
combination benefit reductions and/or payroll tax increases. As for other problems such as population aging and large health care costs, though viewed as obviously important and related, proponents suggest they are separate from the OASDI financial shortfall. Unfortunately, where those advocating radical change are attaching their arguments to a vision about what is best for the future, the proponents of social insurance sometimes seem mired in the technical details of how to address the financing problem and fail to give sufficient attention to clarifying the values at stake in the debate. Hence, they often avoid important questions about the kind of society we wish to be and the role of Social Security in achieving a positive vision.

As discussions proceed on how best to address the shortfall and on the advisability of the more radical approaches to reform, it will be important not to lose sight of Social Security as a practical ideal which has provided the building block that has transformed old age. It is the only pension protection available to six out of ten working persons in the private sector. For those who are relatively well off, say the roughly 4.8 million elderly households with incomes between $18,732 and $31,179 in 1994, Social Security provides nearly half of the total income going to their homes. For the 60 percent of the elderly households (14.6 million) with incomes under $18,731 in 1994, Social Security provides over 70 percent of all income (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1996). Indeed, absent Social Security, the poverty rate among the old would increase to roughly 50 percent. And importantly, the security of beneficiaries is protected by cost-of-living protection which assures that benefits, once received, maintain their purchasing power into advanced old age—the point in time when elderly persons, especially widows, are often at greatest economic risk.

The program also provides widespread and basic protection to America’s families and employees. It is also the main source of disability and survivors protections. For a 27 year old couple with two children under age 2 and with earnings equal to average wages, it provides the equivalent of a $300,000 life insurance policy; a $207,000 disability policy; or, looked at another way, the equivalent of $12.1 trillion dollars in life insurance protection, more than the entire value ($10.8 trillion) of all the private life
insurance protection in force. Included among its 44 million beneficiaries are three million children under 18 who receive benefits each month. In short, a program with an expansive reach, Social Security has become a central societal institution.

The Financing Problem: Dimensions, Choices and Consequences

In addition to recognizing the historical and political context giving rise to Social Security, today’s debate about the implications of the Advisory Council report and the future of Social Security should recognize:

- We are facing a financing problem, not a crisis
- Privatization does not address the Social Security financing problem
- Important areas of agreement exist, despite some strong disagreements
- Privatization shifts risks from the government to individuals
- Privatization creates winners and losers
- Many reform options exist
- Conflicting values are at the core of this debate.

The Dimensions of the Financing Problem

While an excellent political strategy for those seeking to shrink the public sector, the alarmist view that Social Security is going “belly-up” is wrong on several counts. Even if no policy changes were made, after 2029 anticipated revenues would still be sufficient to meet about three-quarters of the program’s promises according to Social Security’s Board of Trustees. Given the nation’s 60 year tradition of making periodic adjustments to keep the system in projected balance seventy-five years into the future, it is reasonable to assume that some of the roughly 25 percent gap that remained would be made up by moderate benefit reductions and payroll tax increases well in advance of 2029. No doubt this represents a real financing problem and should be addressed soon, but the timing and magnitude of the problem hardly calls for pressing the panic button in 1997.
Very importantly, there is nothing about Social Security’s financing problems that cries out for privatization as a solution. If anything, privatization proposals complicate program financing and make the goal of achieving actuarial balance more difficult. Privatization would require both a large roll-back of the traditional Social Security benefit package and additional taxes to establish individual “savings” accounts. If a portion of current Social Security benefits are diverted to IRA-like private accounts new revenues must be found to finance Social Security pensions to all current and many future recipients. For at least the first several decades privatization would make it more difficult to finance Social Security.

Areas of Agreement

In spite of the splits in the Council, the members unanimously agreed that there is a financing problem, that it can be addressed and that it should be done sooner rather than later. They also unanimously agreed that some redistribution to low income persons should be maintained in any Social Security program, that means-testing Social Security is a bad idea, that full COLA protection is essential to the economic well-being of beneficiaries and that any “sacrifice in bringing the system into balance should be widely shared and not borne entirely by current and future workers and their employers.” All three plans improve the rate of return for future beneficiaries through some form of investment of the growing Social Security trust fund assets in the private sector. All three call for increased tax revenues or their equivalent. All three would continue a mandatory and universal retirement, disability and survivors program.

Council majorities supported extending coverage to all new state and local workers; reducing benefits by roughly three percent through a technical change in the benefit formula; taxing Social Security benefits in roughly the same manner as income from contributory defined-benefit plans and adjusting the COLA to reflect the Bureau of Labor Statistics estimate that the Consumer Price Index over-adjusts for inflation by 0.21 percent. And there was majority support for a proposal to accelerate the planned increase in the normal retirement age to 67 in 2011 instead of 2022, and to index it to changes in life expectancy thereafter.
Taken, together, these five changes address seventy percent of the projected financing problem—arguably a pretty substantial down-payment on the projected shortfall.\textsuperscript{5}

\textit{Areas of Disagreement}

Of course, it is the differences between the plans that are generating the greatest controversy. The proposal which would basically maintain the existing structure and commitments of the present program—the Maintain Benefits plan—is supported by six of the 13 members of the Council, including Robert Ball, a former commissioner of Social Security and the labor representatives among others. While this proposal calls for giving strong consideration to gradually investing 40 percent of trust fund assets in the stock market via something along the lines of a passively managed index fund, it does not call for the creation of individual IRA-like accounts. Because the government bears the risk, it insulates individuals and their families from poor investments and market fluctuations. If government investment in index funds yields a real rate of return of seven percent over the next 35 years, the Maintain Benefits plan would help ease the burden of providing for the retirement of the boomers—significantly decreasing by roughly 35 percent the need to cut benefits or generate additional federal revenues through tax increases. Of course, if the stock market experiences an extended period of decline or stagnation, the plan would compound the problem of paying for the boomers.\textsuperscript{6}

The more moderate of the two partial privatization schemes—the Individual Account (IA) plan—is supported by two members, including the Council’s chairman, Edward Gramlich, dean of the University of Michigan’s Institute of Public Policy. The IA plan would establish small defined contribution accounts for each worker by mandating a new contribution—arguably an indirect tax increase—of 1.6 percent of covered payroll to individual investment accounts. Workers would have a few investment options, but far fewer than envisioned in the Schieber plan. The administrative costs of the individual accounts would be relatively low since the individual accounts would be publicly managed. Benefit reductions, especially for middle and high-income workers, would help bring the public portion of the
revised Social Security program into long run actuarial balance. "The combination of the reduced growth in benefits, the increased age of eligibility for full retirement benefits, and the proceeds of the individual accounts would leave total benefits on average at about the levels of present law for all income groups."7

The most radical privatization proposal—the Personal Security Accounts (PSA) plan—calls for a partial privatization of Social Security and is supported by five members and identified with Sylvester Schieber, an executive with a benefits consultant company and Caroline Weaver, an economist at the American Enterprise Institutes and former advisor to former senator Robert Dole. It calls for gradually transforming Social Security into a two tier scheme with the first providing a low flat rate benefit ($410 in today's dollars) and the second tier based on contributions made to mandatory IRA-like accounts. Additionally, the value of disability benefits would be reduced and retirement eligibility ages increased. Five percent of the current payroll tax would be diverted into these privately-held and managed defined contribution accounts. Those with high earnings and those who make better investment decisions (or are just plain "lucky") would end up with larger second tier benefits. This proposal would be financed by a 72 year "transition" payroll tax of 1.52 percent and by borrowing $1.9 trillion dollars from general revenues to be repaid using the projected excess of tax revenues between 2035 to 2075.8

Shifting the Risks: Winners and Losers

Privatization—especially large scale privatization such as that proposed under the PSA plan—may be a bad idea. But it is not necessarily so for everyone—at least if we assume that the most well-off do not have a stake in promoting the well-being of the rest of society. Affluent workers would likely do better under privatization plans—at least in so far as they do not experience serious declines in their earning capacities during middle age. Such workers would be well provided for even if the stock market were to stagnate or decline just prior to retirement. But the biggest winners would be the banks, mutual funds and investment companies who stand to benefit from the millions of transactions and
trillions in private sector investment that would follow even a small partial privatization.

It may be economically rational for the affluent to accept the risks associated with privatization. But not so for most middle and low-income persons. The primary risks are market risk, investment risk, inflation risk and political risk.

Privatization places low- and moderate-income workers at significant political risk. As Social Security is currently structured low-income workers get a better return than high wage workers on their contributions, a factor that keeps millions of the elderly out of poverty during their retirement years. With privatization, upper-middle and high-income wage workers would have less reason to maintain the purchasing power of the basic benefit that low-income workers are especially dependent upon. Hence, in separating out the interests of higher-income workers from the public portion of the program, privatization schemes ensure erosion of political support for the program’s redistributive role—an outcome which would further increase the economic and social distance between rich and poor. Even a modest privatization scheme such as the IA plan risks the inadvertent undermining the program’s social adequacy goal.

Middle and low income workers would face especially serious market risks. Long run returns on stock market investments have generally been quite favorable. But no promises can be made about what will happen to an individual’s nest egg in the few years, months or even days before retirement.

Low- and even many middle-income workers cannot afford good investment advice. They are more likely to make poor investment decisions, for example, investing too conservatively during early working years or taking unacceptably high risks just prior to retirement. And after retirement, beneficiaries would receive much less protection against inflation under the Schieber plan, yet another example of how privatization plans often shift risk from government to the individual. The affluent are better positioned to seek financial advice and tolerate such risks, but the impact on low and middle income retired persons could end up being devastating.
Privatization

Other Options Exist

When the focus of Social Security reform moves towards the legislative process, policymakers and the public would be well advised to look beyond these three plans. Certainly, the "consensus" recommendations in the Advisory Council report provide a reasonable basis for starting the policy discussion, although each should be carefully assessed especially in terms of their costs and benefits for different population groups. But other options must be (and are being) considered.

One approach would eliminate the taxable maximum ceiling for the employer, set at $65,400 in 1997, thereby requiring the employer to pay the Social Security payroll tax on all wages that are paid. As the nation's income distribution has become more unequal, the proportion of wages covered by the payroll tax dropped from roughly 90 percent to 88 percent, and it is projected to drop to 85.5 percent ten years from now. Subjecting 100 percent of the employer's payroll to FICA taxation would effectively eliminate almost 1/2 of the projected financing problem. Yet another tax ceiling approach would restore and maintain the proportion of wages covered by the payroll tax at the 90 percent level by 2000, addressing about 14 percent of the projected financing problem. And there are many other possibilities.

Another set of proposals would reduce the fringe benefits exemptions from payroll taxation. As fringe benefits have grown, the proportion of total compensation (cash earnings and fringes) subject to payroll taxation has shrunk. This represents a very substantial loss to the trust funds which could be partially offset by treating some portion of fringes as taxable for Social Security's purposes. At the extreme, subjecting 90 percent of all cash and fringe benefit compensation to the payroll tax would address roughly 45 percent of the projected financing problem.10 Similarly, Edith Fierst, a member of the Advisory Council, notes that Social Security's actuaries estimate that taxing "the cost of employer-provided group health and life insurance... as though it were cash compensation" would address roughly one-third of the predicted shortfall.11 The distributive consequences are progressive because the burden of this change would fall primarily on higher
income workers who generally receive relatively and absolutely larger amounts of their total compensation in the form of non-taxable fringe benefits. And there are many other reforms on both the benefit and tax sides of the ledger that could address Social Securities financing problems without radically altering the program.

Senator Moynihan accepts the findings from another commis-
sion headed by economist Michael Boskin that the CPI overstates inflation by much more, perhaps 1 to 1.5 percent. The Boskin commission suggests that the CPI does not provide an accurate basis of measuring changes in overall living standards because it does not account for improvements in quality or the changing purchasing habits of Americans (e.g., buying in discount stores and purchasing substitute goods (e.g., oranges) when the price of another good (e.g., grapefruits) rise. Writing in the New York Times, the Senator calls for a 1.1 percent reduction in annual COLAs. The advantage—namely a quick and fair fix to roughly 70 percent of the projected deficit—is obvious.

The danger is that a new approach to approximating changes in the cost of living would understate the effects of inflation for some vulnerable groups. No one wants to provide a COLA that increases benefits in excess of price increases. However, there are serious questions about the type of price index that should be used. It is important to use an index that adequately and fairly assesses increases in the cost of living for those living at the economic margins including such subgroups as very old widows. It is not enough that an index provides an accurate measure of increases in the cost of living for the population as a whole.

Values at Stake

There is a disturbing tendency to reduce Social Security discus-
sions to mere accounting exercises of the financial cost of the program, overlooking its value as a source of national social cohe-
sion and as an expression of the contributions and obligations of each member of the national community. It has stood as a symbol of the kinds of programs that the federal government has been able to do well.

But even many of Social Security's staunchest defenders have focused on technical changes to the relative neglect of the
profound debate that is taking place between two very different value systems: the community-enhancing values of the program's defenders versus libertarian values of its critics, values that call for shrinking the size of the government as well as shifting risk burdens and responsibility from the national community to the individual. This debate is fundamentally about our sense of responsibility to each other; about the basic protection that each working American should be assured of for themselves and their families in old age, disability or on the death of a loved one; about the mix of public and private efforts we should encourage to assure that security. And this debate is also about the real consequences to the well-being of individuals and families of various possible changes.

Certainly, all Americans should be encouraged to save. But in shifting much of the risk from government onto individuals, privatization would undermine the basic retirement, disability and life insurance protections of all Americans—an outcome that would be unfortunate when the economic transformation of the American economy is rendering employment and living standards less secure.

Indeed, there is nothing about the current financing problem of Social Security that requires such radical and unprecedented change. And there is much to argue for addressing the financing problems in a way that assures that our children and theirs will receive basic protections from this program which for sixty years has served as an expression of the nation's concern for each member of the national community.

The moral basis of Social Security rests on the assumption that we, as a people, have a stake in the well-being of our family and neighbors. Along with Social Security, this value is worth preserving.

Notes
3. Board of Trustees of the Federal Old-Age and Survivors Insurance and Disability Insurance Trust Funds (1997)
6. See Advisory Council on Social Security (1997). Also see National Academy of Social Insurance (1996). Also, it is important to note that under the other two plans, market declines would translate into lost benefits for millions of boomers.
9. Consistent with the social insurance goal of providing a floor of protection for all Americans, the Social Security benefit formula provides proportionately higher benefits to workers who have worked consistently at lower-paying jobs. It replaces about 58 percent of average monthly earnings for persons retiring at age 65 with yearly earnings equal to one-half of average wages, compared to about 28 percent for workers whose earnings equaled the maximum subject to payroll taxation. So while higher income workers receive larger monthly benefits than low and middle income workers, these monthly benefits replace a smaller proportion of pre-retirement earnings.
10. See Bipartisan Commission on Entitlement and Tax Reform (1995)
12. See United States Senate Committee on Finance (1996).
13. See Stewart and Pavalone (1996) for evidence that the current CPI underestimates increase in the cost of living for those age 62 and over. The problem gets worse for the very old. Also see Baker (1996) and Madrick (1997) for critical assessment of the conclusions reached in United States Senate Committee on Finance (1996).

References


The Rush to Measure Performance

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This article examines the concept of performance measurement and identifies several major performance measurement initiatives that have implications for the human services. Each of these initiatives is briefly discussed and their similarities and differences noted. The article points out that little coordination appears to be taking place between these initiatives which raises the specter of human service agencies having to contend with multiple potentially incompatible performance measurement systems. The implications of performance measurement for human services agencies is then discussed. The article closes by suggesting that agency administrators, advocacy groups, clients and others concerned about the human services need to become informed and knowledgeable about performance measurement.

Introduction

Performance measurement is arguably one of the hottest topics in government and the human services today (Kravchuk and Schack, 1996; Martin and Kettner, 1996). Any attempt to promote performance accountability in the human services is to be applauded. In an era of increasing societal competition for scarce resources, it is imperative that the human services be able to demonstrate and document their performance. Nevertheless, one gets the nagging sense that the human services are being pushed and pulled in different directions by competing performance measurement initiatives.

Over the last few years, the federal government, numerous state and local governments, and a few private sector organizations have all launched their own performance measurement
initiatives. Coordination between these various initiatives appears marginal and ad hoc at best. Thus, the specter is raised of human service agencies having to cope with, and respond to, multiple performance measurement systems with potentially incompatible features. While it may be premature to declare a state of emergency, it is not to early to sound the alarm.

What Is Performance Measurement?

Performance measurement is defined as the regular collection and reporting of information about the efficiency, quality, and effectiveness of government programs (The Urban Institute, 1980). As originally conceptualized, performance measurement was to be a structured method by which government programs would communicate with their stakeholders (e.g., elected officials, citizens, advocacy groups, clients and others). Government programs would routinely report to their stakeholders on: the amount of service they provided (efficiency), the extent to which they satisfied client or participant expectations (quality), and their accomplishments, results, impacts, or outcomes (effectiveness).

Three aspects of performance measurement, as originally conceptualized, are worth noting because of their implications for the human services:

First, performance measurement was intended to be a generic approach to government program performance accountability. Performance measurement was not designed with the human services specifically in mind. Consequently, much of the language and methodology of performance measurement is foreign to the human services.

Second, performance measurement did not presuppose any a priori hierarchy between the dimensions of efficiency, quality, and effectiveness. Rather performance measurement assumed that all three dimensions were important to at least some stakeholders, although individual stakeholders might prefer one dimension over the others.

Third, performance measurement did not anticipate the extent to which government human service agencies would come to rely on community based organizations for actual service delivery. Because purchase of service contracting is now institutionalized
as a major mode of government human services delivery (Kramer, 1993; Kettner and Martin, 1994), anything—such as performance measurement—that directly affects government human service agencies also indirectly affects community based organizations.

Major Performance Measurement Initiatives

Several major performance measurement initiatives launched in the last few years have implications for the human services. These initiatives can be classified into three broad categories: federal government initiatives, state and local government initiatives, and private sector initiatives.

Federal Government Initiatives

The Government Performance & Results Act (GPRA) (Public Law 103–62) mandates that beginning with fiscal year 1999, all federal departments and agencies must begin reporting performance measurement data on their various programs. GPRA may be the most important of the major performance measurement initiatives because it is a federal law with widespread direct and indirect implications. While GPRA directly affects only federal departments and agencies, state and local governments as well as community based organizations are indirectly affected. For example, many of programs operated under the auspices of the Department of Health & Human Services (HHS), the Department of Labor (DOL), and the Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD) are actually implemented by state and local governments and community based organizations. The only way federal departments like HHS, DOL and HUD can comply with the provisions of GPRA is to require state and local governments and community based organizations to also collect and report performance measurement data.

A second major federal performance measurement initiative is The National Performance Review (NPR). The NPR is the federal incarnation of the “reinventing government” movement as espoused by David Osborne and Ted Gaebler in their influential book Reinventing Government (Osborne & Gaebler, 1992). One of the major tenets of Reinventing Government is: what gets measured, gets done. The reinventing government activities of the NPR have
given added impetus to the implementation of GPRA and to performance measurement.

A third major federal performance measurement initiative is the efforts of the federal Department of Health & Human Services (HHS). In order to comply with the provisions of both GPRA and NPR, HHS has launched its own performance measurement initiative called "performance partnership grants." The intent of HHS is to develop sets of standardized performance measures for all programs over which it has operating authority. To accomplish this objective, HHS plans to enter into a series of national dialogues with state and local governments and community based organizations to arrive at consensus performance measures. The first products produced by HHS are a set of proposed standardized performance measures for public health programs (HHS, 1996) and an overall strategic plan (HHS, 1997).

State & Local Government Initiatives

The Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) is the organization that establishes what are known as generally accepted accounting principles for state and local governments. For the past several years, GASB has been experimenting with what it calls service efforts and accomplishments (SEA) reporting. The idea behind SEA reporting is to have state and local governments routinely collect and report performance measurement data about their programs in addition to the financial information that GASB already requires (GASB, 1994).

SEA reporting is the most fully developed of all the major performance measurement initiatives in that it represents a complete system with its own specific methodology. Currently, SEA reporting is still in the experimental stage, but it could well become mandatory by the year 2000. When SEA reporting becomes mandatory, state and local governments will be directly affected and community based organizations will be indirectly affected. The only way that state and local governments will be able to satisfy the requirements of SEA reporting will be to require their contractors, including community based organizations, to also collect and report performance measurement data.

Numerous state and local governments have launched their own performance measurement initiatives. Some initiatives, such as those of Florida (Florida OPPAGA, 1997a; 1997b) and Maine
(Harris and Nicholas, 1996) are attempts to replicate *The Government Performance & Results Act* (GPRA) at the state level. Other initiatives, such as those of Arizona (State of Arizona 1996) and Texas (Texas State Auditor’s Office, 1995) combine elements of both GPRA and SEA reporting. Still other initiatives take the form of state and community level benchmarking programs.

State and community benchmarking programs consist of sets of social indicators for which states and communities have established goals or benchmarks. A social indicator can be described as a measure of some social, economic, health, or other condition of a state or community that is monitored over time. For example, a social indicator used in several benchmarking programs is: the proportion of children under the age of two that are fully immunized. Each state and community has an immunization benchmark (e.g., 90%) that it hopes to achieve over time. Three of the better known state benchmarking programs are: “Minnesota Milestones,” (Minnesota Planning, 1996), “Oregon Benchmarks,” (Oregon Progress Board, 1996a, 1996b), and “Florida Benchmarks” (Florida CGAP, 1996). The State of Florida has the dubious distinction of having two state performance measurement initiatives. All of the state performance initiatives noted above will directly affect state agencies, including human service agencies, and have the potential to indirectly affect community based organizations operating under state funded purchase of service contracts.

**Private Sector Initiatives**

While originally conceptualized as an approach to performance accountability in government programs, performance measurement has also caught on in the private sector. Two major performance measurement initiatives coming out of the private sector are managed care and the recent efforts of the United Way of American. While it is difficult to classify the various managed care programs, one characteristics they all share is a concern for performance measurement and performance accountability. These twin notions appeared first in health care and are now finding their way into the human services.

The United Way of America has recently launched yet another private sector performance measurement initiative with release of its publication, *Measuring Program Outcomes: A Practical Approach*
Any community based organization that receives funding from a managed care provider or the United Way of America can anticipate eventually being required to collect and report performance measurement data.

What Gets Measured?

What gets measured refers to the dimensions of performance that are assessed and to their relative importance. As mentioned previously, performance measurement was originally conceptualized as consisting of three relatively equal dimensions: efficiency (output), quality, and effectiveness (outcome). The original intent has been altered somewhat. When it comes to dimensions, the major performance measurement initiatives vary in some interesting and important ways (See Figure 1).

The Government Performance & Results Act (GPRA) is concerned with all three traditional dimensions (efficiency, quality, and effectiveness) of performance, but places more emphasis on effectiveness (outcome). The National Performance Review (NPR) is likewise concerned with all three traditional dimensions of performance, but tends to place more emphasis on quality. The federal Department of Health & Human Services's (HHS) performance partnership grants initiative includes the three traditional dimensions of performance, but adds two others: “process” (e.g., number of clients served) and “capacity” (i.e., state actions to move toward output and outcome performance measurement). The stated reason for adding these additional dimensions is the current inability, according to HHS, of many state and local governments and community based organizations to collect and report data on efficiency, quality, and effectiveness (HHS, 1996).

The Governmental Accounting Standards Board’s SEA reporting initiative uses all three traditional dimensions of performance, but includes two others: efficiency ratios (cost per unit of service) and effectiveness ratios (cost per outcome). The various state performance measurement initiatives, both benchmarking and non-benchmarking approaches, include such dimensions as: input (i.e., measures of resources, e.g.: budget and full time equivalent positions), process, capacity, efficiency, quality, effectiveness, efficiency ratios and effectiveness ratios.
In terms of the private sector performance measurement initiatives, the various managed care programs tend to focus on all three traditional dimensions of performance, but place more emphasis on efficiency (output). Conversely, the United Way of
America initiative focuses only on the dimensions of quality and effectiveness (outcome) to the exclusion of efficiency (output). Additionally, the United Way of America initiative does not treat quality and effectiveness (outcome) as distinct dimensions, but rather refers to both as “outcome indicators.”

Performance measurement has clearly strayed from its original conceptualization: a structured method by which government programs communicate with their stakeholders. The original conceptualization of performance measurement is decidedly at odds with current practices. Performance measurement has become a sort of catch all term used to describe a number of differing public and private sector approaches to performance accountability.

Deja Vu All Over Again

The human services have long suffered from the failure of management improvement efforts—like management by objectives (MBO), zero-base budgeting (ZBB), total quality management (TQM), and others—to be implemented in a comprehensive and coordinated fashion. This failure has less to do with the human services and more to do with the tendency of government and private sector funding organizations to view management improvement efforts from their own narrow agency and program perspectives. For the human services, the result has been a dismal history of: incompatible computer systems, differing financial and program reporting requirements, contradictory contracting and grant obligations, duplicative financial accounting and auditing standards, conflicting monitoring and evaluation procedures, and the list goes on and on. When it comes to the current rush to measure performance, one gets the impression that history is repeating itself.

Implications For Human Service Agencies

The various performance measurement initiatives detailed above have numerous implications for human service agencies. Some implications are immediate; others are more long term.

The major immediate implication is that performance measurement is real and is not going away. Human service agencies that ignore performance measurement do so at their own risk.
Another immediate implication of performance measurement is the need for better programmatic and financial information. Human service agencies will necessarily have to track and report—at a minimum—a variety of data on program efficiency, (outputs), quality, and effectiveness (outcomes). To deal with these data requirements, human service agencies will need to have in place automated program reporting systems. Performance measurement data will also have to be linked with financial data in order to derive the efficiency and effectiveness ratios required by SEA reporting. Consequently, human service agencies will have to adopt performance budgeting practices and to automate their financial systems in order to track and report costs by program.

In terms of long term implications, performance measurement has the potential to significantly affect resource allocation decisions not only between human service programs and agencies but also between the human services and other competing societal needs (e.g., health care, transportation, the environment, etc.). It seems likely that at some point in the not too distant future performance measurement data will be used to make funding decisions. Those human service agencies that perform will be rewarded; those that do not will suffer the consequences.

Summary and Conclusion

What will be the future of performance measurement? Will additional performance measurement initiatives appear on the scene? Will new dimensions of performance be identified and added to the current inventory? The answer to these questions is far from clear. What is clear, however, is that performance measurement has major implications for the human services.

Given the importance of performance measurement, agency administrators, advocacy groups, clients and others concerned about the human services need to become informed and knowledgeable about this rapidly developing policy area. Toward this end, Figure 2 identifies several INTERNET World Wide Web sites that can be accessed in order to learn more about the performance measurement initiatives discussed in this article and to stay abreast of the latest breaking developments.
Figure 2

*Performance Measurement Related World Wide Web (WWW) Sites*

Arizona Governor's Office of Management & Budget
<http://www.state.az.us/ospb/> (for Arizona's approach to performance measurement select: master list of state programs)

Department of Health & Human Services

Financial Accounting Foundation
<http://www.nan.shh.fi/raw/fasb/faf.htm> (for GASB SEA reporting documents)

Financial Network <http://www.financenet.gov/> (for case studies on performance measurement, state benchmarking programs and links to other performance measurement related www sites)

Florida Commission on Government Accountability to the People
<http://mailer.fsu.edu/~spap/research/gapp/gapp.html> (for Florida Benchmarks select: tables of recommended indicators for proposed topics)

Florida Office of Program Policy Analysis & Government Accountability
<http://www.state.fl.us/oppaga/> (for Florida's other approach to performance measurement select: performance-based program budgeting)

General Accounting Office <http://www.goa.gov/> (for reports on GPRA)

State of Maine's Strategic Planning Office
<http://www.state.me.us/spo/stratpla/> (for Maine's approach to performance measurement)

Minnesota Planning Office <http://156.98.2.36/> (for Minnesota Milestones)

Texas Legislative Budget Board <http://lbb.state.tx.us/> (for Texas's approach to performance measurement, look under: reporting and user documents for strategic planning)

The National Academy of Public Administration
<http://www.relm.lmi.org/napa/> (for federal, state and local government activities and publications dealing with performance measurement)

*continued*
The National Performance Review <http://www.npr.gov/> (for GPRA, the National Performance Review (NPR), and links to other performance measurement sites).

United Way of America <http://www.unitedway.org> (select: resource network on outcome measurement)

Note: www URL addresses and the accompanying notations were correct as of 12/03/97.

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Oregon Progress Board. (1996a) Governing for Results: Using Benchmarks to Define & Measure Progress Toward Strategic Priorities. Salem, OR: Author.
“Safe Places to Go and Things to Do”: Political Texts from Urban Youth of Color

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This paper is the first to examine the political texts of urban youth of color. It presents their assessments of what kinds of policies and programs would improve their lives.

Urban youth of color are presented as one of our nation’s major threats. Assumed “gang-related” and mythologized on “real-life” TV shows, young men and women of color are constructed as a surly, silent foe of America. Scholars have recently turned their attention to championing youth of color in a variety of ways: Jonathan Kozol [1991, 1995], Alex Kotlowitz [1991], Greg Donaldson [1993], and Darrell Dawsey [1995] have brought us rich and sympathetic ethnographies. Martín Sánchez Jankowski [1991], Joan Moore [1991], and Felix Padilla [1991] have explored and explained the political economic realities that produce and shape gang activity. Robert Coles [1986] has engaged deeply with young peoples’ psyches, showing them to be brave, generous, and wise about the political events of their nations. Lisa Delpit [1995] and many others have taken us inside schools and shown us what is happening to youth of color there. Youthworkers Arturo Hernandez [1995] and Joe Marshall [1996] have provided a crucial perspective by sharing insights from their important work with youth on the street. These works make valuable points about the role of oppression in the lives of young people, about youths’ struggles for good lives, and about the opportunities for institutional change that could vastly improve the lives of urban youth of color. However, since Carlos Muñoz’ 1989 Youth, Identity, and Power, few scholars have presented American urban youth of color with such a rich and sympathetic analysis of their political texts.
color as political actors. Perhaps Tricia Rose comes closest in *Black Noise* [1994], an exploration of the politics of rap as it is wielded by youth of color.

This paper presents the findings of a discourse analysis of what I call "youth political texts"—youth newspapers, political and policy statements, and youth-written votes and surveys. These materials are important because they provide youths' collective, negotiated, and dialogic representations of their political positions. I requested materials from any program that provided a medium for youth to give voice to their own views of what needs to happen to improve their lives and their communities. The texts I analyzed were produced by youth between the ages of 9 and 22 working in 34 youth leadership programs in 10 cities. They included several issues each of 11 different newspapers written by youth, as well as program newsletters, press releases and other public statements written by youth, surveys conducted by youth, and articles written about youths' political actions. I call the method "discourse analysis" because this unusual data is composed of such a variety of types of documents. Rather than pursuing strict content analysis, I read the texts for discursive themes. One of the interesting findings from this discourse analysis is the degree of unanimity among urban youth of color across the country regarding policies on crime, education, and the role of adults and community organizations. I also draw on interviews with youthworkers which were conducted in fourteen cities during 1993. [Starr 1994]

Why is it necessary to write a study that shows that youth of color have something to say? Historically people of color and children have been constructed as mute and unprepared to participate in self-governance. The combination of these customs with the sensationalized fear of youth crime has produced a dangerous situation in which youth of color are both brutalized and silenced. In an effort to protect them, many of us who wish to help collaborate in their silencing. A tiny minority of youth-serving organizations have organized their programs to enable youth to produce knowledge and to give voice politically. That the following discourse exists at all is due to their visionary work.

Too much of even the most sympathetic youthwork is organized around defending youths' willingness to conform to the
system, if just given the chance. What has happened such that this is the most we hope for them? This study presents a glimpse of how well youth can analyze their own situation and how intelligently they can fashion and present solutions to their problems.

Jobs

According to youth who participated in the Mayor’s Youth Development Task Force in Chicago, the second most important way to “improve the lives of young people” is to give teens “a chance to build working skills in their communities.” When asked how the city should spend new funds for youth, 46% of the 5000 San Francisco high school participants in Youth Vote 1994 chose “more jobs and training”. [Coleman Advocates for Youth, San Francisco] This was the top vote-getter of several options and in some neighborhoods received up to 62% of the vote. When youth from East Bay Asian Youth Center (EBAYC) asked 511 Asian and Pacific Islander Oakland youth ages 12 to 17 what three things would most help young people stay away from violence, the top answer was jobs. The second answer was safe places to get job training. Former Attorney General Janet Reno also believed that job training was essential to addressing youth violence, but she said nothing about the provision of living wage jobs to trainees. [in Children’s Express 1994: 16]

Youth at the Boston Children and Youth Advocacy Day in 1994 said that the way to reduce violence in communities is for the government to “supply teens with jobs that help young people to gain skills and that pay enough to support single and parenting teens (not just flipping burgers).” Youth recommended work that would benefit the community, like rehabilitating “burned-out buildings and convert[ing] them into apartments or youth centers.” The jobs should also help youth “get experience in a field of interest (paid internships at hospitals for aspiring doctors).”

Empowered Youth Educating Society (EYES), a youth policy group, puts jobs as the first point in their violence-reduction policy platform: “Well paying jobs should be available to all young people. Our society must view it as a responsibility to make sure that all young people have a chance (at least) to survive in our economic system.” Researchers have documented that
“gainful employment” is one of the strongest deterrents to youth criminality. [Elliott 1994, Sampson & Lamb 1993]

Safe Places to Go and Things to Do

Open up more recreation programs 24 hours a day. . . . If it was up to me, this place would be open 24 hours a day, staffed 24 hours a day. . . . with sports activities, culture activities, bands, music, and food.

Youthworker Ray Balberan

Eighty one percent of youth who participated in Youth Vote 1994 agreed that “youth violence would be reduced if kids had ‘more safe places to go and things to do’ ” (in some neighborhoods 89% of youth agreed with this statement). When asked in another question what would make them “feel safer after school and on weekends”, the highest vote getter on a list of options was “safe places to go and things to do”. According to youth who participated in the Mayor’s Youth Development Task Force in Chicago, the most important “way to improve the lives of young people” is “a citywide system of centers where youth and their families can go to find safe activities.” [Addae 1994] The third highest response to EBAYC’s survey of what would help youth stay away from violence was “safe places to have a good time”. The second point on EYES’ violence-prevention policy platform is enough community centers so that there are community centers available to all young people at all hours. Centers should be organized and directed by young people, and adults should work with young people every step of the way in order to offer information, encouragement, and confidence in the capabilities of youth. The centers should be safe places that are free and public, and there should be funding available to have interesting programming that addresses the needs of the young people in that community. Resources should also be available to make sure that all programs are publicized well, so that young people are aware of what is happening. Schools are possible places for community centers to be housed.

The issue of hours of availability is central. Youthworkers and programs are moving toward 24 hour recreational facilities in
order to extend the availability of safe "alternatives to the streets". YMAC's Youth Vote 1993 found that expanding public library hours to Sunday so that students have a place to do homework over the weekend is more important to high school students than refurbishing the facilities or buying new books. YouthVote 1994 asked how the city should spend new funds for youth. The second highest vote getter (after jobs) was "more youth centers for fun activities", with 24% of the vote. Personal/career counseling got 13%, tutoring and other school help got 12%, and community service opportunities got 5%.

In Youth Vote, youth rated the three most important thing that would get them to go to a youth program. The quality of the facilities is as important as the activities offered within them. Youth will go somewhere where their friends go, because they want to hang out with people that they like. Other questions on the ballot confirmed that youths' most common and most preferred after-school activity is hanging out and talking with friends, winning easily over sports/athletic, TV and video games, and shopping or hanging out at the mall or wharf. So developing an appealing program means attracting groups of youth who are friends and making the program a new social center.

Another question on the ballot asked youth what facility youth would like to see the city develop in the next year. A teen entertainment center with videos, pool tables, ping-pong, bowling, etc. got 40% of the vote, a teen nightclub got 33% (up to 72% in some schools). The less popular options were a recording studio for teens interested in music industry, a theater which features plays written and performed by teens, and a teen cafe. Teen nightclubs, teen nights at adult clubs, and non-profit substance-free teen parties like "Friday Night Live" have been successful, attracting many youths and remaining safe.

Youth Vote 1994 also asked youth what kind of equipment is most important to have at a youth center. 21% said computers (up to 28% in some neighborhoods), table games like ping pong and pool also got 21%, weight training got 16% (ranging from 9% to 29%), swimming pool got 14%. The least popular types of equipment were video/filmmaking, art studio, lounge with comfortable chairs, and video games.
Sixty-eight percent of youth are "willing to help develop the program" for the new youth center. And finally, Youth Vote found some exciting news which could help with youth programs' funding dilemmas. Even though 60% of youth have never been to an after-school program, 68% of youth are willing to pay "a small fee (like $5/month) for quality recreational, educational, or other after-school programs". In some neighborhoods 79% of youth are willing to pay.

AIDS Education, Sex Education, and Condoms in Schools

According to Youth Vote 1993 high school students had "more unanimity" on sex-related issues than any other issue: 92% said that AIDS education should be mandatory. 89% said condoms should be distributed in schools. 66% said that counseling should be mandatory for each student the first time they are given condoms.

According to Planned Parenthood, 85% of Americans agree that sex education should be taught in public schools. Planned Parenthood also found that teens who have had a comprehensive sex education course at school are more likely to use birth control regularly. Youth conclusions at the Children’s and Youth Advocacy Day in Boston stressed that sex education be taught well and made interesting "so teens will listen and understand what to be careful about." Youth at this forum also proposed that condom distribution become a new community norm. Not only schools should distribute condoms to youth, but also outreach groups and parents.

According to a Youth Outlook! (YO!) survey, 63% of "teens" use condoms. According to important studies of young gay men's safe sex behavior, accurate knowledge about AIDS transmission and safe sex practices aren't enough to cause young men to change their behavior. These studies find that the education approach must eroticize safe sex in order to increase condom use rates. [Kegeles, Coates & Hays 1991] The same approach is probably necessary to get young people to use condoms consistently.

Youth Victory on Issues Concerning Empowerment (VOICE) of Washington D.C. and many other advocates assert that "abstinence is an unrealistic option for many young people. So as many
adults choose to make this a moral issue, young people are not listening, and more and more teens are dying." They agree that condoms should be handed out in schools "in conjunction with information via video, pamphlet, and guest speakers." They also endorse daycare in schools to support teen mothers.

School and Education Issues

Another issue on which youth political texts showed unanimity was the need for more teachers of color and teachers from the community. This is the highest priority for educational change. Schools that serve urban youth need teachers of color, teachers with bilingual abilities, and "teachers with a love for teaching, with love for the job."

A second main area of concern is seriousness and respect for youth. In explaining why youth are "not interested in education", Youth VOICE listed the very first factor as "facilities are dilapidated, damp, drafty, and dark." Youthworker John Nauer says "a nice school, it made you wanna come to school. But when you come to a school . . . it's dirty . . . most kids get turned off." Youth VOICE recommends refurbishing all schools with designs and ideas from students.

Youth feel disrespected by school administrators' unwillingness to clean up filthy, inoperative, and unsafe bathrooms. Schools blame youth for the conditions of bathrooms. Students can't understand why they are different from users of any other bathrooms, which are allocated resources for cleaning and repair. In an article in YO!, youth described how young entrepreneurs are making money by providing shuttle services back and forth to the nearest McDonald's so students can use the restrooms there.

Youth also feel extremely disrespected by the unavailability of books and the use of outdated books. The lack of books is often listed as a sign of injustice in the school system.

Youth propose that schools be reorganized. Some propose that schools should be smaller and should be modeled on the "community schools" or "Beacon schools" idea, in which schools are centers for community services, provide adult as well as youth education, house community meetings, and are open for recreational and club activities until late at night. [see Day 1994]
Staffed by AmeriCorps youth, the Morton McMichael School in Mantua, West Philadelphia now "stays open until 9:00 p.m. four nights a week and all day on Saturdays. [Goldsmith 1995] Youth VOICE explains that schools should be community centers, which would mean that "every person in the school must be trained on how to be effective counselors, and not just lecturers." YouthVote asked youth "if a school in your neighborhood was open every night (including weekends) and had all kinds of fun activities for teens, would you go?" 71% of students said "yes", and in some neighborhoods over 90% said "yes".

Youth also speak out against rules that exclude students from activities if their grades aren't good; this policy alienates some youth from school even more because they feel it's impossible to make it. Grade floors may exclude youth from the only parts of school that keep them there at all (extracurriculars and sports). Grade punishments become a burden when youth try to apply for jobs and when they start applying for drivers licenses and insurance.

The third main area of concern to youth and youthworkers is the need for the curriculum to be responsive to different racial and ethnic groups. High school students are walking out to protest lack of ethnically responsive curriculum. [Sanchez 1994] Along with the necessity of a multi-cultural curriculum, youth see that schools have the responsibility to do broader public education work on issues of race/ethnic diversity, sexuality, and gender. In discussing "diversity" issues in their schools, students tend to agree that they see interracial relations and relationships as a way to "learn". But they believe the schools have a responsibility to provide events and educational sessions to help students understand each other and get to know each other.

The other major curricular issue youth raise is the issue of practical "relevance". Youth VOICE says "Students do not feel they are learning anything of value . . . there seems to be minimal, if any, relevance in the student's life." It's not enough for teachers and other adults to say that a subject is important, they have to show why and how it's important. This is also expressed as a pedagogic issue. Youth VOICE says "Students feel that teachers are out-of-touch with reality. Many teachers are tenured and/or older and are not familiar with the 'new youth order', where
lectures are no go and students like to see, rather than hear.” In an article called “What Can Be Done to Make School Interesting?” in New Youth Connections, students commented on pedagogy, critiquing teachers who don’t provide hands on activities and opportunities for students to answer questions. They say teachers shouldn’t be surprised when students “fall asleep, daydream, or just simply get annoyed” when faced with a lecture. Alexie Torres of El Puente says “Teens learn best in the streets, not in traditional classrooms.” A student at the extremely successful Community-as-School Program says “A lot of grown-ups seem to think we aren’t learning if we aren’t strapped to a desk!” [Checkoway 1992] At New Visions school in New York, students will be included in curricula design. “We’re gonna be the leaders”, says Jessica Burgos.

Youth VOICE says that current programs for training and recertification of teachers are inadequate because “it is unclear what new things they are learning”. Teachers need to be learning about technology, discussion groups, peer counseling methods, and experiential curricula. Finally, students say that schools should “demand more” of their corporate “partners”.

Youths’ views on schools are probably not surprising to most educators. What is useful about reviewing youths’ statements is how they clarify that students can be political allies in the struggles for funding, facilities, and teacher training.

Violence Prevention

Youths’ top two proposals for violence prevention, jobs and safe places with safe activities at all hours, have already been discussed here. This section now turns to the other ideas that have been put forth for violence prevention.

What’s important to look at on the youth surveys is not only the top three answers, but what didn’t win out. In the EBAYC survey, more jobs, safe places to get education or job training, and safe places to have a good time won out over former Attorney General Janet Reno’s “adults to talk to” about personal & family problems [in Children’s Express 1994: 16] and also over the following: Better understanding between racial and ethnic groups; better understanding between males and females; teenagers helping younger children with their schoolwork and teaching them
not to get in trouble; eliminating guns; more cultural and sports activities; more police to patrol schools and neighborhoods; not having as many liquor stores around; and keeping people who commit crimes in jail longer. EBAYC survey designers also had the brilliance to ask youth which three things would have the least effect in helping young people stay away from violence. The answers: eliminate guns, hire more police to patrol schools and neighborhoods, not have as many liquor stores around. In Youth Vote 1994 on the question asking youth what would make them feel safer, “more police” received low scores (between 19% and 31%, depending on the neighborhood).

EBAYC’s results on gun control are very interesting. They contradict the findings of LH Research, which found that 57% of young people support immediate banning of handguns for young people. [Lou Harris in Children’s Express 1994: 31] Youth VOICE recommends reducing gun availability, increasing waiting periods, requiring frequent recertification, and holding manufacturers and stores liable for some killings. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends banning civilian ownership of handguns, and is working to “help families and communities choose safer means of self-protection.” Their “message is that it is possible to protect children or guns, but not both.” [Dr. Katherine Christoffel in Children’s Express 1994: 37] Some people are concerned about the implications of banning guns. We are witnessing the development of police-state conditions in urban neighborhoods where people of color live. Certain populations are becoming policed and jailed populations. Banning private ownership of weapons would increase the imbalance of power in those conditions. People would have no defense against a growing police/military state. While youth may not see gun control as the solution, this does not mean they are arming themselves to create a sense of safety. Only 12% of Youth Vote 1994 respondents said that having a gun or weapon to defend themselves would make them feel safer.

Only 14% of Youth Vote 1994 respondents said more conflict resolution would help. This low rating for conflict resolution in YouthVote is interesting in light of the fact that conflict resolution has been so widely touted as a solution to youth problems by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [Satcher in Children’s
Safe Places 85

Express 1994: 41] and others. EYES supports conflict resolution in schools because it is a way to provide jobs for teens, which is a top priority. But they explain that conflict resolution doesn’t address the root causes of violence. They insist that money for “drug free zones” and the police departments’ DARE program in the schools should be spent instead to hire youth to do this work.

EYES worked with Teens on Target, Youth of Oakland United, Children of War, and the Youth Empowerment Project in bi-weekly coalition meetings to develop a proposal for school safety by and for Oakland students that was presented to the Oakland School Board. They identified the usual cause of violence at school as disputes carried onto campus by non-students. So the motivation behind their plan is to provide safety without treating students as criminals. Police should only be used on campus if they are “trained to mediate in a non-confrontational way.” Generally, having police on campus “creates tension and an atmosphere of oppression.” [Apter & Goldstein 1986] Campus supervisors should be trained in conflict resolution strategies because they “actually cause more conflict than they prevent”. Parent patrols should be avoided because “people end up fighting to defend a parent who has been disrespected by another student.”

The coalition also says that dress codes may be appropriate “for dealing with issues of economic inequality and theft” but do not address “the root causes of violence”. EYES demands that “ALL students should have a say in the decision to restrict freedom of expression” and a role in defining exactly what will be restricted. Apparently the dress code that the District developed “include[d] items that have nothing to do with violence and robbery.”

EBAYC youth also came up with a violence-prevention proposal. They asked the City of Oakland to devote one percent of the general fund budget to programs for youth, which would raise the total spent on youth programs by a factor of ten. EYES’ violence-prevention proposal includes “drastic decrease” of media violence and elimination of stereotypes of youth because “Youth will not stop committing violence if violence is what is expected from them.” To end violence oppression must be addressed, which means “giving every human being good support . . . and the possibility of having a good life.” It also means including young
people in making rules and laws and full participation in the political system.

Youth and youthworkers agree that youth should have a much greater role in developing the violence-prevention strategies. Sherman Spears of Youth Alive!/Teens on Target says "I really wish that kids were given more opportunity to be involved in the solution for violence because they are the ones that are most at risk and they genuinely know what needs to be done to reduce the violence that affects their lives." [in Children's Express 1994: 38] Domico Curry of Seattle Youth Involvement says "you need an understanding from youth that they can make a difference." [23] Spears and Curry were both involved in violence before becoming youthworkers.

Dealing with violence will require a complex set of policies that address youths' many legitimate needs, their communities' disempowerment, and the U.S.' relationships with its own citizens and with those of other countries, particularly as an increasing proportion of urban youth are refugees from drug wars and other U.S. military operations in Latin America.

Police & Courts

Youth propose that police, like teachers, need to be from the community. Some just say "We need more cops of color!" [Children's and Youth Advocacy Day]. Others say that police must be required to live in the community. A youthworker says "Local police. They have to live in the neighborhood. That would help us because we get a lot of police brutality where the kids get beat up a lot by the police here."

Youth at Children's and Youth Advocacy Day presented two police problems that need to be addressed. First the police "assume that everyone with a beeper is a drug dealer" and second, people "have to wait hours for police to answer our calls." It seems that the police have their own priorities and interpretations of public safety that do not match the expectations of the people in the communities they "serve."

Youth Vote 1994 asked youth what the mission of the Youth Guidance Center (the local facility for detention of youth who have committed crimes) should be. Sixty nine percent of youth
said it should be rehabilitation rather than punishment. At some schools 93% of students voted for rehabilitation. Youthworkers are also interested in the development of alternatives to incarceration, particularly education programs.4

Youth themselves are providing a solution to gangs through the truce movement. Youth say “We started this mess, now we got to clean it up.” Some of the truce organizations are involved in entrepreneurship development programs. Unfortunately, many adults are not in support. Police officers take credit for reductions in violence achieved by gang truces. Chicago’s “major media, municipal officials and the police department have all criticized the gang peace summit as a scam designed to give credibility to what is essentially a criminal enterprise.” [Muwakkil 1993] Youthworkers, policymakers, social service agencies, adults, and youth need to support the gang truces in every possible way.

Conclusion

The policy implications of this research support the conclusions of many other researchers. Racism is an incredibly destructive force that looms large in youths’ lives, institutionalized and condoned by schools, police forces, courts, and our national and local economies. Dignified employment opportunities may be the single most powerful policy that could be brought to bear on the situation of youth of color. AIDS education in schools is essential. Schools must teach the histories of people of color and hire teachers of color. Youth need safe places and activities in their communities at all hours. Police must live in the communities they patrol. Criminal justice must be focused on developing the people in its care. Gang prevention should follow the lead of gang members’ own approach to peace. This study of youth political texts shows that young people of color can make and present policy analyses and proposals to address the urgent issues in their lives and communities.

The federal 1994 AmeriCorps funding gave no grants to organizations “to organize politically, or assault more intractable social ills.” Applicants had to argue that the service would produce “direct and demonstrable results.” Even staff of AmeriCorps are torn between solving individual problems and working for
institutional change. A staff member tells the parable of saving babies from the river and eventually going upstream to find out why there are babies in the river. Nobody would want to let the babies drown in favor of searching out the cause. But it's one thing to catch the babies while wading upstream to the source. It's another thing for youth-serving organizations to put an incredible amount of energy into competing with one another for funding for their baby-catching technology while leaving the political challenges unmade. “It's not just the deaths that we need to be concerned about, it's the loss of outrage.” [John Calhoun, Exec Dir of Youth as Resources, in Children's Express 1994: 34]

Yakini Ajanaku, a Boston youthworker, explains that programs must understand their challenge as more than just enabling youth to survive the environment and resist the temptation of the streets: “Making it...only means that they got into the system. The tragedy about the [ones who do is] they aren’t equipped to come back out and help the other[s].” Ajanaku’s idea is that individual development must be defined as developing the ability to contribute to the community’s struggle for transformative change.

The Black Panthers and the Young Lords spent the morning providing breakfast for children and the rest of the day in militant activities confronting racist and classist structures. Meeting needs and struggling for political change were seen as equally urgent by these community development organizations. Organizations that support youth in producing political texts provide meaningful activity in a safe place that develops their political skills, attempting to prepare young people to change the things that need to be changed.

Notes

1. This approach was developed in response to the insightful criticism of Michael James and the suggestions of Christina Valdez.
2. The term ‘teen’ is frequently used by youth policy organizations. We will use it when referring to statements made specifically about this group. Otherwise, we will continue to use ‘youth’.
3. Youth VOICE is a youth policy leadership group associated with The Entrepreneurial Development Institute. Their policy proposals were developed from a series of speak outs (at which no one over the age of 30 could speak) and planning meetings.
4. The following organizations are advocating for alternative sentencing: National Center on Institutions and Alternatives, Alexandria VA, Campaign for an Effective Crime Policy, Washington DC.

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Kegeles, Susan, Thomas Coates, Robert Hays. 1991. “Understanding the high rates of HIV risk-taking among young gay and bisexual men: The Young Men’s Survey”, paper presented at the VII International Conference on AIDS, Florence Italy. This knowledge has been known and used by gay men in materials and workshops since 1981.


Starr, Amory. 1994. It Takes the Whole Village: Beyond the War on Youth in Urban Communities. unpublished book manuscript.
The gap between knowledge generated by systematic inquiry and its eventual use by practitioners has been a concern in social work for several decades. Explanations for the gap have been identified as the orientation or attitudes of practitioners, the character of professional education, and the nature of scientific inquiry. The structural character of both practice itself and its knowledge base have been overlooked as an explanation. By comparing legal and social work practice, we suggest that characteristics of social work practice and knowledge also impede research utilization.

The gap between knowledge generated by systematic inquiry and its eventual use by practitioners has been a concern in social work for several decades. There are several explanations for this gap. Practitioners have been faulted for their ignorance of research methodology and statistics (Weed & Greenwald, 1973; Witkin, Edleson, & Lindsey, 1980; Taylor, 1990; Lazer, 1990; Glisson & Fischer, 1987; Task Force, 1991), their anti-intellectual and anti-research attitudes (Eaton, 1962), and their reading of few scientific articles (Kirk, Osmalov & Fischer, 1976; Kirk & Fischer, 1976).

Some argue that practitioners have not been taught to appreciate scientific inquiry and its usefulness (Bloom & Fischer, 1982; Blythe & Tripodi, 1989). In response, faculty of schools of social work have revised the master’s curriculum, and added
practice-oriented research content and experiences. New research methodologies, such as single system designs and rapid assessment instruments, were developed to allow greater practitioner involvement in research (Blythe, Briar & Tripodi, 1995). Social workers educated in the new orientation and methods were expected to overcome the barriers to using research that impeded previous generations of practitioners (Kirk and Penka, 1992).

Other authors have questioned whether the high level of generalizability that makes knowledge statements professionally worthy is congruous with practice relevant knowledge that must focus on client-specific variables (Rosen, 1994). For example, the development of generalizable knowledge through scientific inquiry is an uncertain and time-consuming process. Researchers are trained to be skeptical and cautious. What they eventually report in articles is meant to be considered tentative until there is replication by others in different settings, using other populations. Only through this lengthy process do findings get refined, properly qualified and placed in their niche in the body of knowledge. Since this may take years, it is understandable that practitioners do not pay much attention to academic articles that offer provisional findings. Even if practitioners did wade through technically-laden articles on narrowly defined topics, there is no certainty they would learn anything useful for their everyday tasks of providing services. The use of research "findings" by practitioners is now recognized to be a much more complex phenomena (Reid & Fortune, 1992).

Legal practitioners, too, have faced criticism by legal scholars. Law students and novice attorneys are faulted for their poor research skills and inability to locate professional knowledge (Howland & Lewis, 1990). Blame is aimed at the law school research curriculum, its low status in the overall structure of legal education, the placement of research courses too early in the course of study, and poor teaching by predominately non-tenured faculty (Berring & Heuvel, 1989; Woxland, 1989). Furthermore, legal practitioners have been criticized for their "quick and dirty" approach to locating knowledge; their unwillingness to find time for scholarly literature, their distaste for expanding knowledge or critiquing existing knowledge and their heavy diet of self-serving
"advocacy research" (Streib, 1988). Attorneys have been criticized for practicing without a clear understanding of legal doctrine and making judgments that are "incompletely theorized" and "unaccompanied by a full apparatus to explain the basis of those judgments" (Sunstein, 1993 p. 747).

Despite criticism that lawyers may be poorly equipped to use the wealth of abstract legal knowledge available to them, they do routinely consult primary sources such as "case law" in their practice. Practice-relevant knowledge derived from case law is concrete and non-theoretical compared with the abstract and doctrinal work produced by legal scholars, but this intermediary body of low level knowledge provides a crucial link in a continuum of both knowledge development and knowledge utilization in the legal profession. Case law provides both pragmatic, idiosyncratic information to legal practitioners and source material for theoreticians and legal scholars.

This intermediary tier of practice-relevant legal knowledge is quite different than in social work. In this paper we explore this difference and how it may help us understand the structural impediments that produce the practice/research gap in social work. To do this, we trace the evolution of case law and how its use is supported by the pedagogical techniques used in legal education, the commercial marketability of legal research tools, the nature of legal practice and the structure of the legal system. We suggest that some of the structural and market characteristics that support knowledge utilization in law are absent in social work practice. Consequently, it may be misleading to explain the gap between research and social work practice on the basis of the orientation or attitudes of practitioners, the character of professional education, or the nature of scientific inquiry.

Professional Similarities

Lawyers and social workers usually function in the context of individual cases. In both professions the initial relationship is directly between the professional helper and the client. In both, clients seek help with problems that are rooted in some sort of conflict. Many clients seek help voluntarily, although some clients are coerced by law and circumstances to seek professional assistance.
Although each client presents a unique set of circumstances, they may share characteristic with other similarly situated clients. Clients frequently have an ill-defined sense that something is wrong, but may be unable to identify precisely the problem without the guidance of the practitioner. The practitioners' role is to help make sense of the facts and circumstances presented by the client and to apply unique professional knowledge and expertise to help solve the client's problem. Both professions use intervention strategies informed by practice wisdom and whatever additional knowledge gathering is deemed professionally necessary. Practitioners' service in both professions may include advice, negotiation or advocacy on behalf of the client and may entail interviews, information gathering, fact finding, and paperwork. Practitioners may be privately or publicly employed and may be paid directly by the client or by a third party.

Professional Differences

In spite of sharing the common goal of producing qualified practitioners, law and social work schools take different educational approaches. While social work programs require substantial hours in the field, working with clients under the dual supervision of agency and academic personnel, law school education offers almost no client contact to its students. Usually, only a small percentage of the student body participates in legal clinics attached to law schools or take skills-oriented classes such as trial advocacy or negotiation. Social work education focuses heavily on an apprenticeship system in which theory is learned in conjunction with practice, while legal education focuses almost exclusively on doctrinal analysis. Professional acculturation of social workers includes the message that social workers can begin "practice" while they are learning the theoretical models for their work. Law students learn that practice starts, not with a live client, but with an analysis of existing theoretical literature.

Both professions use a body of less theoretical and less generalizable material. In social work, traditionally it consists of case studies and, in law it is prior case law. These two sources of knowledge share some common characteristics. They are both practitioner-relevant and client specific. Both make only modest
Knowledge Utilization

claims of generalizability beyond the circumstances reported. They are concrete and non-theoretical. They both present relevant facts, allow for case analysis and report final outcomes.

Despite these similarities of cases, law and social work differ greatly in the importance attached to this knowledge and the role it plays in the work of both practitioners and scholars. In law there is a distinction between primary and secondary legal authority. Case law is included on the list of primary authority, along with such sources as constitutions and statutes, while secondary authority includes the encyclopedias, treatises, and law review articles produced by legal scholars. Primary sources are published separately and are more readily available to practitioners than secondary sources. The fact that lawyers have access to a non-theoretical, case specific body of knowledge is supported by the market and the nature of law, as we will discuss. These structural elements encourage knowledge utilization by practitioners who need only have an intuitive, not theoretical, grasp of the law's structure in order to do their work with individual clients.

In social work, by contrast, there is not a general repository of cases. Each graduate school or professor cobbles together their own cases that may be based on real or fictitious examples. These cases are not published in journals, nor are they necessarily selected because they were important cases in their own right. Whereas lawyers use scholarly journals for secondary material, social workers use them for primary material.

Case law serves an additional role of providing source material for legal scholars interested in doctrinal analysis. Judicial opinions about specific cases, or the problems raised by them, encourage inductive theory development. In social work, there are few published case studies and even the small body of single subject design studies are neither organized for easy analysis nor routinely scrutinized as a body of knowledge to be used in the development of theoretical models for further research.

Training for Knowledge Utilization

Three techniques are used predominantly in American legal education: the casebook method, training in analogous reasoning and the Socratic method. Each of these techniques serves the
dual purpose of cultivating practitioner skills while conveying the message that the practitioner must be grounded in case law literature.

The “casebook”, first introduced as a teaching tool by Professor Christopher Columbus Langdell at Harvard in the late 1800s, consists of judicial decisions accompanied by minimal “casenote” text or commentary and replaced textbooks containing general principles of law. Cases are arranged in a didactic sequence that permits the instructor to guide students in extracting legal doctrine. Cases are selected for inclusion in casebooks either because of their unique “landmark” status (for example, *Roe v. Wade*) or because they illustrate the relatively routine application of standard legal principles (for example, the application of the best interest of the child standard in a child custody matter). Langdell believed that judicial decisions were the very “stuff” of law and “reading them could lead to an intuitive grasp of the law’s structure” (Berring & Heuvel, 1989).

Students are taught to derive legal doctrine from cases using critical thinking techniques, including analogical reasoning: Instructors direct students in comparing the similarities and differences between cases in order to evaluate what factors influenced final outcomes. Students are taught that subtle distinctions in a line of cases define the boundaries of the law. The challenge in analogical reasoning is to decide when differences are relevant (Sunstein, 1993, p. 745). In essence, law students are taught to critically access what factors limit and enhance the generalizability of legal outcomes reported in individual cases.

Finally, legal education usually includes exposure to the Socratic method. Although this teaching method is not universally used in law school, few students graduate without being exposed to it at some point in their law school careers. The Socratic method involves the dynamic interaction between a single student and the professor who questions the student about the parameters of an assigned case in order to etch out the “black letter law”, using analogical reasoning. Although many law students dislike the process, it serves several purposes: it requires preparation and attention to assigned reading; it anchors the students in the text of the case, since answers cannot be concocted from personal opinion; and the public performance prepares fu-
ture practitioners for the experience of facing critical questioning from judges and opposing parties, in a public forum. Students begin to learn to distinguish between personal and intellectual attack, to defend their positions in existing knowledge not personal belief, and to equate preparation and performance with professionalism.

The education of social workers has two major components. The first is classroom learning based on the use of textbooks and journal articles. This material consists of condensations of behavioral science theory regarding human development, the history of the social welfare policies and institutions, and generic theory about social work practice. There is no standard pedagogic approached used in graduate social work schools, nor is there a unified body of knowledge that is conveyed.

The second component is field practicum. From the first semester, students are expected to function as social workers under the careful supervision of an agency practitioner. But there are at least two approaches to field practice. One, the apprenticeship approach, emphasizes the need for students to deduce from practical experience the general theory of social work. The other, the academic approach, emphasizes the student mastering theoretical material in the classroom and using the field practicum to test the material (Wodarski, Feit & Green, 1995). With both approaches, students are encouraged to use their own cases in the classroom and as the basis for written assignments.

Field practica are enormously diverse in social work and heavily dependent on the experience and orientation of the supervisor and the rules, regulations and customs of the specific agency. However well the practice experiences and cases aid the student in becoming a competent practitioner, their specific cases are not available in written form for the learning of others, except perhaps in specific classroom discussion. Moreover, this case material does not form a collection of raw primary material from which scholars can derive general understandings of social work practice. That is, these cases are rarely the primary sources for the elucidation of practice principles by scholars and researchers. Thus, unlike law, social work does not have a method for organizing and selecting these cases as a profession, but carries on in a instructor-by-instructor approach.
The English Common Law and the Use of Precedent

The structure of legal knowledge is inextricably linked to the history of jurisprudence, the substance of law and the development of commercial publishing. The American legal system has its roots in English common law. The notion of a uniformly applied common law of the land slowly replaced dispute resolution based in local custom and was initially an attempt to legitimize the reign of William the Conqueror by using a central legal authority (Brenner, 1990).

A necessary corollary to the development of a common law was the development of legal precedent. References to legal precedent slowly began to replace references to custom as a source of judicial authority during the 16th century. By the 19th century the concept of precedent was firmly entrenched as the legitimizing source of authority for the common law system (Brenner, 1990, p. 472). The doctrine of precedent holds “that legal principles once revealed in a decision by a court should be followed in similar situations in the future” (Berring, 1987, p. 18).

Use of precedent as a legitimizing source for legal authority gave rise to the need for recording judicial proceedings (Brenner, 1990). A variety of legal publications emerged to meet the need for a written record of important decisions. Bracton, one of the itinerant justices of the Kings Court, wrote a treatise on English law between 1250 and 1260 which consisted of carefully selected cases chosen because they illustrated what Bracton believed “the law ought to be” (Brenner, 1990). Year Books, first published in England in 1292 were periodically updated as guides to court procedures. Case reports which were organized written notes taken by court reporters from selected oral decisions, ultimately replaced the Year Books (Brenner, 1990). Drafts of these court reports came to be reviewed by judges who “authorized” them, thereby enhancing the credibility of the report (Brenner, 1990). A system of “standardized” modern case reports emerged in England by 1865 (Brenner, 1990).

The British common law system was transported to the colonies. The American legal system, like its English counterpart, relies on precedent to provide guidance and legitimacy to the law.
Precedent is structurally important to the goals of the legal system which include justice, stability and efficiency. Legal theorists describe precedent as just because it ensures that litigants are judged by the same standards as those who faced similar circumstances before; as stable because precipitous or radical departures from the expected are not favored; and as efficient, because previously solved problems are not reopened with each new case (Llewellyn, 1991; Cardozo, 1921).

Knowledge development through case law is both a conservative and evolutionary process. It is conservative because judges are loathe to disturb a settled point of law (under the doctrine of stare decisis) and it is evolutionary because, as jurist Benjamin Cardozo explained "the rules and principles of case law have never been treated as final truths, but as working hypotheses, continually retested in those great laboratories of the law, the courts of justice" (Cardozo, 1921, p. 23). The notion that individual cases have the dual characteristics of providing resolution or final outcomes for individual litigants while contributing to overall legal doctrine is firmly established in the American legal system.

Early American practitioners relied on English case reports, as well as nominative case reports—which were neither systematic nor comprehensive—and case "notes" recorded by individual case reporters (Berring, 1987, p.19). Selective case reporting in the United States began to lose hold with the enactment of statutes mandating judges to issue written, rather than oral, opinions (Brenner, 1990 p. 492). The late 18th century marked the advent of state-appointed functionaries who replaced volunteers and whose duties consisted of attending judicial proceedings and publishing opinions (Brenner, 1990; Berring, 1987). By the 19th century, most jurisdictions had established a system of "official" reports (Brenner, 1990).

The official reports failed to meet the needs of lawyers practicing during the period of rapid industrialization in the mid-19th century. Case reports, which had become valuable commodities, sometimes took several years to appear in official published form (Brenner, 1990). Private commercial publishers stepped in to meet the growing market demand of practitioners by publishing and distributing reports more quickly. In order to promote
legal knowledge distribution as a viable business commodity, publishers took an aggressive and active interest in stimulating knowledge use among practitioners. The entrance of these private commercial publishing concerns in the late 19th century had a profound effect on the structure of legal knowledge and its use in this country. Currently legal case reports are arranged as they are because of a series of "intellectual and market choices" (Berring & Heuvel, 1989, p. 445).

The West Publishing Company has been at the forefront of the commercial frontier since its establishment in 1876. From its inception, West concentrated on distributing cases quickly, reporting cases accurately, increasing the number of cases available to practitioners and developing innovative features that facilitated legal research (Brenner, 1990). Three West innovations are of particular importance: the introduction of national reporting, the "key number" system and the movement toward comprehensive reporting.

West introduced its national reporting system in 1879 which resulted in a single unified format for reporting all cases (Woxland, 1989). In addition, it created a legal classification schema known as the "key note" system which is consistently used in all West publications. The "key note" system links a comprehensive subject matter supra-structure with a numerical system capable of an endless array of subdivisions. Key words or key numbers allow practitioners to quickly search for relevant cases. The structure is both horizontally (existing in all jurisdictions in every State) and vertically (covering decisions at every level of the appellate structure) consistent. It covers both State and Federal case decisions. It covers criminal and civil law. Therefore the national reporting and key note system unify diverse bodies of knowledge, diverse geographic areas and diverse fields of legal practice under a single classification system.

Some argue that this legal paradigm is the result of the systemic structure imposed by West, that not only transmits legal knowledge but has influenced its very development (Berring, 1987, p. 15). Berring argues that both practitioners and researchers have so internalized the West structure that it has "became the skeleton upon which the rest of the system was built" (Berring, 1987, p. 25).
Finally, the West national reporting system relied on exhaustive case reporting rather than the selective case reporting favored by the English system. This decision resulted in entrepreneurs creating a self-perpetuating market for current legal information, in addition to creating a market for the finding tools necessary to locate information. Thus the notion of precedent, as a concise doctrine or theoretical thread, was largely replaced by a glut of individual and contradictory cases. The trend toward quantity rather than quality led to a nearly insatiable demand for case law by practitioners and contributed to the demise of practicing attorneys being theoreticians and masters of legal doctrine.

**Social Work**

Unlike the structure of legal knowledge with its core theme of precedent and its slow evolution through judicial decisions, there are few descriptions of the structure of social work knowledge or its development. In part, this is due to the diversity of the sources of social work knowledge as Kadushin (1959) observed many years ago:

"The knowledge base of social work is a comprehensive topic which encompasses the facts and theories, skills and attitudes, necessary for effective, efficient practice. The literature which details what the social worker needs to know, to do, and to feel is almost embarrassingly rich" (p. 38).

One can get the flavor of this richness by examining the curriculum policy statements and accreditation guidelines of the Council on Social Work Education about what social workers should know about human behavior and the social environment, practice methods, policies and services, research and fields of practice. Or one could get an overview of social work knowledge by scanning the *Encyclopedia of Social Work* (Edwards, 1995), issued periodically by the National Association of Social Workers, which represents a serious attempt to cover this board territory.

But these attempts to describe current social work knowledge do so by cataloguing facts, theories and studies pertaining to a diverse, uneven and fractured domain (Tucker, 1996). They do not represent an expression of an overarching, systematic classification that allows for the incorporation of new knowledge.
such as exists in law. The elements of social work knowledge that Kadushin listed are scattered across more than 30 fields of practice and among micro, mezzo and macro levels of practice. Social work knowledge is not linked in any systematic way, nor does it necessarily develop evenly or through any established, sanctioned process. For example, the "key words" which accompany articles submitted to journals are selected, not by the editor of the journal in a process aimed at standardizing knowledge organization, but rather by the authors themselves who have at least as much interest in creating unique words which will set their work apart as they have in using words that standardize it and bring it within some pre-existing structure. Similarly, the *Encyclopedia of Social Work*, not only adds new sections, but can also reorganize itself every few years. In short, the structure of social work knowledge and of the processes for its development are largely ill-defined. That is one explanation for why Kadushin, several years after describing the literature as embarrassingly rich, could co-author a report of a conference to examine social work knowledge which opened with the following statement: "Social work has not produced a systematic body of knowledge . . ." (Bartlett, Gordon & Kadushin, 1964, p. iii). These seemingly contradictory conclusions present a puzzle that continues to bedevil social work (Tucker, 1996). How can there be so much knowledge about social work and yet not be a systematic body of knowledge?

One way of understanding this paradox is that there is a lack of structure guiding the acquisition and building of social work knowledge. Social work knowledge comes from practice wisdom, the social sciences, governmental policy and guidelines, scholars who produce theory and research findings. These sources do not contribute evenly to all areas of social work, nor are there established rules for determining what knowledge should be incorporated into the profession and what excluded. For example, on what grounds or through what processes should social work incorporate into its knowledge the concepts of the underclass, co-dependency, or the battered child syndrome?

There is little agreement on methodologies for establishing valid findings or determining what kind of systematic inquiry is preferred for knowledge building (Schon, 1983; Kirk, 1996). Social work has no guiding commitment to precedent, clinical
field trials or established dogma. Certainly the methodologies of the social and behavioral sciences have been influential, if controversial (Kitty & Meeaghan, 1995), but a commitment to the rigorous testing of hypotheses has never captured the profession (Task Force, 1991). Moreover, there is limited agreement not only on how and what to add to the knowledge base, but on what constitutes the current base on which social work can build. Thus, while social work indeed has knowledge, it is most difficult to describe or add to it systematically.

Case study, which has always had a central role in social work education, has not evolved a set of standards for developing cases or a method of classifying and cross-referencing them. Despite the development of rigorous methods of studying cases (Yin, 1994; Bloom, Fischer & Orme, 1995) using such approaches as single system designs, such studies are relatively scarce in agency practice and are not catalogued. Furthermore, there has been no commercial interest to stimulate and invest in such an endeavor.

Research-Practice Interface

Law

West Publishing Company changed the nature of the legal literature available to practitioners. Moving from a system of selective, to comprehensive case reporting had two consequences. First, it diminished the role of practitioner-as-theoretician and shifted that role to legal scholars. Second, analogical reasoning, the tool of academicians for deriving legal doctrine, was transformed into an assessment tool for practitioners.

The introduction of volumes of mixed quality cases made it difficult for the average practitioner to derive coherent doctrine from the raw case material. This explosion of reported cases, and the superstructure standardizing them, made research a "mechanical process" (Berring, 1987, p.22). Research efforts became an exercise in sifting through volumes of material in search of cases "on point," that is, those that most closely duplicated client fact patterns (See Berring cited in Barkan, 1987, p. 633). Therefore, legal research which had involved selecting cases for the quality of their legal reasoning was replaced with matching efforts to
locate any subset of a large number of published cases which had similar facts and favorable outcomes.

The nature of analogous reasoning changed from one of extracting principles from cases to one of assessing fact patterns and outcomes. Legal practitioners, like social workers, face the problem of predicting likely outcomes for clients given particular intervention strategies. In law, the use of analogous reasoning and the easy availability of cases helps practitioners increase their predictive accuracy by allowing them to evaluate their current cases against known previous outcomes. Practitioners connect their work to existing literature by merely suggesting that the current facts are more or less similar to earlier cases, without fully articulating the theoretical reasoning that led to the outcome.

In addition to changing the nature of legal practice, the glut of case law led directly to the birth of academic literature such as treatises and law reviews that attempted to derived legal generalizations from the multitude of published cases (See Gilmore cited in Barkan, 1987, p. 634). Legal scholars routinely analyze conflicting case law from different jurisdictions and articulate the boundaries of the law. Legal scholarship influences practitioners only indirectly to the extent that journal articles are sometimes used as support in the opinions of the highest courts, such as the U.S. Supreme Court, and filter down through the judicial hierarchy binding lower courts and their practitioners.

In short, legal practitioners use low level knowledge while leaving the primary responsibility for theory development to academics. Nevertheless, the source material for both practitioner and scholar can be found in the same body of case material.

Social Work

Although social workers, too, must formulate initial assessments of clients and plans to help them, it is rare that they would turn to recent research reports for assistance. Moreover, they would be unlikely to be aware of or to review recent articles that report the probabilities for success using different interventions. Like attorneys, they may not use the scholarly literature. However, unlike attorneys, they do not have a case literature to scan for the outcomes of similar cases. The assessment and treatment process is guided much more by the personal experience and practice
wisdom of the practitioner, the agency customs and the advice of more experienced colleagues or supervisors (Rosenblatt, 1968). Thus, the search for precedents is often limited to the scope of experience of the practitioner and her immediate colleagues in the same agency. Surely, some of this informal wisdom may have diffuse connections to the research literature (Reid and Fortune, 1992) or the experiences of others, but there is little likelihood that the treatment offered will be viewed as fitting within some connected and evolving body of knowledge. It is also unlikely that the practitioner would view their work as an extension or refinement of the body of knowledge that might be reviewed and used by others in the future.

In part, the weak connections between practice and research is due to the nature of the case records in social work agencies. They consist typically of standardized agency forms and idiosyncratically written case records. Neither of these written documents is designed to establish the relationship of a particular client problem to an existing body of knowledge or to show how the problem is similar to or different from other cases. It would be most unusual, for example, to find in any case record a reference to a published article or to another similar client case. The social worker is expected, instead, to be guided by some abstract, generic theory about practice (Wakefield, 1996a, b).

Thus, although there are superficial similarities between lawyers and social workers in how they try to adapt current knowledge to practice, legal practitioners are more likely than social workers to actually attempt to link their current case with a verifiable, external body of knowledge. This tendency is not due to lawyers' individual attitudes or preferences, but to institutionalized structures that are more likely to promote the involvement of lawyers in the knowledge building enterprise.

Structures for Knowledge Use

There are structures that encourage knowledge utilization in the legal profession but are largely absent in social work.

Law

Structure of Knowledge and Authority. There is a controlling body of knowledge for any legal problem. General agreement
exists among practitioners regarding the scope of applicable law for any given set of facts. This agreement covers jurisdictional boundaries which limit the practitioner's research and creates a clear distinction between information which is binding (or controlling) and information which is merely instructive. In addition, the agreement covers the substance of the law applicable to a given set of facts. Disagreements over either jurisdiction or substance will be focused sharply by the two opposing sides and will constitute the heart of the dispute. Therefore, the parameters of legal research are constrained and clearly defined for a practitioner.

The judicial system provides a hierarchical decision structure which guarantees that there will be a final determination for every client in every case. Lower courts must yield to the rulings of higher courts and there is a pinnacle beyond which it is agreed universally that there is no further argument. Therefore, both practitioner and client are assured a final resolution of the problem. This hierarchical decision structure leads to a corresponding hierarchical structure of legal knowledge.

Structure of Conflict. The legal system is adversarial by design. This has two advantages. It encourages competition and it leads to a cross-pollination of ideas that builds new knowledge and informs practitioners. Structured and sanctioned competition creates an incentive for the practitioner to know or quickly locate the current and most valid information to be used on behalf of the client. Each side is expected to seek information from the body of knowledge which strengthens its own position and discredits its opponents'. The process is similar to academic debates in which the quality of the evidence and the logic of the reasoning come under sustained and critical scrutiny. The search for information must be comprehensive, because unfavorable findings are likely to be presented by the opposing side. To ignore or to overlook contrary, but relevant, precedent leaves a legal practitioner unprepared to meet his opponent's arguments.

This adversarial system guarantees that there are winners and losers. It is inherently result-oriented. Competition encourages careful preparation with an eye toward victory. If defeat is likely or if the risks are great, compromise is considered early to minimize the effects of losing. Thus, clear and certain outcomes,
encourage realistic negotiation and compromise. This is particularly the case when there are financial rewards in victory when the case is over. For example, in contingency fee cases, a lawyer’s fee is established as a percentage of the final judgment.

The ultimate arbiter of any valid legal dispute is the judiciary. The practice of law in this forum is a public event. The lawyer’s work is publicly criticized by the opposing side and is publicly evaluated by a judge in the final decision. Except in certain specific situations (such as litigation involving children), courtroom activity takes place openly where it may be scrutinized by colleagues, litigants, the media and other interested individuals. Practicing in a public forum encourages careful study of the body of applicable knowledge for both the personal reasons of avoiding “public embarrassment” and the desire to perform in a “professional manner” (Brenner, 1990, p. 526).

Information Retrieval. The practice of law is aided by a system of information retrieval and cross-indexing that is unique, relatively efficient and readily available to practitioners. Universally keyed case law, from the controlling jurisdiction as well as analogous information from other jurisdictions, can be located quickly. Moreover, all legal knowledge is linked and heavily cited. Legal research cited by practitioners in briefs and memoranda are incorporated in published court decisions and subsequently used by other attorneys. This method of perpetuating literature reviews provides a clear starting point for practitioners. Furthermore, cases are easily “shepardized” by computer. Any case, statute, regulation or law review article can be checked to see if any further action has been taken on that case, as well as to see if it has been cited as support in any other opinions or literature.

There is an emphasis on current information. New information is disseminated quickly to the legal community. Computer research is available to most practitioners. Bound volumes of legal material have loose-leaf or update services that keep information very current. Daily newspapers, in urban areas, are available to practitioners and report on pending as well as decided cases. Finally, access to these materials is readily available to attorneys, usually in their work environment or within the legal community. Even sparsely funded legal services offices have minimally equipped libraries containing state statutes and case law. Major
law firms provide every attorney with an individual computer terminal containing WESTLAW or LEXIS. In addition, major law firms have complete law libraries on the premises as well as full time law librarians to aid attorneys' research.

**Social Work**

Social work does not enjoy many of these structural supports for practitioners to use an established body of knowledge.

Structure of Knowledge and Authority. Social work practitioners are not without a body of knowledge: workers in child welfare are informed by knowledge of child development and family dynamics; workers in mental health settings are influenced by knowledge about psychopathology and treatment effectiveness; and those who work with the elderly are aided by knowledge about the biological and psychological concomitants of human aging. The knowledge, however, is fragmented and without the systematic organization and structure of legal knowledge. The bodies of social work knowledge are in most cases merely instructive and do not have the binding or controlling features of much legal knowledge. For example, despite what is known about depression, the social worker in a mental health clinic has wide discretion in diagnosing and treating a client who appears depressed.

Whatever treatment approach is chosen, the practitioner's assessment and intervention are rarely subjected to review by a hierarchical decision structure in which the practitioner's recommendations will be subject to the critical scrutiny of an adversary. The practitioner's work is often subjected to review by supervisors or clients, and increasingly by managed care companies, but rarely will encounter adversaries who deliberately attempt to undermine the practitioner's assumptions and reasoning. Furthermore, there is no final case outcome decided by a third party, higher authority. Experience may be gained, but a guiding precedent will not be set.

Structure of Conflict. Although there are occasions when social workers advocate for clients to receive entitlements, rights and resources, much of practice consists of engaging in counseling, not conflict. Even when, for example, members of a family have different interests and, perhaps different social workers,
it is more customary for the social workers to co-operate than to compete in treatment planning. At the heart of social work is a worry that conflict is to be avoided, negotiated, counseled away, or diffused. Adversarial actions are reserved for extreme situations, as a last resort.

Without an adversary and a final outcome, there can be no winner. The client may or may not benefit, but as long as the social worker has tried, she is neither winner or loser. There is no box score in social work and few financial implications for the social worker in helping the client.

Unlike law, where a practitioner's failure or success becomes part of a public court record, the outcome of a social worker's efforts may be protected by laws of confidentiality. Certainly there are extreme situations where the media critically scrutinize the work of social workers when a child has been abused, a homicidal patient released or an executive of a charity organization indicted, but in general social workers practice privately, even in public agencies.

Information Retrieval. Most social workers have no access to information retrieval technology or even adequate professional libraries. Even if they did, information retrieval would not be very efficient. Because of the fragmented nature of social work knowledge and the absence of an organizing scheme, it would probably require hours, if not days, of reading before a succinct summary of literature could be formulated which supported the practitioner's treatment recommendations. Few social work practitioners are expected or allowed the time to engage in this kind of background research. Few agencies have bibliographic resources readily available and none hire staff to do the library research needed to guide practitioners' clinical assessments and treatment planning.

Conclusion

For some of the reasons we have discussed, the structure and use of knowledge in law and social work are vastly different. Legal knowledge, particularly in recent times, has been shaped by external commercial publishing concerns which created a comprehensive, universal knowledge classification and retrieval system. This classification system both facilitates development of
new knowledge by providing an infrastructure to which new knowledge can be added and constrains new knowledge development by insisting that all new information must fit somewhere in the pre-existing structure. By using a comprehensive and universal classification system, the entire body of legal knowledge is systematically linked and therefore easily accessible. This makes knowledge utilization easier for the average practitioner.

Social work has not been blessed, or cursed, with such an externally-imposed system. Social workers enjoy greater freedom and flexibility in knowledge development, in theory testing, and in practice experimentation than do lawyers, for the very reason that there is no acknowledged universal structure for social work knowledge. On the other hand, such freedom means social work must weather attacks on such fundamental issues as whether it even has a unique body of professional knowledge. Furthermore, the lack of a universally accepted structure makes knowledge retrieval difficult, if not impossible, for the average social work practitioner.

Perhaps of most interest, is the vastly different use of "cases" in the two professions. Of particular note is the dual use of cases by both practitioners and scholars in the legal profession. Legal practitioners use cases as a source of information, for guidance in developing client strategies, for predicting case outcomes and—since the work of many low-level trial attorneys is captured in written, published and disseminated court decisions—as a place to contribute their own "practice wisdom" to the body of knowledge. Legal scholars, too, use cases but as a springboard for articulating grand legal theory and critiquing the current practices of the profession. In this manner, published cases serve as a knowledge link for scholars and practitioners. The legal profession has formalized an inductive method of knowledge development in which grand theory is folded back into case law through use by judges in writing decisions. Therefore, cases serve a role in transmitting information between the scholars and practitioners.

Social work may underestimate the value of cases in overall knowledge development. Social work knowledge relies heavily on a deductive system where theories are tested and reported in a "top down" approach. Not surprisingly, this does not provide
practitioners with an immediately useful source of knowledge to inform their practice decisions. Nor do practitioners have a place where they can easily contribute their own additions to the knowledge base. In part, because practitioners can't "speak" directly to researchers through their work product, researchers are denied a primary and basic source of important information from which to develop theoretical models. All too often researchers developed their theory far removed from the daily concerns of practitioners. By not recognizing the value of cases to both practitioners and researchers, the profession may be missing an opportunity to facilitate a medium of information exchange that would lead to more productive and useful knowledge development.

Comparisons among professions, such as the ones we have been making, can be instructive. They can highlight similarities or differences that are often overlooked, shedding new light on problems that may be unique to one profession. For decades, social work scholars have struggled with the need to develop a knowledge base for the profession and to link more closely the worlds of practice and research. The gap between social work practitioners and researchers has led to a variety of attempts to make research methods more user friendly, to make research reports more accessible, and to alter how and what students are taught in graduate school. By examining the practice-research interface of the legal profession, we are suggesting that there may be important structural impediments within social work that make that gap more understandable, if difficult, to close.

Our argument is not that all lawyers are masterful legal scholars or that social workers are ignorant of the knowledge bases for their work. This is hardly the case. Rather, we are suggesting that structural characteristics of professions partially determine the nature of the interface of practice and knowledge use. The implications of this view are that attempts to facilitate the uses of knowledge in social work that rely solely on changing the curricula of graduate schools or the attitudes of practitioners will be of marginal significance. Attitudes and curricula are affected by the structural characteristics and demands of practice. Changing these structural arrangements, if possible, would eventually change the views of practitioners and the way they are educated.


Increasingly, public administrators and managers in the fields of human service and environmental planning have been exploring new avenues to resolve complex and seemingly intractable public problems. Confronting such controversial issues as land management plans, common-pool resources, endangered species, welfare reform, health care and immigration are requiring new and more innovative ways of doing business—ways in which problem-solving and leadership is a shared pursuit of governmental agencies and concerned citizens.

Since collaborative efforts in these arenas have recently reemerged as one avenue to resolve complex policy disputes, it is premature to give an accurate assessment of their long term viability. This research contributes to the emerging data base on collaboration by analyzing two successful case studies within the fields of environmental planning and human service delivery: The Clark County Habitat Conservation Plan for the Desert Tortoise and The Family Preservation and Family Support Program.

Both groups demonstrate how affected parties can craft solutions through collaboration, dialogue and engagement. The collaborative planning of these two groups succeeded where many other groups dealing with the same or similar issues have failed. Given the right mixture of urgency, lack of better options, and committed and dynamic participants, solutions are possible. Through both qualitative and quantitative techniques, this study focuses on factors contributing to their success, limitations of these efforts, and possibilities for improving this method of handling, and ultimately resolving complex community issues.
Introduction

Increasingly, social work administrators and environmental planners have been exploring new avenues to resolve complex and seemingly intractable public problems (i.e., policy disputes or controversies that are highly resisted to resolution by reasoned argument or fact). Managers, particularly in the fields of human services and environmental planning, are faced with a volatile social and political environment, economic interdependencies, and increased legal action by special interest groups. New arrangements are being crafted to effectively monitor and resolve these evolving human and environmental resource issues.

The rapid explosion in the number of collaborative ventures in these two fields is truly remarkable. The vertically integrated organizations that have dominated institutional arrangements for the past century are being replaced more and more frequently with various forms of collaboration, partnerships and consensus-making models (see for example, Bean, Fitzgerald & O'Connell, 1991; Bryson & Crosby, 1992; Chrislip & Larson, 1994; John, 1994; and Porter & Salvesen, 1995).

Public officials are coming to the realization that some problems are so complex, so far-reaching, so long-term, with so many competing sides, it is becoming increasingly difficult to encapsulate in a "51 percent-beats-up-49 percent" kind of proceeding. Confronting such controversial issues as land management plans, common-pool resources, the Endangered Species Act, welfare reform, health care, race relations, and immigration requires new and more innovative ways of doing business—ways in which problem-solving and leadership are shared pursuits of governmental agencies and concerned citizens.

Government's role in the implementation of various community-based cooperative endeavors is critical. Collaboration is resource intensive. Government's willingness to engage concerned stakeholders, provide funding and coordination, and offer the necessary legitimacy can be essential components for successful resolution of complex community problems (Berman, 1996; Weschler & McIntosh, 1996).

Frameworks for collective action

While the terms collaboration and consensus-building have become the most recent buzzwords of the late 1990's, few studies
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have explored how different forms of collaborative ventures have emerged and been sustained. Most of what we know about collaborative undertakings is based on anecdotal reports of successful partnerships in various fields and "how-to-guides" that discuss the common and highly predictable developmental stages through which collaboratives seem to pass. Missing is information about particular collective actions that have promoted various forms of collaboration, how and why these structures evolved, and what happened as a result of the collaboration. This is precisely what public managers and social work administrators need as they work to resolve the numerous complex problems facing them.

Kirlin (1996) argues that the role of government is to establish frameworks and opportunities that encourage collective action among individuals, groups, and organizations. This includes the effective use of resources and structures found outside formal governmental institutions.

In Nevada, a diverse coalition of individuals and groups are attempting to create effective frameworks for collective engagement to resolve complex issues. The purpose of this article is to describe and analyze two successful collaborative efforts currently taking place within the different arenas of environmental planning and human service delivery: The Clark County Habitat Conservation Plan for the Desert Tortoise and The Family Preservation and Family Support Program.

Background

What is collaboration and what makes it work?

In practice, collaboration is commonly interchanged with terms such as cooperation and coordination. However, the scholarly literature distinguishes among the terms (see Hard, 1986; Kagan, 1991; Melaville & Blank, 1991). Collaborative groups have recently re-emerged as one avenue to address complex community issues. Their uniqueness, according to Susan Stein (1996), lies in one or more of the following conditions: members are from multiple organizations; the goal is system change; and the collaborative is a means to an end. "Collaborative" is a term now commonly applied to a set of processes intended to create consensus among parties who, in normal circumstances, disagree
vehemently about the issue at hand. Typically, collaboratives take the form of stakeholder groups, sometimes called consensus groups, which come together to try to solve problems jointly which none of the parties could solve alone.

Chrislip & Larson (1994) found the factors which need to be present or deliberately built into a successful collaborative process included: good timing and clear need (see also Bryson & Crosby [1992] and Kingdon [1984], both of whom have stressed good timing and utilizing a window of opportunity as being crucial factors in the ability to collaborate successfully); strong stakeholder groups; broad-based involvement; credibility and openness of process; commitment and/or involvement of high-level, visible leaders; support or acquiescence of "established" authorities or powers; overcoming mistrust and skepticism; strong leadership of the process; interim successes; and a shift to broader concerns.

The collaborative process

A review of the literature advanced from both academicians and practitioners indicates that collaborations have much in common structurally. The majority of successful collaborations seem to pass through predictable developmental stages. However, the pace and outcome through which the stages are achieved vary greatly depending on numerous complex and competing variables.

Although authors tend to use different names to describe the stages of the collaborative process, Kagan (1991) summarizes the stages described in the literature as follows: formation, conceptualization, development, implementation, evaluation and termination. Similarly, Selin & Chavez (1995) have synthesized recent research on collaborative process as it occurs in the natural resource management field. It is proposed that collaboration emerges out of an environmental context labeled antecedents and then proceeds sequentially through problem-setting, direction-setting, and structuring phase. Outcome and feedbacks are the dynamic and cyclical nature of the collaborative process.

Less predictable than the stages, there are numerous variables which can differ in intensity and in their impact on the collaborative process. Theorists studying collaboratives have cautioned
against adhering to a single model in analyzing them. The complex configuration of variables that can impact collaborative efforts are varied and are often site or project specific (Gray, 1989; Kagan, 1991; Mattessich & Monsey, 1992; and Mealville & Blank, 1991).

Challenges to collaboration

Despite many advantages of collaborative planning, why have more regulatory agencies, local governments, human services, and environmental organizations not embraced and promoted this concept? According to Porter & Salvesen (1995), "... planning consumes large amounts of time and talent, and for the most part, no institutional mechanism exists to fund the necessary studies, countless meetings, and negotiations, or to develop and implement a plan" (p. 4). There is also no guarantee that, after all the time and resources are spent, there will be an agreement reached by the affected parties, or that the process will not result in stalemate. High transaction costs may also result from the considerable amount of interactions between government officials and citizens. According to Warren & Weschler (1986), "Transaction costs are the psychological, social, language and resource costs citizens bear when trying to communicate with bureaucrats and to consume the services provided by the typical bureaucratic structure" (pp. 11-12). In short, collaboration can be an uncertain process.

Additionally, collaborative planning requires compromise and tradeoffs. Many organizations cannot compromise on certain issues. Selin & Chavez (1995) have cited an unwillingness of some environmental advocacy groups to compromise as a significant obstacle to collaboration. According to the authors, "Litigation gives these groups a highly visible forum to express their views that is not afforded in compromise situations" (p. 193). Gray (1989) cites obstacles to collaboration may be too difficult to overcome when conflict is rooted in basic ideological differences; one stakeholder has the power to take unilateral action; and a legitimate convener cannot be found.

The organizational culture that exists in many public agencies, which often follows a centralized, rational-comprehensive approach to management, has been criticized in both the
environmental management and human service fields as an obstacle to meaningful collaboration (see for example, Chrislip & Larson, 1994; John, 1994; Osborne & Gabeler, 1993; Schatz, McAvoy & Lime, 1991; and Thomas, 1995). It has been argued that a more flexible and decentralized approach to public management would be more conducive to consensus-building (Robertson & Tang, 1995).

Finally, Bryson & Crosby (1992), Chrislip & Larson (1994), Pierce (1993), and Putnam (1993) have all cited the level of trust among members as one of the most decisive factors in whether a collaborative effort will succeed or collapse.

**Why collaborate?**

What is it that enables individuals and organizations to collaborate despite the difficulties? Why do people participate in collaboratives and share resources, especially if participants are on the opposite sides of an issue?

Historically, social theorists assumed that without a strong authority to force cooperation, all individuals and organizations, in pursuit of self-interest, would battle each other. Adhering to Mancur Olson's (1965) argument that people will "free-ride" if not given individual incentives, it was commonly thought that rational people will not act to achieve their common interest.

However, there is now convincing evidence that some individuals and organizations will strive to achieve collective goals even when they do not benefit themselves (see Hage, 1974; Marshall & Oliver, 1984; Ostrom, 1990, 1992). Knobe (1988) found that moral commitments were able to attract members to organizations when the organization had altruistic objectives. Etzioni's (1988) framework in *The Moral Dimension*, suggests that there are both self-interest and moral commitments involved in the rational choices of private and public organizations' desire to gain more resources and to accomplish collective goals.

**Case Studies**

Two mandated collaboratives in Nevada were analyzed: the Clark County Habitat Conservation Plan for the Desert Tortoise (HCP) and the Family Preservation and Family Support Program (FP/FS). Although the collaborative efforts are in different arenas,
they were selected because of the success of their respective collaborative endeavors, and because both collaborations produced concrete results measured in terms of specific outcomes. The chosen efforts are characterized by complex problems, diverse stakeholders, and differing social, political, cultural and ecological attributes. The intent was to gather comprehensive information that, while not generalizable to other initiatives and organizations in a statistical sense, will provide an important perspective to support decision-making and problem-solving by leaders facing difficult and intractable problems.

Plan of action

Initially, the author conducted a review of the textual documents from each collaborative. This included a content analysis of public and organizational documents, including media, newsletters, meeting notes, published articles, and other items used for historical development. After this was completed, a survey instrument (described below) was administered to the Steering Committee members of the two collaboratives. The purpose of the instrument was to gather information of the collaborative process of these two groups and to compare the averages to successful groups that have been assessed nationally.

After the instrument was analyzed, face-to-face/telephone interviews were conducted with several members of each collaborative project to validate, refine and extend what had been learned thus far. Various theoretical tools were employed to interpret and extract meaning.

Respondents

In the Spring of 1996, surveys were distributed to Steering Committee members from the FS/FP and the HCP. A total of thirty-one (31) surveys were distributed to the FS/FP Committee and thirty (30) to the HCP Committee. A total of twenty-five (25) and twenty-four (24) surveys, respectively, were returned—an overall response rate of 80 percent for each of the groups.

Statistical methods

A five-page measurement instrument was used to assess the status of a collaborative effort. The feedback instrument was
used as one tool to assist in the analysis of the collaborative structure. The instrument was developed to capture the strengths and weaknesses of collaborative groups and improve their ability to work together. The instrument development was based on a research project funded by the American Leadership Forum. The instrument (a 40 item scale), "Working Together: A Profile of Collaboration," assesses five dimensions of collaboration: 1) The context for the collaborative group; 2) The structure or design of the collaboration; 3) The members' skills and attitudes; 4) The process that is being used; and 5) The results that are being accomplished.

The instrument has been tested for reliability and validity. The scale reliability with accompanying Cronbach's Alpha for the five dimensions is as follows: context = .46; structure = .77; members = .87; process = .85; and results = .80. The low alpha for the dimension context comes from very little variance on the item scores and the tendency for respondents to rate the items very high (Omni Research, 1996).

The components and questions in this survey relate directly to much of the literature advanced thus far on collaborative efforts. The work discussed previously in this paper makes explicit many of the factors that are necessary for creating success with collaboratives and consensus-decision making models (Chrislip & Larsen, 1994; Melaville & Blank, 1991; Kagan, 1991; and Mattessich & Monsey, 1992). Research conducted by Gray (1989) and Hallet & Birchall (1992) have carefully outlined the various obstacles to effective collaboration.

Clark County Habitat Conservation Plan for the Desert Tortoise

Background

The largest reptile in the Mojave Desert is the desert tortoise, which has existed in one form or another for the past 20 million years. Historically, the desert tortoise occupied all of the Mojave from southwestern Utah through southern Nevada and southeastern California, and into the Sonoran Desert of Arizona and northern Mexico. Today, the tortoise populations are scattered and fragmented, and the species is in serious decline in most of its former habitat (Berry, 1990).
The tortoise is especially at risk in Southern Nevada where it is forced to share its living quarters with the burgeoning and rapidly growing community of Las Vegas. The tremendous population growth in Las Vegas has led to rapid residential and economic development in Clark County. This, coupled with years of drought, a highly contagious and often fatal disease known as the upper-respiratory tract disease, and competition for meager forage with cattle and sheep has led to the decline of this species by as much as 90 percent in some areas of the Mojave (Berry, 1990). In recent years, study populations have dropped another 10 to 20 percent annually. These conditions led to the emergency listing of the desert tortoise as endangered under the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA) in 1989 (Christensen, 1992).

This action by the federal government stalled development in Clark County and resulted in a classic confrontation between economic development and the conservation of endangered species. Construction immediately came to a halt in Las Vegas. Clark County and the city of Las Vegas were forced to stop work on various public facilities, and new housing developments were put on hold, resulting in millions of dollars being tied up in construction commitments. At the same time, up to 6,000 individuals were relocating to the Las Vegas area on a monthly basis (Christensen, 1992; personal communication, Jim Moore, March 22, 1996).

As a result, the city of Las Vegas, the state of Nevada, and local developers sued the federal Department of Interior to overturn the listing. The lawsuit was lost as was the subsequent appeal (Bean, Fitzgerald & O‘Connell, 1991).

The planning process

At an impasse, local leaders turned to a little-known and little-used provision of the ESA known as the Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) contained in Section 10 (a) to help defuse the confrontation and bring together affected parties to the bargaining table. In 1982, Congress had amended the ESA to create a mechanism for reconciling governmental, business, and environmental interests (U.S. Fish & Wildlife, 1989).

Clark County assembled a steering committee (approximately 30 members) comprised of affected stakeholders including local government representatives from the County and the cities of Las
Vegas, North Las Vegas, Henderson, Boulder City and Mesquite; state and federal agency representatives from the Office of the Governor, Nevada's Congressional delegation, Nevada Departments of Agriculture, Wildlife and Farm Bureau, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, the Bureau of Land Management and the National Park Service; ranchers; miners; off-road vehicle enthusiasts; hunters; recreationists; university biologists; representatives from developers and the Home-Builders Association; environmentalists including the Nature Conservancy, the Environmental Defense Fund and the local Tortoise Adoption Group; and concerned citizens. This committee took on the task of developing a mitigation plan to allow for the continued economic development in the burgeoning Las Vegas Valley and a suitable long-term protected habitat for the desert tortoise.

The stakes were high, and at a time when spotted owls and logging appeared almost daily in the media, affected parties in Clark County were anxious to avoid the divisive controversy that had embroiled efforts to protest the owl's habitat in Oregon and Washington. Such a failure to implement an acceptable mitigation plan in Clark County would result in a halt to the continued orderly rate of development.

The primary purpose of the Steering Committee was "... to oversee preparation of the HCP. It also plays a vital role in the planning process by bringing together groups affected by the listing of the desert tortoise and who have a significant stake in the HCP process" (Clark County, p. 4).

Meetings were held a minimum of once a month, or more frequently at the onset, and the Committee continues to keep this schedule six years later. An attorney, who in 1985 facilitated a similar HCP in Coachella Valley, California, involving the Coachella Valley Fringe-toed Lizard, was hired by Clark County to play a similar role with their plan. In addition, consultants were hired to draft all permit applications, environmental assessments and impact statements, all drafts of the plan, as well as the final plan itself. All major expenditures and recommendations had to be approved by the Board of County Commissioners in Clark County.

Several technical advisory committees were formed including one dealing with biological issues and another focusing on public
information and education. In addition, ad hoc committees were formed as needed to discuss such issues as road closures, research, and tortoise relocation projects. Finally, a hotline was set up to provide information to the general public on various tortoise topics ranging from pre-construction clearance procedures to adoption of tortoises as pets.

Several public hearings were held during the process, including the presentation of recommendations publicly to the Board of County Commissioners. As expected, some of the early hearings were highly contentious meetings with threats being made against some of the participants. At the transition period between moving from the four-year interim short-term plan to the thirty-year long-term plan, a scoping meeting was convened by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service to solicit input in a non-confrontational way from the public. It was decided that this type of meeting would be held to still gain input from the public while avoiding the confrontations and arguments that took place at previous public meetings. The scoping meeting allowed for the public to simply list their areas of concerns on flip charts, but no interaction between committee members and the public was permitted.

The collaborative process did not lead to a total consensus. Not all were in agreement with some components of the final plan. The local Tortoise Group objected to the recommendation to cease with the mandatory surveying and removal of tortoises from lands scheduled to be developed. Additionally, the Environmental Defense Fund strongly opposed the plan to mitigate the loss of desert tortoise habitat in and around the Las Vegas Valley by managing public lands more intensely rather than through the purchase of private lands. The mitigation on federal lands was a departure from other HCPs that mitigate at least acre-for-acre by purchasing private lands to be set aside for the benefit of the target species (Beatley, 1995). However, in Clark County, the vast majority (90 percent) of remaining habitat in the planning area is owned by the federal Bureau of Land Management (BLM).

**Obstacles/Challenges**

Several obstacles and challenges threatened the collaborative process. Some County Commissioners were troubled by the notion of spending large amounts of money to protect the desert
tortoise. Initially, some of the Commissioners felt the general public did not support this effort in light of other pressing community needs such as crime, schools, and traffic concerns. However, the desert tortoise was the official state reptile, and the subcommittee on Public Information developed several effective Public Service Announcements (PSA's) concerning the protection of the tortoise and the larger ecosystem in Clark County. After a public opinion poll was commissioned, some of the Commissioners became convinced of the merits of the collaborative effort. It was also much easier to convince the general public that the desert tortoise was worth protecting, because thousands of Las Vegans have them as pets. It has been much more challenging to sell conservation for other endangered species such as the Kangaroo Rat in Riverside County, California; the Fairy Shrimp in Central California; and the Cottonmouse from Key Largo, Florida (Beatley, 1995; personal communication, Jim Moore, March 22, 1996).

The issue that threatened the credibility of the Steering Committee members the most, and which generated the most controversy, was the decision to euthanize tortoises not able to be utilized for research, selected for relocation or adopted out to families. There was a huge outcry from the public nationally, and from as far away as the United Kingdom who were confused with the notion of spending money to protect the tortoises only to kill them later. One steering committee person noted, "This was a classic example of 'group think' . . . we had been together for so long . . . through so many meetings where this issue was debated, that we had convinced ourselves that the public would accept this." The Board of County Commissioners later voted to preclude the euthanasia of any healthy tortoise.

The plan

This collaborative effort resulted in a four year short-term habitat conservation plan, which allowed for the development of 30,000 acres on non-federal land within Las Vegas Valley in exchange for the conservation of over 531,000 acres of prime desert tortoise habitat on federal lands south of the urban center. During the course of the short-term plan, a thirty-year Desert Conservation Plan was developed to incorporate additional species of concern to protect the County from potential future federal listings of these other increasingly rare desert inhabitants.
At least one additional Desert Conservation Area will be established over this thirty year period on public lands in the northern part of Clark County in exchange for the ability to develop over 111,000 acres of non-federal lands throughout the County. This entire effort has been paid for by means of development fees collected throughout Clark County. These fees will continue to fund all future conservation actions.

Conclusion

Unlike Oregon's heated controversy following the federal listing of the Spotted Owl as threatened leading to policy gridlock, further polarization of communities and organizations, and continued court intervention, the Desert Tortoise HCP has been hailed nationally as an example of how affected parties can craft a solution through collaboration, dialogue and engagement of affected parties (Bean, Fitzgerald & O'Connell, 1991; Christensen, 1992; Porter & Salvesen, 1995).

This is not to suggest that the process was problem-free or that there are not controversial issues associated with the Clark County HCP Plan. Given the amount and intensity of divergent views regarding land management and the desert tortoise, there was a real probability of years of gridlock. Meetings were seen by some participants as too drawn-out and often contentious. Mistrust and perceived political maneuvering among some participants marred and threatened the process. Yet, the collaborative planning of the HCP Desert Tortoise Steering Committee accomplished what most other groups dealing with the same or similar issues have failed to do.

Solutions are possible—given the right mixture of urgency, lack of better options, and committed and dynamic committee participants. Strategies to protect the desert tortoise are in place and economic development is continuing at record pace in the Las Vegas Valley.

The Family Preservation and Family Support Program

Background

In response to deteriorating conditions for many American children and to the increasing number of children in out-of-home placement, federal legislation was passed in August 1992
to strengthen troubled families. Hailed as the most significant reform of federally-funded child welfare services since the Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act of 1980 (P.L. 96-272), the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1993 (P.L. 103-66) provides $1.3 billion to states over a five-year period for early intervention, prevention, and family support services. This legislation provided states with an unique opportunity to reform the child welfare system and create systems that are comprehensive, family-focused, and community-based.

This piece of legislation came on the heels of numerous national debates on the current crisis of the child welfare system. Despite federal and state laws that limit the time a child should stay in foster care (from 12 to 18 months), a recent evaluation of several large states found that thousands of children remain in foster care for substantially longer periods of time (Hardin, 1995). Community involvement in protecting children from abuse and neglect is limited in most jurisdictions and public Child Protective Services agencies carry the primary responsibility for responding to maltreatment.

Several states and communities have embarked on various reforms to serve vulnerable families and children. Some initiatives emphasize an approach that attempts to build a solid community base that meets the needs of families and provides a way to access services without bureaucratic barriers at the neighborhood level. It attempts to develop a community-based system of protecting children and utilizes the assets of the community instead of existing system interventions, thus allowing for multiple responses to reports of maltreatment.

At several national conferences designed to discuss the implementation of these new family preservation and family support monies—consumers, citizens, non-profit child and family serving agencies, and public child welfare agencies clashed over how the monies would be spent. Citizens and consumers assailed public officials for their failure to involve them in the planning and implementation of child welfare services. Citizens and consumers did not trust government officials. Non-profit agencies didn’t trust the governmental agencies or each other. Some public officials saw the new monies as a way to reduce the excessively large caseloads of their agency case workers or to provide needed
services to at-risk families. Many non-profit agencies saw these monies as an opportunity to enable them to better respond to the overwhelming needs of their communities and to make up for some of the severe cuts in funding from their state and local governments. Consumers and citizens saw these funds as an opportunity to be included in the planning of services to the community.

The federal legislation required a year of assessment and grass-roots planning involving key stakeholders in the process. However, many states attempted to circumvent the collaborative planning because it was seen as time-consuming, resource-intensive, and included an uncertain outcome. This national debate and the accompanying controversy and distrust of each other and governmental officials spilled over into the state of Nevada.

The planning process

While the state Division of Child & Family Services is responsible for the administration of the program, the five-year plan was organized and developed by a thirty (30) member statewide Steering Committee. The committee met for over a year prior to the submission of the State Plan. Contribution and membership reflected diverse representation from federal, state and county agencies, the Schools of Social Work in the University System, the Family Court system, Native American organizations, consumers, concerned citizens, and a variety of private non-profit agencies dedicated to child and family welfare.

Initially, meetings were held once every other month. The Committee now meets every quarter with several standing committees meeting on a monthly basis. Subcommittees convened to include the following areas: public awareness; needs assessment; technical assistance and training; evaluation and outcome measures; and financial oversight. Ad Hoc committees were established to develop and evaluate the Request For Proposal (RFP) Process and to develop and train participants for town meetings and focus groups.

The state hired a full-time contractor to facilitate the meetings and to oversee the entire process. Consultants were hired to draft the state plan, evaluate the existing Child Protective
System, conduct statewide focus groups and evaluate the program's consortiums. In addition, outside mediators were brought in to assist the committee members in their decisions on how to allocate monies and to help when contentious problems evolved. Finally, technical assistance was accessed to train participants in consensus decision-making, family-centered programming, and community-based work.

**Obstacles/Challenges**

As with the collaborative effort involving the state desert tortoise, the Family Preservation/Family Support (FP/FS) process was far from problem-free. In fact, many stakeholders expressed serious reservations on participating in the statewide process. Planning meetings were often contentious and heated. The most significant issue that threatened the collaborative process was the level of distrust, both among many of the members, and towards state government.

**The plan**

The collaborative effort resulted in legislation being drafted to ensure an expanded role of communities in protecting children from maltreatment and supporting vulnerable families. It allows for some services to be provided directly from community agencies rather than the public child protective service agency. A decision was made to funnel the entire state allocation of funding under this project to local communities to assist them in building the capacity to successfully fulfill their expanded role.

Three community-based consortia located in northern, southern, and rural regions of Nevada were selected to receive funding. A decision was made to require a coordinated and collaborative response from the community. No single agency could apply. Services to be delivered through each of the consortia required active involvement from citizens in the community, local, county and state government, churches, local family serving agencies, schools, as well as local businesses and casinos. In order to attempt to "level the playing field," committee members assisted grass-roots/nontraditional participants in drafting their proposal requests for funding. This was seen as a significant departure from traditional practice involving funders and prospective recipients of the funding.
Projects ultimately funded were consumer driven and neighborhood based. The state contracted with the local universities to assist each consortium in the development of measurable outcome indicators. Federal officials hailed the five-year state plan as a model plan and an example of consensus-building and collaborative planning that involved key stakeholders from the community (personal communication, Sid Justice, February 29, 1996).

Conclusion

The FP/FS project effectively engaged all major stakeholders in a process that resulted in a shared-vision and a shared-plan of action. The state has attempted to move toward community-based protection with emphasis on prevention rather than crisis response; community-wide responsibility for protection of children rather than responsibility by a single government entity; and multiple, differential response to reports rather than a single, uniform response. New legislation has been introduced in the 1997 Legislative Session that would change existing statute and allow for varied levels of intervention and services in both investigation and treatment of child protective services. Levels of mistrust between major stakeholders and government officials have been drastically reduced and will allow for additional opportunities for consensus-building in the future.

Survey Findings

Data analysis plan

Since the data were non-normally distributed, non-parametric statistics were used (O'Sullivan & Rassel, 1995). The level of significance was set at .05. Responses were lumped into the five main categories: Context, Structure, Members, Process and Results. Therefore, the plan of analysis of these data involved comparisons of the five main categories. The mean values of each of the categories were tested for significance for both groups. These were compared between the two groups as well as with additional data collected from respondents nationally that have used the instrument. In addition, individual mean scores were compared between the two groups.

Finally, responses to each item on the survey were analyzed separately through descriptive statistics to determine specific
collaborative strengths and weaknesses in the sample as a whole. These observations will be useful in determining which of the specific areas of the planning process are most significant for the two collaborative groups.

Findings

Comparison between groups

Two sample t-tests were performed to test associations between the two groups (FP/FS and the HCP) and across the five main categories outlined in the survey instrument. Membership was found to be highly significantly different between the two groups (p=.001). The category Structure also was found to be significantly different (p=.05). The categories Results and Process both approached significance at p=.08 respectively.

Chi-square evaluation of the data indicated that only the category Membership between the two groups was significantly different than what would be expected for random distribution with a p value of .01. However, both categories of Results and Process again approached significance with p values of .08 and .07 respectively.

Comparison of categories

A comparison of the five categories between the FP/FS, HCP and the national group data showed that the category Context was perceived as extremely high in all cases (mean= 1.50; 1.39; and 1.41 respectively).

Although lower than Context, Structure and Process were also high as shown below. Membership was rated lowest by the HCP group.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>FP/FS</th>
<th>HCP</th>
<th>National</th>
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<tbody>
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<tr>
<td>Process</td>
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<td>Results</td>
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Discussion

Quantifying, observing, and measuring collaboration is a difficult challenge. Collaborative strategies are not identical; different tactics evolve to accomplish different objectives. Ultimately, determining success of a collaborative effort must be based on whether the originating objective was obtained. What can be inferred from the results of the survey instrument and accompanying case studies, is that the factors which appear to be common components of any successful collaborative effort, such as membership, structure and process, are at a minimum the basis from which all other variables are developed. The success of the two collaboratives cannot be attributed to these basic variables alone; however, the identified components formed the framework upon which the ultimate goals were achieved. Due to the peculiar political and socio-economic dynamic of each effort, the emphasis in weighing that each of these components variables receive may be very different, yet the outcome can be perceived to be a common success.

Differences in collaborative groups

Despite the obvious differences between the two groups: one being related to environmental issues and the other focusing on social service problems, there are some significant differences concerning the reason the collaboration was initiated and the membership characteristics. Although both efforts came about as a result of federal regulation, the HCP project came about after repeated efforts to invalidate the emergency listing of the tortoise had failed in court. At an impasse, affected parties agreed to come to the table to attempt a resolution. Since legal recourse had failed, a collaborative venture to craft a solution may have been a strong motivating factor in members' commitment to the process. Some participants of other HCP projects have described the situation as a kind of "balance of terror" in which environmental and development communities stay with the process because failure to do so would create a huge liability for their competing interests (Porter & Salvesen, 1995). In the FP/FS project, the economic and political risks for non-participation were minor and there had been no court involvement in the issue.
Additionally, the stakes were much higher in the HCP project. The continued economic growth of Clark County was virtually at a standstill. Failure to funnel funds for community-based programming through the FP/FS project, while disappointing, would not have created the immediate economic impact and political fallout for the state. That is not to suggest that a decision to keep federal social service monies at the state level would not have created political controversy. In fact, many participants expected that to happen. However, it would not have led to severe consequences and immediate liability for the failure to craft an acceptable solution.

Membership characteristics also differed significantly. Participants in the HCP process came from opposite ends of the political and philosophical spectrum with diametrically opposing views concerning whether the desert tortoise warranted listing as endangered. Members' views were more divergent, intense and volatile. In contrast, although there was a significant amount of distrust, especially with consumers, most individuals involved in the FP/FS project were like-minded and shared similar views on the need for community-based services for at-risk families. This accounts for the significant findings when the two groups were compared to each other. The two sample t-tests and the chi-square evaluation were both highly significant. Furthermore, the Membership category for the HCP was the lowest average of any category at 2.04 compared to 1.63 for the FP/FS and 1.76 for the national data average.

**Evaluation and funding**

Items accounting for some of the lowest averages addressed the monitoring and evaluation system. This corresponds to some of the concerns voiced in the literature regarding the considerable amount of funding which is needed for effective collaborative efforts (Marsh & Lallas, 1995; Porter and Salvesen, 1995). Evaluation and monitoring are resource intensive. Sources for funding many environmental, land management and water resource issues have historically relied heavily on development impact fees. However, increasingly, developers are pushing for the costs to be shared by the general public. Timothy Beatley (1995) suggests, “Often, previous growth and development in a community, which may
benefit the entire community, may be responsible for bringing a species to the brink of extinction. Is it not equitable, therefore, for the broader public to contribute to these conservation efforts?" (p. 67). A move to push more of the costs to the general public may erode future interest in protecting various species, especially if they are not easy to market to the community, like insects or most reptiles.

In the FP/FS collaboration, the second lowest score was attributed with the item concerning having adequate staff to plan and administer the collaborative effort. This FP/FS effort is funded entirely by the federal government. Many members doubted that any other entity would pick up the cost if federal funds dried up. Like many one-time discretionary funding projects from the federal government, continuation of these efforts rarely materialize at the same level or intensity from the state or local community due to an inability to find a stable funding source.

Lessons learned

So why should the reader believe that the collaborative process described here led to the resolution of the conflicts rather than the demands of the situation, the need for action, or the general ability of political and administrators' actors to craft solutions to problems and overcome barriers to action?

In the case of the HCP, although the urgent development needs of Clark County was a strong motivating reason that brought people to the table and contributed to the ultimate resolution of the issue at hand, similar public land management planning efforts for the desert tortoise in the other high growth regions of its range (southern California and northwestern Arizona) have failed or are still in the process of trying to reach solutions to the multiplicity of public land-use issues (e.g. the Western Mojave Coordinated Management Plan, and the northern and eastern Colorado Desert Coordinated Management Plan). Reasons attributed to the lack of a plan included the failure to include those affected by proposed HCP plan, the inability to identify a credible outside conveyer, and not securing the commitment of high-level, visible leaders (Jim Moore, personal communication, April 20, 1996).
For example, the failure to involve affected citizens in public land management policy in the Western Mojave Coordinated Management Plan early on resulted in a complete lack of acceptance by local residents in the affected California communities of Barstow, Baker and Victorville. After three years of virtually internal planning and development, public support for the plan was solicited and duly rejected. This forced all parties to regroup with new participants including a loosely-knit, populist coalition of public land users referred to by local and federal officials as CAVE People (Citizens Against Virtually Everything) (Molly Brady, personal communication, April 9, 1996).

Although the federal Department of Health and Human Services is in the process of evaluating the success of the FP/FS program, recent national and regional conferences on the program have highlighted those states that have been successful in executing an acceptable plan and identifying needed system-wide changes. Reasons cited have included failing to employ the various distinctive features of the collaborative process.

As previously acknowledged, there is no single way to achieve resolution of complex problems through collaborative planning. The political culture and mediating variables will dictate the objectives and structures to be utilized. However, there are a few lessons, experiences and outcomes that can be advanced from analysis of these successful initiatives in Nevada and may prove helpful for others engaged or planning to engage in similar collaborative efforts.

Involvement of affected parties. Both collaborative efforts spent a considerable amount of time involving individuals and groups affected by the problem at hand. Involvement was broad-based. This encompassed various strategies to include divergent interests on the Steering Committee and to involve the public in defining the problem, as well as input into the resolution of the problem. However, individual public involvement was not pursued without recognition of the need to protect the greater public interest. Both groups attempted to achieve a balance between the experience of governmental officials and the knowledge of citizen and community groups.
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Shared-leadership developed. Although both collaborative efforts were federally initiated, leadership was not centered on governmental officials. Leadership was a shared responsibility. Government officials did not assume the traditional leader role but assisted in the facilitation of the efforts, and hired credible conveners to assist with the process. When contentious issues arose, individuals from the outside were brought in, or a consensus decision-making process was employed.

Trust became stronger as the collaborative effort continued. Trust was a major issue throughout both collaborative efforts. Due to past perceptions and the controversial nature of the various issues, establishing a level of trust between members was seen as the most crucial element for most members. Both groups spent a great deal of time bringing the right players to the table and developing an atmosphere where individuals could learn to work together. Several members said they have become more tolerant and have developed a greater understanding of the “other side.” However, one member cautioned that collaboration is not for the faint-hearted: “You have to be psychologically tough... People who can’t put up with some screaming and yelling won’t last.”

Other collaborative efforts emerged. The Clark County HCP is in the process of evolving and expanding its focus on other species which may be equally impacted by the pace of development in the Las Vegas Valley and surrounding area. The Clark County Multi-Species HCP seeks to provide both public and private land owners the assurance that, with a few modifications to the current conservation plan for the desert tortoise, the federal government will not require substantial additional lands be set aside for the protection of target species.

Additionally, other collaborative efforts resulted from each of these groups. For example, a bottom-up grass-roots collaboration has formed in Moapa Valley (north of Las Vegas) called the Muddy River Regional Environmental Impact Alleviation Committee. The initiative was started by a resident member of the Clark County HCP group who represented the interests of miners and rural citizens. Local Moapa Valley residents agreed to
participate to avoid federal intervention due to the listing of two species as "species of concern" and the potential listing of several others.

Likewise, as a result of the other collaborative effort, two family serving initiatives have attached themselves to the FP/FS collaborative project including: the Annie E. Casey Foundation's Kids Count Project (a nationwide effort to collect benchmarks on the status of children on a state-by-state basis) and a federal home visiting project attempting to coordinate the delivery of services to first-time mothers. In addition, experiences and tools learned during the FP/FS project in conducting town meetings and focus groups have been employed to support a Governor's initiative to develop family resource centers throughout the state.

Government provided frameworks for "people to act". The government succeeded in providing the arena for collective action and citizen involvement to occur. Kirlin (1996) refers to this as "place value," where government provides the necessary frameworks within which individuals, groups, and organizations can act. Members from both groups gave high marks for government's ability to engage key stakeholders in crafting solutions to various complex problems and in the use of both formal and informal resources and structures.

Future Research

This study has contributed to an emerging data base on the prolific field of collaboration. Additional studies aimed at understanding various aspects of collaboration are needed. For example, are some factors more likely to be present in collaborative projects which are mandated, than in efforts which are entirely voluntary? Both of the projects examined in this study came about as a result of federal intervention. Is it more difficult to achieve certain factors in mandated collaborations?

Additionally, what are the long term effects of collaborative efforts? Since collaborative efforts in the arenas of human services, resource management and environmental planning are relatively new, it is perhaps premature to give an accurate assessment of their long-term viability.
Finally, what are the boundaries of collaborative efforts? Do they translate into political action, resource development and other collaborative ventures?

The next few decades will undoubtedly provide even greater conflicts where collaborative efforts may be the only viable avenue for resolution. It is important to understand the limitations of these efforts and to suggest possibilities for improving this method of handling, and ultimately resolving, complex issues.

Conclusion

Putnam (1993, 1995) questions whether civic community can be developed when he laments, “The civic community has deep historical roots. This is a depressing observation for those who view institutional reform as a strategy for political change. . . . Where norms and networks of civic engagement are lacking, the outlook for collective action appears bleak” (p. 183). However, many theorists in the fields of resource management, human services and environmental planning appear more optimistic in their belief that civic community can be created (Bryson & Crosby, 1992; Chrislip & Larson, 1994; John, 1994; Ostrom, 1990, 1992). These authors have also successfully documented numerous cases where new arrangements have been crafted to effectively solve complex and seemingly intractable human and environmental resource issues within a coordinated, consensus-building framework.

This is especially important for a city like Las Vegas where communities are just beginning to develop. They do not have the deep historical roots that Putnam suggests are needed. It is possible for new communities to undertake effective collective action for the common good. The Clark County Habitat Conservation Plan for the Desert Tortoise and the Family Preservation and Family Support Program are excellent examples of this. Although mistrust permeated the initial meetings of these groups, and strong philosophical differences existed, a shared vision and commitment to the issues at hand enabled successful resolutions of problems and effective plans of action to be put in place.

Collaboration is not a cure-all, one-size-fits-all model. It appears to work well when the affected parties perceive that it is in
their best interest to be at the table, and they don't have a better solution. It is important to choose issues where a collaborative process would be significant and useful in building a sense of community and would provide a foundation on which to build upon. Using collaboration to resolve intractable problems is fairly experimental. Despite many of the purported benefits, it remains an uncertain process. This uncertainty, coupled with the high transaction costs, clearly is a limiting factor in its broader application. However, if the United States is going to be prepared to deal with inevitable future conflicts; politicians, bureaucrats and the general public will need to at least be willing to try consensus-based mechanisms.

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On Whose Watch?
The Silent Separation of American Children from Their Fathers

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Within two generations, the primary reason that American children were deprived of a father shifted from a father's death to a woman's choice. That is, prior to the 1960s, the major cause of fatherlessness was the death of the father through illness or accident. After the 1960s, the children became deprived of fathers primarily because of women's decisions to petition for a divorce or to become a single parent mother. The path of the shift is examined, and the consequences writ small per child and writ large for the commonweal are examined.

Rule #1: "All politics are local" — Speaker Tip O'Neill
Rule #2: "All long terms politics are reproduction strategies."
Rule #3: All effective long term politics camouflage Rule #2.
— Ipso Macquire

Around the world, the thousands of known cultures have built their social structures around some version of the nuclear family: a mother, a father and their children. Superimposed upon this core, are variations such as extended families or the avunculate. However, in 1994 nearly 2,000,000 American children became fatherless as a consequence of decisions made by individuals which were adjudged not inappropriate by the commonweal. That is, the system of American folkways & mores had been re-arranged and re-adjusted such that fatherlessness was not
viewed as a problem of sufficient severity to warrant attempts at solutions. This paper attempts to address at least part of the process by which widespread fatherlessness had been refracted as a non-problem.

**Background.** To develop a context, let’s examine the cross-cultural character of the institution of “marriage”. Marriage is a cross-cultural universal (Van den Berghe 1979, Stephens 1964, Levinson & Malone 1980, Brown 1991). A general consensus on the universality of “marriage” is its function to legitimize the wife’s children. As Hartley (1975) wrote: “With hundreds of societies in the world having varied beliefs and customs, different environmental problems, and differences in group size and organization, the principle of legitimacy comes as near as any social rule to being truly universal”. One of the founding graybeard fathers of Anthropology, Bronislaw Malinowski (1927), believed that “the principle of legitimacy” was one of the pillars upon which the organization of the family was built. Malinowski stated that: “... the most important moral and legal rule concerning the physiological side of kinship is that no child should be brought into the world without a man—and one man at that—assuming the role of sociological father, that is, guardian and protector, the male link between the child and the rest of the community...” That is, once legitimacy between a man—now a father—and a child had been publicly acknowledged, then that man is strongly pressured to provision & to protect his children. The children become his children by a ritual of “marriage” (Stephens 1963, Van den Berghe 1979). That is, marriage is for children. McCary (1975, p 289) framed the case well in noting that having children has traditionally been regarded as “the fulfillment of a marriage, if not the primary reason for marriage”. The marriage aligns the child, as well as the mother, with a particular man—now a father—who has particulate responsibility to insure that the child, as well as the mother, have adequate provisions and protection. “Provisioning” or access to resources which would be available to the mother-child dyad is a non-trivial matter and the promise of the resources is an important consideration in a prospective groom being accepted as a husband. If the promise of resources is not forthcoming after a marriage, then a divorce is often a consequence of
the unfulfilled expectations. This dynamic is widely in evidence from such diverse places as Amazonia (Chagnon, 1968, Stearman, 1989), Tibet (Ekvall, 1968), Australian Aborigines (Hart & Pilling, 1960), the Dani of New Guinea (Heider, 1979), India (Maclachlan, 1983), Turkey (Pierce 1964), Japan (Norbeck 1976), and China (Chance 1984). See Betzig (1989) for additional data and analysis.

In a small minority of cultures (about 12%), it is the mother’s-brother, the avunculus, who is the male-figure which is the proximate man to his sister’s children (Schlegel 1972). Nonetheless, the sister is expected to be married and the child is to be “legitimate”. Although the U.S. is a modern industrialized society, it is no exception to the catholic trend and has a de jure monogamous marriage system.

Thus, most “families” across our planet have one husband & one wife as a core. The women become mothers by having her husband’s children, and the husband thereby becomes a social father. As soon as the status of “social father” is achieved by the man, he is strongly prescribed to provide singular attention to his children. Failure to nurture his children with goods & services is a source of (informal) social pressure against the man. Society wide expectations concerning children he has sired, but has not “legitimized”, do not usually include a similar level of nurturance from the man.

Developing a U.S. baseline

There are three basic routes by which a child can become fatherless: death of the father, a single parent birth (that single parent is always the mother), and divorce wherein the mother, not the father, receives custody of the child.

In the U.S. from the 1920s-1940s, death of the father was a prime reason for fatherlessness. For example, in 1920, the death rate for men 25–44 years of age was 7.3 per 1000 men. This number dropped to 5.7 in 1958 and to 2.6 in 1992.

In 1940, only 3.5% of the live-births were out-of-wedlock. This figure reached 3.9% in 1950 and 4.5% in 1955. But by 1993, the figure passed the 30% mark.

In 1920, the divorce rate was 1.6 per 1,000 population. The rate remained at 1.6 in 1930. In 1940, the figure reached 2.0. However, by 1975, the rate had more than doubled to 4.8 and has remained
in that area ever since (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1960, 1995). Accordingly, while fatherlessness from death has declined significantly, fatherlessness both from preclusion—an out-of-wedlock birth—and from judicial abrasion—divorce—had increased significantly.

Thus, between 1940 and the present, the expectations and values of the American mega-tribe had to have shifted (a) in the direction that fatherlessness was not crucial either to the fathers' children writ small or to the commonweal writ large and (b) the magnitude of the shift had to be powerful enough to cross the threshold from the potential to the manifest.

Four variables will be examined in this exercise: (1) birth rates, (2) divorce rates, (3) out-of-wedlock births, and (4) the percent of married women who were employed in the labor force. The time frame to be examined will be from the 1920s to the early 1990s.

(1) Birth rates. The general tendency over the centuries has been for a decline in birth rates (the number of births per 1,000 population). In 1920, the birth rate was 27.7. During the depression, the birth rate dipped into the low 20s and high teens. The famous post-war baby boom increased the rates to the mid-twenties until the middle sixties. Then were was a continuous decline to the middle teens where the rates have stabilized, at least for the present. See Figure 1.

(2) Divorce rates. Divorce rates (number of divorces per 1000 population) for the 1920s and 1930s were in the 1.6 range. From the 1940's to the late sixties, the rates were in the 2.0-2.6 range: a slight increase. However, from the decade of 1968 to 1979, the rates climbed from 2.9 to 5.3. The rates then dipped and have stayed in the middle to high fours. See Figure 1.

(3) Out-of-wedlock births. In 1940, out-of-wedlock births accounted for only 3.5% of all live-births. The figure edged up to 4.1% in 1945 and dipped to 3.9% in 1950. By 1960, the percentage of all births which were out-of-wedlock rose to 5.2%. This percentage was doubled to 10.7% in 1970 and nearly trebled by 1993 to 31.0%. See Figure 1.

(4) Married women in the labor force. In 1920, about 9.0% of ever married women (including widowed divorced and separated
Figure 1

U.S. rates, across time, of divorces (number of divorces per 10,000 population), out-of-wedlock births (percentage of all live births which were out-of-wedlock), births (number of births per 1,000 population), and wives employed (percentage of wives who were employed). Note that the first five dates presented are 1920, 1930, 1940, 1945 and 1950. After 1950, each year is depicted individually until 1993.

Thus, from the pre-WWII America to the 1990s, four trends were extant and germane. First, the number of children born per woman had nearly halved. For the two decades plus of fertility per
woman, the women were averaging about two children. Second, divorce rates had at least doubled. Third, out-of-wedlock births had increased at least by a factor of seven. Fourth, married women had more than quadrupled their participation in the labor force.

The patterns were not inevitable. For example, with a decrease in the number of children per wife, women would be under less stress and could have continued in the homemaker role now made easier by fewer children and with an increase in income by the husband/father due to his seniority and to a rising standard of living in the prospering country. But such was not the reality.

As the number of children per woman decreased, women increasingly entered the labor force and were involved in a higher percentage of out-of-wedlock births and in an elevated number of divorces. Why this pattern and not another? An attempt at a reasonable answer is offered below.

*Individuals are mortal, the commonweal need not be.*

While everyone on the planet is guaranteed a death, tribes or societies are not so obligated. As long as a community can retain political and social integrity and as long as the communities men and women raise competent and viable offspring (in excess of 2100 children per 1000 mothers), then the community can expect perpetual existence. Cultural formulae which are so forged as to churn out loyal, fecund, well-socialized citizens are cultural formulae destined for longevity. In America of 1920, a formula which had been honed for millennia was intact and effective. To wit: the home was an economic unit with very strong division of labor. Wives were homemakers. Men were breadwinners. Infant mortality was, by contemporary standards, horrifically high. Accordingly, if replacement value were to be achieved per family unit, then consecutive and successive pregnancies were a simply part of life. Artificial birth control was often inserted into the folklore as an event which was inappropriate or unnatural or sinful. Regardless of the level of individual discomfort or the thwarting of personal preferences, the cultural formula which had proven successful for the commonweal was perpetuated by its own momentum.

Then three "ideas" began to be percolated into the worldview of the American mega-tribe. And, as argued below, these ideas
made quite a difference. The three ideas or expectations were (1) the government can and should be able to replace the father as a primary breadwinner for a family, (2) marriage was to maximize the happiness or personal fulfillment quotient per spouse, and (3) fathers were supernumery or optional.

**Expectation #1: Government as breadwinner.**

Aid to Dependent Children (ADC) was a program begun in 1935 to give financial help widowed mothers who, by becoming a widow, were shorn of a breadwinner: a husband/father. By the 1960s, ADC had become Aid to Families with dependent children (AFDC). The focus of the aid shifted from helping the widow to helping the child. All families with children became potential recipients. Three Supreme Court decisions—King v. Smith, 392 U.S. 309 (1968), Shapiro v. Thompson 394 U.S. 618 (1969) and Goldberg v. Kelly 397 U.S. 254 (1970)—disallowed distinctions and arbitrary or discretionary decisions to be made by local/state agencies in regards to eligibility. The only criterion for becoming a recipient was that the child was in a family with a low enough level of resources. As itemized below, aid in the form of cash was soon-supplemented with aid in the form of food, housing, health care and education. With the advent of their entitlement programs, the government, whether it be local, state or federal, had become a direct competitor to the traditional father-role as a provider or a breadwinner for his children. Hence, in the context of this direct competition, the mother was in a position to exchange the husband/father for the government. By 1994, major categories of governmental aid through entitlement programs had included: cash (Aid to Families with Dependent Children [AFDC], food (food stamps; Women, Infants, & Children [WIC] benefits; and free-lunch, free-breakfast programs in schools, summer meals), medical care (Medicaid), fuel (fuel allowances), education (Head Start, Pell grants), and housing (public housing). According to average figures from national data for the model year 1994, a family which qualified for all of these entitlements could receive cash, goods, and services worth between $15,347-$23,184. See Table 1. Note that none of these benefits is taxable. Also note that state and local programs, which are not included in this analysis, spend 64% as much as did the federal programs (in 1994).
Table 1.

**Yearly entitlement benefits available from federal (only) programs: 1994 (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1996).**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>National Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aid to families with dependent children (AFDC)</td>
<td>$4,572.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child care</td>
<td>$1,348.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food stamps</td>
<td>$2,089.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medicaid (AFDC)</td>
<td>$1,265.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing</td>
<td>$4,981.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School breakfast</td>
<td>$166.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School lunch</td>
<td>$174.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer feeding</td>
<td>$100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fuel</td>
<td>$270.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women, infants, children program (WIC)</td>
<td>$382.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BASE SUB-TOTAL</td>
<td>$15,347.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social security on $15,347 @ 7.65%</td>
<td>$1,174.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>$16,521.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BASE SUB-TOTAL ($15,347) plus Head Start at $6,146</td>
<td>$21,493.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plus social security @ 7.65% plus taxes @ 15%*</td>
<td>$25,106.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BASE SUB-TOTAL ($15,347) plus one Pell grant at</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$1,691</td>
<td>$17,038.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plus social security @ 7.65% plus taxes @ 15%</td>
<td>$19,590.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BASE SUB-TOTAL ($15,347) plus Head Start and one</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pell grant</td>
<td>$23,184.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plus social security @ 7.65% plus taxes @ 15%</td>
<td>$27,203.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Four exemptions, standard deductions

However, if a man's earning capacity is used to develop a benchmark comparison for the value of government entitlements, a somewhat different mosaic emerges. The range computed above (from $15,347-$23,184) represents disposable income. Employees must pay Social Security taxes plus federal taxes (plus state and local taxes, depending on the locale).

If the federal taxes (including Social Security, but not including any state or local taxes) are added to the base salary, then a man would have to earn between $16,521 and $27,203 in salary to match the Federal programs. See Table 1. If he works at minimum wage ($4.75 in 1996) for 52 weeks at 40 hours per week, a man
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will earn only $9,880 and so will not even come close to matching the benefits available though entitlement programs. The salary required to match benefits through federal programs exceeds the income of at least 27% to 58% of single men in 1994 (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1996). Since single men are those who are eligible to marry single women, the 27% to 58% of all single men whose incomes are below the level required to match entitlement benefits from the government are those who feel most acutely the effects of trying to compete with the federal government as a provider.

In terms of enhanced independence for the woman, the "government programs" have two advantages when compared to the husband. First, the "government program" is remarkably reliable in its payments. A "government program" cannot be laid off nor fired. A "government program" will not quit work. A "government program" has excellent credit, and vendors are profoundly confident that the goods & services rendered will be reimbursed. Women are acutely aware of the greater reliability of the "government programs" versus the husband/father. Men are equally aware that the women are acutely aware.

Second, a "government program" does not require negotiations on the dispersal and allocation of available funds. The "government program" does not sit down with the woman to prioritize a budget. Husbands/fathers are much more involved in the fate of disposable income. Informal folklore and formal marriage & family courses and textbooks are replete with the problems, friction, and frustrations of husbands and wives in their attempts to negotiate and prioritize their family finances.

Within this crucible of potential dissension between men and women, one can imagine the added parameter of a man who generates low income and, because he is poorly educated, semi-skilled, and marginally employed, his future prospects for increased access to resources are dim. The man simply is not going to be able to provide for his children at the level of resources that the "government " can and will provide in his absence. The man knows this. The woman knows this. The man knows that the woman knows this.

In the calculus of human relationships, the possibilities for reliable resources without dependence upon a spouse and without negotiations with a spouse create incentives for a woman
to preclude legal entanglements with a significant other. That is, she is less likely to get married. If she does decide to get married, the same potentials of low levels of resources from the husband/father serve as incentives to jettison the father of her children. With one husband jettisoned, the probabilities of the woman re-marrying are fairly low. Women who do receive entitlement packages from the “government” have disproportionately lower rates of re-marriage (Bennett, Bloom & Miller 1995, McLanahan & Booth 1989).

This generalized social dynamic of decision making has a negative feed-back loop. Entitlements, not unlike any other governmental entity, tend to have a one-way ratchet: programs are easier to initiate and augment than to terminate or constrict. Accordingly, with a (mythological) “middle-class” childhood as a benchmark, the “government” (whether state or federal) would always be under social and political pressures to “up the ante” or raise the threshold of an appropriate, if sub-optimal, set of entitlements. To fund the incremental entitlements, the “government” would have to raise taxes. Increased taxation on wages and salaries, but not on entitlements, systematically adds to the proportion of men who are not economically competitive with “government” programs as providers for their children.

Expectation #2: Marriage as a means to personal fulfillment

As mentioned earlier, there is a general consensus that “marriage” is a cross-cultural universal (Brown 1991, Levinson & Malone 1980, Stephens, 1963, Van den Berghe 1979). Nonetheless, the attempt to construct a definition of marriage which would neatly delineate the diverse, disparate, variegated and polyglot societies around the world has proven vexing to anthropologists. If nothing else, humans are an inventive and symbolic creature. However, at base, a couple of essentials seem to be universal in the institution of marriage. (A) Marriage publicly announces and sanctions that the married couple can have sexual relations with each other. Other avenues of sexual adventures may occur, but, (i) if two people are “married”, then (ii) sexual relations would be appropriate. If (i) they were not married, then (ii) sexual relations then may or may not be appropriate. (B) Marriage aligns a man with a woman’s children. That is, as mentioned earlier, marriage

Leach's (1955, p.183) list of features of marriage is a little more structured, but essentially encompasses the same two concepts as above. Leach's list includes the following. Marriage is:

1. To establish the legal father of a woman's children.
2. To establish the legal mother of a man's children.
3. To give one spouse a sexual monopoly in the other spouse's sexuality.
4. To give one spouse partial or monopoistic rights to the other spouse's domestic and other labor services.
5. To give one spouse partial or total rights over property belonging or potentially accruing to the other spouse.
6. To establish a joint fund of property—a partnership—for the benefit of the children of the marriage.
7. To establish a socially significant "relationship of affinity" between the husband and his wife's brothers.

"Marriage", as an institution, had not been incorporated as a vehicle for personal happiness or personal fulfillment. For most of known cultures, for most of their known existence, "romantic love" was generally viewed as a fortuitous happenstance for the betrothed couple, but was neither a necessary nor a sufficient precondition for marriage. The industrial revolution harbingered the death knell to peasant farming and the family as an economic unit. With economics removed, romantic love filled the gap for a rationale to be married. For twentieth century America, as elsewhere, expectations for "marriage" were transduced from economic survival to being happy.

Accordingly, if a "marriage" was not generating the appropriate levels of happiness, then a divorce seemed an eminently logical recourse. Recent surveys which sought out reasons for divorce found the obvious. "Divorces" were petitioned because at least one of the spouses was not happy enough (Burns, 1984, Cleek & Pearson, 1985, Gigy & Kelly 1992, Greif & Pabst, 1988: Thurnher et al. 1983; cf Greif 1985). See Appendix II for the data.

In the 1960's, with "freedom and personal liberty" given high marks for individual goals and socially sanctioned priorities,
divorce was envisioned as a reasonable solution to the problem of adults who no longer wanted to be married to each other. However, "divorce" was encumbered by the judicial, religious, and societal restraints which had been specifically constructed to prevent divorce: a fragmentation of the economic unit. In at least partial response to these restraints, California's no-fault divorce law (Family Law act of 1969, ch. 1608, 1969 Cal. Stat. 3312, 3314–51) became effective in 1970 (see Kay 1987, Glendon 1989 for discussion). With California as a precedent, "no-fault" divorce, as a legal device to end a marriage, quickly swept across the nation. Within a generation, every state had adopted some version of "no-fault" divorce. Of interest, the generic version of "no-fault" divorce—across the U.S.—makes no distinctions between a marriage with minor children and a marriage with no minor children. Such was the power of the new folklore which defined that a good marriage necessitated happy spouses.

Divorce: petitioners & respondents & children. For the U.S., in 1993, over a million (1,075,000) minor children were involved in a divorce situation. Most of these children remained with the mother. In some jurisdictions, despite judicial edicts which have proclaimed gender neutrality in terms of custody (McIntyre & Sussman, 1995, Westfall 1994, Weyrauch & Katz 1983), mothers gained custody in 90% of the divorce cases (Sack 1987, Sitarz 1990). In fact, in 1994, more minor children were living with neither parent (4%) than with father only (3%). Twenty-eight percent were living with mother-only, and 65% lived with both parents (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1995).

In terms of national data, it is important to note that women predominant in the petitioning for divorce. For divorces which involve no children, the ratio is 1.6 to 1.0. If one or more minor children are involved in a divorce, the woman’s tendency to petition for divorce increases, and the man’s tendency to petition for divorce decreases. Depending upon the number of minor children involved, the ratios range from 2.3–2.4 to 1.0 (National Center for Health Statistics 1989, 1996). See Chadwick & Heaton (1992) for similar data. See Table 2. Most (52.6%) of the men’s petitions for a divorce involve no children. Most (57.3%) of the women’s petitions for a divorce do involve one or more children. See Table 2. It
Table 2.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of children</th>
<th>Status of petitioner:</th>
<th>Ratio of Wife to husband</th>
<th>Status of petitioner:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Husband</td>
<td>Wife</td>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>35.5%</td>
<td>55.9%</td>
<td>8.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sd</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One</td>
<td>27.8%</td>
<td>64.8%</td>
<td>7.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sd</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two</td>
<td>27.6%</td>
<td>64.7%</td>
<td>7.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sd</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three or more</td>
<td>27.4%</td>
<td>65.7%</td>
<td>7.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sd</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All numbers</td>
<td>31.3%</td>
<td>60.2%</td>
<td>8.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sd</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
should be also be re-stated that women’s primary reasons for their willingness to end the marriage were psychological reasons, e.g. lack of fulfillment, lack of sufficient happiness in the marriage, or lack of romance.

Then, once again, the interface of science and society became in evidence. Our society wanted to be re-assured that divorce was not troublesome for the children involved. Accordingly, studies were conducted which, unsurprisingly enough, found no deficits in children of divorce. Studies which did suggest that single-mother families entail the highest risk in terms of social mal-adaptation and psychological well-being of the child (Kellam, Ensminger, & Turner 1977, Bohman 1971) were simply ignored. The conventional wisdom was pre-potent: surely it was better to live in a quiet house with one parent than to live in a noisy, raucous house with two parents who did not like each other. The title of Wallerstein & Kelly’s (1980) book is informative: *Surviving the breakup: How children and parents cope with divorce* (emphasis added).

By 1989, revisionism was occurring, Wallerstein & Blakeslee’s (1989) sequel to the 1980 book was titled: *Second chances: men, women & children a decade after divorce who wins, who loses*. The authors chronicle children grown to adulthood who were anything but pleased at the prior breakup of their family. See Silvestri (1992) and Wallerstein et al. (1992) for similar analyses. The much ballyhooed blended family—mine, yours, ours—was not reported by children to be as nurturing or as stress free/minimal as their biological nuclear family (Furstenberg 1987, Amato & Keith 1991, Booth & Amato 1994, Dawson 1991, Downey 1994, Hanson, McLanahan, & Thomson 1996). See Popenoe (1996) and Blankenhorn (1995) for reviews of the literature.

*Expectation #3: Fathers as supernumerary or optional.*

By the late 1990’s, a clear dilemma had occurred within the American society: “What to do with U.S. fathers?” Two very separate images were being generated (see Furstenberg’s [1988, pp. 193–218]) “Good dads-bad dads: two faces of fatherhood” and Coolsen’s (1993) “Half full or Half empty?” for complementary discussions). One image seemed rather pleasant and congenial: the modern, caring, in touch-with-their-feelings men, many of
whom, along the way, had somehow managed to view themselves as rather morally superior to their own fathers who were viewed as inflexible patriarchs. The second image was anything but congenial: the Deadbeat Dad. These were tawdry men who abandoned their wives and children and had absconded with the family's treasure. The "good" image will be examined first.

The image of the good Dad. A plethora of literature—a cottage industry—appeared noting that a new and improved father had arrived in America. These newest new fathers were seen as quite distinct from their male ancestors: ancestors who were clearly deficient as fathers. Kimball's (1988) 50-50 parenting advocated the equality of parenting: essentially based on the mother template. Ritner (1992) had one of the more descriptive titles: Fathers' Liberation ethics: A holistic ethical advocacy for active nurturant fathering. Garbarino (1993) who was undoubtedly dissatisfied with current fathers wrote "Reinventing fatherhood" in which he asks and then answers his own question: "What must we do? To develop a new kind of father, we must encourage a new kind of man. In My Fair Lady, Professor Higgins asks, 'Why can't a woman be more like a man?' It's time to ask the opposite question. If we are to rewrite the parenting scripts to emphasize nurturing and the investment of self in children's lives, we need to ask, 'Why can't a man be more like a woman?'"

Louv (1995) was also in favor of a re-construction of "father". In "Remaking fatherhood", Louv wrote (p. 182): "As men work toward redefining what fatherhood means, they need to call upon all their talents and capacities and hopes . . . Although these instincts are common to virtually all fathers, men are only beginning to find the words to describe what fatherhood makes them feel".

Coolsen (1993) asks a question, but does not provide an answer: "Can we create a society . . . in which fathers themselves are willing to give up their old authoritarian role and act as partners with their spouse in child rearing and everyday family life? On the dust jacket of Sears' (1991) book Keys to becoming a father a blurb reads: "Fathers today are playing a larger parenting role than ever before. Here is a doctor's advice to men on all aspects of fatherhood, from assisting at childbirth through sharing childcare
functions with mom. Most of all, this book offers insights into getting joy from being a father”.

Colman & Colman (1988) synthesized a problem and then solved it: to wit: “. . . we summarize the dilemma: ‘The behavior of fathers is under attack, but the concept of ‘father’ has remained relatively stable. Men who become nurturant in the family often feel that they are ‘mothering’ rather than ‘fathering’. It is difficult for a man to feel like a gentle, caring parent and like a man at the same time.”

Bronstein & Cowan’s (1988) edited book was entitled: Fatherhood Today: Men’s Changing role in the family. The editors seemed convinced any changes would be for the better. Rothman’s (1989) publication was entitled: Recreating Motherhood: Ideology & technology in a patriarchal society. On page 213, Rothman writes: “Freud was right; mother-rearing has consequences that are not good. Freud was wrong: it is not women who are so horribly damaged, but men. . . . The loss, the ominous subhumanity, is men’s. The solution is to involve men fully in child care, enabling boy children to experience the continuity, connectedness, womanliness in themselves that would make them whole.” Streiker’s (1989) Fathering: Old game, new rules shared with the reader his view of the even more newer and more improved U.S. father (p. 36): “Dad needs a new image (or new images) of who he is, what he does, and why he is important. He needs an understanding of himself and his family that takes cognizance of the way things are and yet empowers him to make a differences. He needs to throw away and discard inappropriate images, for not only do current images of father and of the family invalidate all of us, but they are warped by outmoded expectations, unworkable models and mind boggling confusion”. Then he asks the, perhaps rhetorical, question (p. 129): “How then does a man get in touch with the tender giving and caring aspects of his own being?” Streiker then (1989, p.150) proffers the trilogy: “Great fathering requires three things: being there, being aware, and being real. Everything else is dessert”.

Pittman (1993) explains masculinity to the reader with his article: “Fathers and Sons: What it takes to be a man”. The reader is informed that “We know that raising children is the central experience of life, the greatest source of self-awareness the true
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foundation, of pride and joy, the most eternal bond with a partner. We know that being a father is life's fullest expression of masculinity. So why did so many men forego this for so long, and will the current crop of post-patriarchal fathers fare any better?" (p. 52).

For those men who needed a how-to book, Levant & Kelly (1989) were able to supply Between father and child: How to become the kind of father you want to be. The authors are clear in their goal in that they "... want to change the terms of the father-child relationship from distant, wary and respectful to warm, open, intimate, and tender".

None of these authors mentioned that the prior generation, which they were castigating, had half-again more children, a divorce rate about half the current one, and whose percentage of out-of-wedlock births were less than half of the current percentage. There was also no mention that the prior generation had managed to survive a Great Depression and were on the winning side of World War II.

It is also useful to note that most of the literature which is described above was not intended to be seen as outgrowths of the scientific enterprise. The samples of subjects that were tested, if they existed at all, were usually very small and either self-selected and/or highly non-random. The image of the U.S. father is that which was being crafted by the authors. They were sculpting folklore. The bulk of the literature which focused on the U.S. fathers did not attempt to establish behavioral central tendencies on what they, the fathers, were, in fact, doing or even attempting.

During the same time frame, a second very different imagery on the exact same subject—the U.S. father—was being created.

The image of the less than good Dad. Pirani (1989) concisely states this alternate image: "Fathers are missing; away at work; separated by divorce from their children. Paternal authority has been eroded, yet paternalism is still in evidence, and under attack by the women's movement. The reliability of male political leaders is at a low point, the spiritual fathers are alienated, the God the Father is a fading concept."

Popenoe (1993) was less lyrical, but more analytical. He wrote: "Recent family decline is more serious than any decline in the past
because what is breaking up is the nuclear family, the fundamental unit stripped of relatives and left with two essential functions that cannot be performed better elsewhere: childrearing and the provision to its members of affection and companionship."

As early as the 1980s, Russell (1983) presented data that indicated that more egalitarian marriages were also more fragile and were more prone to separation or restructuring (along a more traditional format) than were less egalitarian marriages. Lewis & O'Brien’s (1987) edited book *Reassessing fatherhood: New observations on fathers and the modern family* also waved a flag of caution. On page one, they write “In contrast to much of the literature, this book reflects critically on the ‘new father’. Despite the wave of optimism driving contemporary accounts, the evidence for the existence of such a man is much less convincing.” Also in the mid-1980s, Lewis (1986) interpreted his data on fathers thus: “There is no evidence to suggest that father infant relationships are closer today than they were. We might expect to see differences in the small amount of comparative data that exists, but in effect the figures which Schaffer & Emerson (1964, p. 175) produced twenty years ago are *broadly similar* to those presented in Chapter 7” (emphasis added).

Blankenhorn’s (1995) book’s title is rather straightforward *Fatherless America: Confronting our most urgent social problem*. One of Blankenhorn’s working premises is that “Fatherlessness is now approaching a rough parity with fatherhood as a defining feature of American childhood.” If a critical mass were to be reached and the fatherhood role were to be adopted by a shrinking minority of U.S. men, no one has any clue on the ramifications of such a structural shift in the U.S. culture.

*The Deadbeat Dad.* The phrase and specter of the “Deadbeat Dad” began to filter through the professional and popular presses/media. For example, in the mid-eighties, Cutright (1986) wrote “Child support and responsible male procreative behavior”. A search in one of the current data bases—Infotrac—found that there were 38 sources which included the key word “Deadbeat”. Of those 38, 20 were aligned with “Dad”, hence Deadbeat Dad. A search for the key words “Deadbeat” and “mother” found four sources. All four described how mothers deal with Deadbeat
Dads. There were no sources which used the phrase “Deadbeat Mom”. The titles of articles related to Deadbeat Dads included: “Collecting from deadbeat dads” (Mansnerus 1996), “Deadbeat dads under fire” (Cross 1996). “Triumphing over a deadbeat dad” (Anonymous 1995), “Clinton cracks down on deadbeat parents” (Laabs 1995), “Dunning deadbeats” (Van Biema 1995). Van Biema’s abstract is informative: “The Clinton Administration has taken aim at deadbeat dads and Congress has given new child-support enforcement tools to the states. The new form of bounty hunters who seek out these deadbeat dads are discussed” (emphases added). How the men came to be separated from their children was very systematically avoided.

The role for the U.S. father. The U.S. literati and academics, starting about 1976, began the task of deciding how American men should perform their role as father. Lamb’s (1976) academic book The role of the father in child development, and Levine’s (1976) popular book Who will raise our children? serve as useful benchmarks. Two shifts concerning paternal expectations quickly occurred.

Shift #1: Father the underachiever. Until the mid-1970s, fathers had been viewed by academia as being irrelevant to the cognitive, social, and social development of their young children (see Demos 1986, Griswold 1993, Lamb 1976, 1981 LaRossa 1997, Mackey 1985, 1996, for further examples and discussion, cf Biller 1971, 1974, Hamilton 1977, Lynn 1974). It was the mother-child dyad which was intensively analyzed and which was the focus of theories, e.g. Bowlby (1973, 1982, 1988). For example, in the Foss series (1961–1969) on child development, there were 91 references to maternal/mother in the index, but only one reference to paternal/father. The one reference was Itani’s work with the rhesus macaque monkey. But, due to Lamb and Levine inter alios, father the irrelevant became father the underachiever. The underachieving was predicated on the mother-template, i.e. men should become more like mothers. Risman (1986) summed the leitmotif clearly with her title: “Can men ‘mother’?” Hanson & Bozett (1985, p. 14) summed up the worldview of the academics and the literati with their statement: “In general, we believe that men need to assume more responsibility for children rearing and homemaking... many (men) are relatively ineffective in child
care, seem reluctant to increase their participation or are unable to participate because of external circumstances”. But no evidence was found or presented that indicated that American men—as a class—were going to adopt the template of the mother-role (Coverman & Sheley 1986, Lewis 1986, Shelton 1992, Hochschild 1989, Palkovitz 1988, Coltrane & Ishii-Kuntz 1992). Bartz (1978, p. 213) foreshadowed men’s intransigence with: “however, fathers’ unwillingness to seek education help with the parental role is a problem more resistant to change. There are emotional and attitudinal factors involved here which have not yet been thoroughly explored.” What did occur was that families which did adopt gender-egalitarian families were more prone to dissolution (Booth & Amato, 1994, MacDermid, Huston, & McHale 1990, Radin 1988, Radin & Goldsmith 1989, Russell 1983, Williams & Radin 1993).

Shift #2: Father the domestic. Since men were not going to be mother surrogates, another tack was attempted: men, to become better fathers, should become better husbands by equalizing the domestic chores within the family, i.e. by becoming better wives (Hochschild 1989, Shelton 1992, Shelton & John 1993, Coltrane & Ishii-Kuntz 1992, Nakhaie 1995). Father Theodore M. Hesburgh epitomized the spirit of the new shift with his sentiment: “The most important thing a father can do for his children is to love their mother”. (Dr. Charles Shedd [1977, p. 9] was simply ahead of his time when he wrote: “As I see it, my number one job as a father is to love my children’s mother well.” He repeated the message on page 11: “Dad’s first job? To love his children’s mother well.” Hochschild’s (1989) seminal work: The second shift; working parents and the revolution at home concisely articulated the position. Hochschild’s thesis was that women were over-worked in the home and men were under-worked. Shelton’s (1992) Women, men, and time: Gender difference in paid work, housework, and leisure found the same pattern, and so did Calasanti & Bailey (1991), and Coltrane & Ishii-Kuntz (1992), and Deutsch, Lussier, & Servis (1993), and Shelton & John (1993), as did Lindsey (1994). Sheley & Coverman (1986) conducted a longitudinal survey, but could find no evidence that male participation in housework was increasing. What did happen was that divorce, again with mothers
as the dominant petitioners, stabilized at a high level, and that the percentage of births which were out-of-wedlock births continued to increase.

Synopsis

Under the aegis of (1) governmental decisions to compete with the father as a breadwinner, (2) individual fulfillment and happiness, and (3) the amorphous imagery being presented by government, media, and academia on American fatherhood, fathers were being systematically and silently separated from their children.

Consequences of the Father & Child Separation

It is certainly arguable that happy divorcees are preferable to unhappy wives, that more reliable governments are an improvement over unreliable husbands, and that the traditional father was an anachronistic troglodyte whose passing both should occur and should be celebrated. Nonetheless, there is a cost to the above exchanges. By and large, children without fathers have deficits when compared to children who have their biological and social fathers residing with them. These putative deficits are examined below.

Costs to children without fathers.

(1) Child abuse. Although rarely phrased in such a way, a resident biological father is a reliable health insurance policy for his children. As soon as any other domestic arrangement occurs, i.e. as soon as any other man other than the biological & social father becomes proximate to children which are not his own, the children are at increased risk to physical abuse (Daly & Wilson 1980, 1985, 1987, Gil 1970, Hegar, Zuravin, & Orme, 1994; Johnson 1974, Lenington 1981, Mann 1996; see Kasim, Shafie & Cheah [1994] for an example outside of the U.S.). If the child is a girl, then the increase in physical abuse risk is complemented with an increased risk to sexual abuse (Gordon & Creighton 1988, Immerman & Mackey 1997, Russell 1986, Tyler 1986, cf Wassil-Grimm, 1995).

Hence, if a mother (i) chooses not to co-reside with the biological & social father of her children, and (ii) chooses a life-style other
than unrelenting chastity, then her choices elevate the chances that her children will be physically/sexually abused. The long-term sequelae of physical abuse on either boys or girls is an unknown entity (aside from death which has a predictable future). On the other hand, the long term *sequelae* of sexual abuse upon girls is known and is extremely expensive to the violated-girl-grown-to-adulthood and to whatever social group in which she would find herself. The expenses are certainly psychological, as well as sociological and economic (Alexander 1993, Bagley & Ramsay 1985; Briere & Runtz 1988, Courtois 1979, DeYoung 1982, Goodwin, McCarthy, & Divasto 1981, Miller et al. 1978, Peters, 1988, Russell 1986, Sedney & Brooks 1984, Stein, Golding, Siegel, Burnam & Sorenson 1988, Schetky, Angel & Morrison 1979, see Browne & Finkelhor [1986] and Immerman & Mackey [1997] for reviews of the literature). [No long-term sequelae of sexual abuse against boys were found].

(2) *Children's deficits in adjustment and well-being.* Hanson, McLanahan, & Thomson (1996) surveyed data from the “1987–88 National Survey of Families and Households” to compare childhood well-being in different structures of families: original, two-parent households, single-mother households, and stepfather households. The authors began their presentation with the statement:

“One puzzling finding in the literature on disrupted families is the absence of a remarriage benefit for children in step-family households. Although the remarriage of parents increases a family’s economic security and brings an additional parent figure into the household, children in step-families exhibit about the same number of adjustment problems as children in single-parent families and more problems than children in original two-parent families” (page 141).

In their analysis of the results, Hanson, McLanahan, & Thomson illustrate that well-being of children in “original, two-parent households” exceeds the well-being of children in stepfather households or single-parent households for all eight of the diagnostic indices: (i) school performance, (ii) grade point average, (iii) no school behavior problems, (iv) low externalizing (v) low internalizing, (vi) sociability, (vii) initiative, and (viii) quality of life.
(3) *Educational disengagement.* The U.S. Department of Education (Hofferth, West & Henke 1994) was concerned about students' low achievement in the educational system. In its analysis of a survey of students and their achievement levels, the Department of Education isolated eight major variables/factors which were most predictive of poor school adjustment on the part of the students. One of the eight factors was "single parent household" (read: mother-only household). A second was poverty. A term which was used to highlight the poor achievement was "disengagement". Once the child was disengaged from the school environment—and subsequently performed quite poorly in that environment—it was virtually impossible to re-engage that child into the school's mainstream (Finn 1993). In fact, living with one parent was a marker or predictor for lowered levels of attending college. Conversely, living with two parents was a predictor of an increased chance for a child to attend college (Gose 1996). Once married, children of single-parent families are also more likely to develop marital problems of their own (Morrison & Cherlin 1995; Wallerstein & Blakeslee 1989); just as individuals who are divorced and remarried have an increased likelihood to be re-divorced (Goode 1993; National Center for Health Statistics 1996).

*Out-of-wedlock births.* Across states plus D. C., an increase in the percentage of out-of-wedlock births is related to increased levels of infant mortality, of congenital syphilis, and of high-school drop-outs. See Appendix III for statistical analysis. The problem of infant mortality is self-evident. A child born with congenital syphilis can acquire a myriad of mental and physical problems which negatively affect his or her life chances. Similarly, a child who drops out of high-school is severely limited in his or her life-chances.

*Fatherlessness & the attenuation of sons' violent behavior.* If a responsible and continuous adult male role-model—i.e. a father or father-figure—is unavailable to young, developing boys, then those boys become more prone to engage in deviant or anti-social behavior. That is, there is a tendency for children from fatherless homes to be over-represented in categories of unwanted behavior (Adams, et al. 1984, Bereczkei & Csanaky 1996, Blau & Blau 1982, Chilton & Merkle 1972, Monahan 1972, Mosher 1969,

Out-of-wedlock births and violent crime (1987–1993). For the time interval from 1987–1993, the average correlation between rates of violent crime and percentage of all births which were out-of-wedlock births in the U.S. (fifty states plus D.C.) was significant ($r_p = .790 \ [sd = .021]; p < .001; n = 51$). The mean percentage of explained variance was 62.4% ($r_{p}^{2} = .624 = 62.4\%$). See Table 3. The level of male unemployment—an index of poverty—had no influence on these figures [see Appendix III]).

Violent crime in the U.S. across time (1975–1993). Taking the U.S. as a unit, from 1975 to 1993 (or 19 years or $n = 19$), the correlation between the percent of all births which were out-of-wedlock births and rates of violent crime was significant ($r_p = .949; p < .001; n = 19$). Over 90% ($949^2 = .901 = 90.1\%$) of the variability in rates of violent crime can be explained by differential levels of out-of-wedlock births.

A lag between out-of-wedlock births and violent crime rates. Let's begin with the year 1970 and record the variation of the percentage of out-of-wedlock births across (available) states and D.C. ($n = 39$). Then let's add 19 years to 1970 to arrive at the year 1989. That is, males who were born out-of-wedlock in 1970 would be 19 years of age in 1989. Approximately 30% of the individuals arrested for violent crimes are 19 years old or less (U.S. Department of Justice 1995). To avoid isolating an aberrant year, let's do the same procedure for four additional and consecutive years to have a five year interval (1970–1974) for the percentage of out-of-wedlock births and a five year interval (1989–1993) for rates of violent crime. Let's correlate the percentage of out-of-wedlock births per state (& D.C.) in 1970–1974 with the rate of violent crime per state in 1989–1993. The average correlation for the five year comparison was significant ($r_p = .882 \ [s.d. = .014]; p < .001; n = 39$). See Table 3. In addition, this figure is higher ($t = 3.20; p < .01; 2$-tailed; $df = 36$) than the mean correlation between the
Table 3.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Correlations ($r_p$)</th>
<th>Percentage of explained variance: ($r_p)^2$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>.796*</td>
<td>63.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>.773*</td>
<td>59.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>.796*</td>
<td>63.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>.815*</td>
<td>66.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td>.813*</td>
<td>66.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>.780*</td>
<td>60.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>.757*</td>
<td>57.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean/(sd)</td>
<td>.790 (.021)*</td>
<td>62.4% (3.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974–1993</td>
<td>.901*</td>
<td>81.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973–1992</td>
<td>.894*</td>
<td>79.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972–1991</td>
<td>.871*</td>
<td>75.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971–1990</td>
<td>.870*</td>
<td>75.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970–1989</td>
<td>.874*</td>
<td>76.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean/(sd)</td>
<td>.882 (.014)*</td>
<td>77.8% (2.5%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a An N of 51 for the years 1987–1993 (50 states plus D.C.)
* = p < .001

percentages of out-of-wedlock births and rates of violent crime from the interval of years (1987–1993), i.e. $r_p = .790$.

In other words, rates of violent crime can be predicted by the percentage of (out-of-wedlock) infants who were born nineteen years earlier. Of course, after nineteen years, the infants are no longer babies, but are perfectly capable of energetic, adult physical behaviors.

Summary

It is suggested here that the widespread and systematic separation of fathers from their children resulted, in part, from three shifts in the cultural expectations in the American mega-tribe.
First, the idea that the government should compete with the traditional father role as a primary breadwinner was introduced and accepted. Second, the idea that marriage was to maximize personal fulfillment or happiness rather than to socialize children was introduced and accepted. Third, the literati and academics decision that a traditional father-figure was simply inappropriate in 20th century America was introduced and accepted (at least by other literati and academics). Their own vision of a replacement for the traditional father-figure seems to be in a state of flux.

It is reasonable to assume that the separation of fathers from their children has enhanced the lives of the ex-wives or single parent mothers. Furthermore, it is also reasonable to assume that, if the women’s enhancements exceed the deficits experienced by the men, then an overall net advantage has accrued to the commonweal. However, the lives of the fathers’ children are another matter. An impressive array of evidence has been gathered to indicate that the presence of a child’s biological and social father enhances the life of the child. The absence of such a father creates deficits for the child.

References


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APPENDIX I

Correlations among the four demographic variables.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VARIABLE</th>
<th>Out-of-wedlock births</th>
<th>Birth rates</th>
<th>Percent of working wives^a</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Divorce rates</td>
<td>.844*</td>
<td>-.874*</td>
<td>.875*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Out-of-wedlock births</td>
<td>-.765*</td>
<td></td>
<td>.966*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>46</td>
<td></td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birth rates</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-.795*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

^a From 1920–1959, all (ever) married women, from 1960 onward, only married women living with their husbands.

* p < .001
## APPENDIX II

Top ten reasons that women gave for petitioning for divorce (by rank and by percentage of women who "checked" the reason for the divorce) for four surveys

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Husband not home enough</td>
<td>69.7%</td>
<td></td>
<td>Growing apart</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lack of communication</td>
<td>69.7%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Wife is unhappy</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Feeling unloved</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wife is unhappy</td>
<td>59.9%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Incompatibility</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Sexual problems</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Incompatibility</td>
<td>56.4%</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Emotional Abuse</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Other women</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Emotional Abuse</td>
<td>55.5%</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Financial problems</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Unmet needs</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Financial problems</td>
<td>32.9%</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Sexual problems</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Differing values</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sexual problems</td>
<td>32.1%</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Spouse's drinking</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Feeling belittled</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Spouse's drinking</td>
<td>30.0%</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Wife's lack of interest</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Spouse's emotional problems</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wife's lack of interest</td>
<td>25.3%</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Husband's cruelty</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Financial problems</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Husband's cruelty</td>
<td>21.7%</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>In-laws/relatives</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Conflict over gender roles</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In-laws/relatives</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
<td></td>
<td>Disagreement over children</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td></td>
<td>Fighting</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## APPENDIX II (cont.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RANK</th>
<th>Reasons</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Reasons</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Reasons</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Spouse's drinking</td>
<td>18.75%</td>
<td>Conflict in lifestyles</td>
<td>24.0%</td>
<td>Marital incompatibility</td>
<td>46.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Spouse has changed</td>
<td>16.95%</td>
<td>Idiosyncratic</td>
<td>19.5%</td>
<td>Husband was unfaithful</td>
<td>23.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Spouse is violent</td>
<td>16.45%</td>
<td>Financial reasons</td>
<td>17.1%</td>
<td>Husband had emotional</td>
<td>10.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>problems</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Strife</td>
<td>16.05%</td>
<td>Wife wants increased</td>
<td>15.9%</td>
<td>Mental abused</td>
<td>9.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>freedom</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Idiosyncratic</td>
<td>16.0%</td>
<td>Spouse is indifferent</td>
<td>13.4%</td>
<td>Physically abused</td>
<td>8.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Conflicts over lifestyles</td>
<td>15.4%</td>
<td>Sexual problems</td>
<td>13.4%</td>
<td>Husband left</td>
<td>5.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Spouse is demeaning</td>
<td>15.3%</td>
<td>Spouse has changed</td>
<td>12.2%</td>
<td>Had affair/wanted to</td>
<td>4.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Spouse runs around</td>
<td>14.9%</td>
<td>Spouse is violent</td>
<td>11.0%</td>
<td>Own emotional problems</td>
<td>3.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Financial problems</td>
<td>13.6%</td>
<td>Spouse runs around</td>
<td>9.8%</td>
<td>Husband immature</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Sexual problems</td>
<td>13.6%</td>
<td>Lack of communication</td>
<td>9.8%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX III

Correlations between percentages of births which were out-of-wedlock and rates of congenital syphilis, level of high school dropouts, and rates of violent crime ($n = 51$ [50 states + D.C.]).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>correlated with</th>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Correlation ($r_p$)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1991–1993</td>
<td>Level of out-of-wedlock births</td>
<td>Rates of congenital syphilis</td>
<td></td>
<td>.752 (sd .031)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>Level of out-of-wedlock births</td>
<td>Infant mortality rates&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td></td>
<td>.798*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>Level of out-of-wedlock births</td>
<td>Percent of high school dropouts</td>
<td></td>
<td>.545*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987–1993</td>
<td>Level of out-of-wedlock births</td>
<td>Rates of violent crime&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td></td>
<td>.790 (sd .020)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987–1993</td>
<td>Level of out-of-wedlock births</td>
<td>Rates of violent crime</td>
<td></td>
<td>.776 (.021)*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>a</sup> Infant deaths per 1,000 live births  
<sup>b</sup> Number of violent crimes known to police per 100,000 population
Herman Kurthen, Werner Bergmann and Rainer Erb (Eds.), *Antisemitism and Xenophobia in Germany after Unification*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1997. $ 65 hardcover, $ 29.95 papercover.

This book sets out to describe and explain from a multidisciplinary perspective the wave of xenophobic violence, the electoral success of far-right parties and the upsurge of aggressive antisemitic incidents between 1991 and 1994 in Germany. And this is exactly what the book provides in its thirteen chapters, broadly subdivided into three areas of concern; namely, general facts and findings about antisemitism and xenophobia, a description of the groups and organizations promoting antisemitism and xenophobia and the reactions to antisemitism and xenophobia by the wider populace as well as the groups targeted by hate groups.

The different chapters, which are well written and balanced, cover a large field but can also be read alone. They place the debate within an international context and discuss empirical and methodological issues. The book also provides a calendar of antisemitic and xenophobic incidents between 1989 and 1994, and contains a very detailed bibliography.

A particular strength of the book is its theoretical rigor and well as its thorough discussion of the political and philosophical origins of antisemitism and xenophobia in Germany. Although the concepts of antisemitism and xenophobia are closely linked, the book makes an interesting distinction between them pointing out that antisemitic behavior is particularly virulent among hate groups who target Jews partly because their acts are a deliberate reaction against Germany’s laws which proscribe antisemitism. While the book suggests that antisemitism is not widespread among the German population, it claims that xenophobia is common and that a general dislike of foreigners is widespread. As the number of migrants from other countries has increased, attitudes towards them have hardened. Negative feelings have been exacerbated by economic adversity, unemployment and the
exploitation of popular concerns by the media. These negative attitudes are not, however, generally directed against Jews.

The issues raised in this book are not only interesting and enlightening from an academic point of view but from a public policy point of view as well. There is real danger that unless decisive action is taken, hate groups will exert greater influence in the future. The book deserves to be widely read. It is a very valuable resource for anyone interested in antisemitic and xenophobia, the resurgence of neo-fascist and other right wing ideologies in Germany.

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The debate over U.S. immigration policy is complex, but in essence, it is a debate between the “admissionists” and the “restrictionists.” The former want immigration to be increased, or at least kept at its present level. The latter, conversely, want it reduced. As the debate between these two sides heats up, recent surveys show that a growing number of Americans are siding with the restrictionists. It is evident, moreover, that the leaders of the restrictionist movement are becoming more vocal and are waging a well-funded and highly-organized campaign to curtail immigration and to make English the nation’s official language. There are indications, too, that the intensification of this campaign has coincided with a rise in prejudice and hostility against foreigners. In light of these trends, some admissionists claim, the U.S. is experiencing a resurgence of nativism.

That is the thesis of this book, a collection of essays edited by a law professor at the University of Florida. An admissionist, he assembled the book to express his dismay over the most salient victory (to date) of the restrictionist movement: the passage in California of Proposition 187, which, among other things, seeks to deny many public services to illegal aliens. The editor sees the arguments behind this proposal, and the other goals of the restrictionists, as reminiscent of the anti-immigrant rhetoric of
exploitation of popular concerns by the media. These negative attitudes are not, however, generally directed against Jews.

The issues raised in this book are not only interesting and enlightening from an academic point of view but from a public policy point of view as well. There is real danger that unless decisive action is taken, hate groups will exert greater influence in the future. The book deserves to be widely read. It is a very valuable resource for anyone interested in antisemitic and xenophobia, the resurgence of neo-fascist and other right wing ideologies in Germany.

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the turn of the century. Thus, he surmises, we are in “an era of recognizable nativism,” and, to be fully understood, this “new nativism” must be critically analyzed (p. 5). To provide this analysis, he has drawn 17 contributors from the social sciences, policy studies, and the law. Most are legal scholars who have written extensively about immigration and ethnicity. Virtually all are, like the editor, strongly opposed to policies that would limit immigration or encourage cultural minorities to assimilate.

The book consists of six parts. The first two introduce the book’s main topics. Part 1 presents two theses: one, the nativism of today is akin to that of the past; and two, Anglo-American elites have, traditionally, taken conflicting positions on immigration, sometimes welcoming foreigners, often rejecting them. Part 2 identifies some fundamental features of the new nativism, focusing on efforts by conservative politicians to secure the U.S. border, restrict immigrants’ access to citizenship and social services, and make English the official language. The thesis here is that such efforts stem from Anglo-Americans’ denial of the modern realities of transnationalism and multiculturalism.

Part 3 asks, what is driving the new nativism? One answer points to the job insecurities of natives, cultural differences between the latter and foreigners, and high, sustained levels of immigration. Another answer is that conservative foundations and think-tanks are orchestrating a campaign to promote the idea that immigrants cause many economic and social ills. According to still another answer, the bellwether state of California is the hotbed of the nativistic sentiments spreading across the country.

Part 4 revisits the topics of Part 1. It is suggested that, historically, U.S. immigration policy has been shaped by the ethnocentrism and xenophobia of Anglo-American elites. It is then asserted that the current restrictionist campaign against illegal immigrants from Mexico is yet another phase of a cycle in which Mexican workers are lured across the border by U.S. employers but later expelled when their labor is no longer needed. The campaign against undocumented Mexicans is further examined in an essay that interprets the effort to restrict access to U.S. citizenship as an attempt to develop a race-based formulation of who is “American.”
Part 5 explores how borders are defined. National boundaries, it is proposed, are socially-defined constructs, not fixed, geopolitical lines. The symbolic meanings of borders, it is argued, are revealed in the metaphors used to describe them and in popular images of those who live beyond them. National boundaries are also, of course, defined by law; yet, according to one essay, recent restrictionist proposals, such as Proposition 187, violate international law and thus may be challenged on legal grounds.

Part 6 concludes the book with analyses of the contemporary discourse on immigration and citizenship. It is noted that the ill-defined term "nativist" is often used by admissionists as a label to discredit the views of restrictionists. In this manner, the term delimits the boundaries of the immigration debate. Next, a manifesto of the restrictionist movement, Peter Brimelow's *Alien Nation*, is examined. The themes of this book, it is claimed, resemble those of Oswald Spengler's *Decline of the West*, a book which supposedly inspired the rise of Nazi Germany. The last two essays lambaste recent calls for more restrictive requirements for U.S. citizenship, placing such calls in the historical context of legal attempts by Anglo-Americans to subordinate people of color.

The views expressed in the essays of *Immigrants Out*, by and large, exemplify the opinions of those pro-immigration academics and activists who, for ideological reasons, believe the U.S. must become more ethnically and culturally diverse than it is today. With few exceptions, the essays inaccurately portray the restrictionist movement as a haven for racial bigots and ignore or downplay the widespread support for immigration policy reform. Most of the essays, furthermore, dismiss or avoid many legitimate concerns of the restrictionists. Among these are the economic costs of immigration, conflicts between immigrants and Blacks, and the cultural unity of American society.

In sum, *Immigrants Out* is, as a whole, a decidedly partisan book. Yet, it would be very useful to readers who wish to learn more about the views of those admissionists who subscribe to the ideology of cultural pluralism. As the book forcefully shows, these views cannot be ignored by restrictionists or by anybody

Pleasantries first. This book is a compilation of first-person and other narratives by women whose lives have been affected by poverty. As such, this volume is sorely needed in the era of welfare-reform and post-War on Poverty politics. Too often, poverty is studied in isolation from other variables or is presented in research that is murky and impersonal. The richness of this text lay in the breadth and diverseness of its contributors and in the intimacy with which most of the contributors discuss the reality of being poor and female in America.

There are many women in this book who have grown up poor and there are just as many who became poor after an ugly, life-changing catastrophe beyond that, hardly any other generalizations can be made. In this book, we learn that not all poor women are African-American and not all of the activists are European-American. And while many poverty activists break the mold of social expectations, there are still too many women who continue to work to maintain tradition and, by extension, poverty. There is great attention paid in this book to the dynamics of race and class in the fight against poverty. The most thought-provoking essay in the text was written by one of the editors, Ann Withorn, on the conundrum of women who work in the system that oppresses women (even though one of her premises, which women who oppress other women may be reacting to a homophobic fear of same-sex intimacy, appears overly-dramatic, even trite). Together, that essay and the bibliography about the political right make the book worth buying.

As a text, this book belongs on the shelves of those interested in social policy, economics, and multi-cultural practice. It
Book Reviews

who seeks to understand both sides of the immigration policy debate.

Robert L. Boyd
Mississippi State University


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As a text, this book belongs on the shelves of those interested in social policy, economics, and multi-cultural practice. It
contains thoughtful analysis on a variety of issues related to po-
vertv including welfare, immigration and violence by known and
emerging scholars such as Mimi Abramovitz and Lisa Catanzarite
and Vilma Ortiz. The book’s true value lies in the tales that are
told not by the scholars but by the survivors. As Robinson so
adamantly put it “... clearly I do count—my story counts—along
with all the other stories of all the different types of women . . .”
(p. 109). So often we make sterile and far removed our discussions
of social policy as to almost render inconsequential the results of
intervention. We prognosticate on the aggregate meanings of leg-
islation and agency rules without giving full attention to personal
implications and individual consequences. This book puts a face
on welfare reform, immigration, violence, devolution, and other
large, contemporary social issues which have been the subjects
of review and overhaul by legislatures and agencies alike in the
name of affecting poverty. None of the contributors in this book
will allow us to ignore their fate.

So here’s where the pleasantries end. This book is destined to
infuriate every one of its readers. One’s anger is evoked continu-
ally by this book because ultimately, this is a book about failure.
There is the failure to prevent poverty from which flow other
large-scale failures that affect people’s lives. There is the failure
of the media to report the truth about so-called welfare reform, the
failure of scholarship to investigate the circumstances of women
of color within the context of poverty, there is the failure of laws
to protect women living in violent homes, the failure of the child-
welfare system to protect young girls in foster care, and the on-
going failure of the patriarchy to support the needs of mothers and
their children. With failure comes either resignation or incentive.
Fortunately, the editors of the text have chosen to concentrate
on the later. Some of the entries in the book offer testimony of
advocates and instructions even, in how to change the system.
In one example, by Claire Cummings and Betty Reid Mandell,
several organizing projects including an alternative newspaper,
videos and a speaker’s bureau have been created in effort to effect
change in one agency, one neighborhood, one college classroom
at a time. It all seems eminently feasible. The final section of the
book is entitled “Talking Across the Tables: Moving Beyond Dia-
logue to Negotiation and Action”. This is somewhat misleading
since other sections of the book include content on how to affect change.

Besides the ire that is naturally raised in the reading of this book, its chief criticism is that it is limited in its geographic purview. Most of the activists seem to come from the northeastern United States (Massachusetts, to be specific) and many of the activists seem to be involved in the same few grassroots organizations. This may be a case of natural social selection; the editors of the book seem active on some level in most of the efforts profiled in this text. Whatever the case, it does perhaps raise the concern of over-localization of a decidedly not local issue.

Tracey Mabrey
Western Michigan University


Studies of domestic and nondomestic crime against women have increased over the past 25 years, but fear of crime and the way it affects women's lives has received less scholarly attention. Fear of crime in women's lives is the topic of this new book by Esther Madriz, a sociologist at the University of San Francisco. Nothing Bad Happens to Good Girls follows and extends the work of feminist theorists and researchers including Griffin, Brownmiller, Dworkin, Stanko, Russell, Ehrenreich, and English by focusing on the ways in which fear of crime contributes to the social control of women. The author's attention to the complex relationship between domestic and nondomestic crime along with her exploration of class and race differences in women's fear of crime are among the greatest contributions of the book.

Madriz gathered information from 140 women through eighteen focus groups and thirty in-depth interviews. Although she does not present a systematic analysis of the data, the author does effectively use women's experiences and opinions to illustrate and support her main points. Madriz includes information on her qualitative methodology and critiques quantitative approaches in criminology in a methodological appendix. The appendix is
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interesting, though the author could have increased its usefulness by including her focus group and interview guides.

Two central arguments of the book are that fear of crime is socially constructed and that it exerts powerful social and political control over women's lives. Madriz begins by noting that women are more likely than men to express fear of crime despite the fact that men have higher rates of victimization. She then wrestles with this "paradox of fear" by reviewing contributions of previous research, the media, and women's socialization to the social construction of fear of crime. Madriz believes that these influences have the overall effect of exacerbating female fear. Her discussion of the role of the media is especially thorough and she makes a strong case that crimes against women are often misrepresented and distorted by both news and entertainment media. Two prime examples are the tendency of the media to eroticize rape and the consistent media focus on women as victims of strangers, despite the fact that women are much more likely to be assaulted by someone they know.

Turning to her second major point, Madriz argues that "fear of crime is a fundamental element in the social control of women because it organizes consent around a strict code of behavior that 'good women' need to follow" (p. 155). She brings this point home by highlighting the burdens, limitations, and feelings of powerlessness that the fear of crime produce in the everyday lives of women. Madriz is especially effective in describing the relationship between fear of crime and "proper" gender roles, using women's stories to illustrate common restrictions on women's use of public space, choice of attire, involvement in certain activities, and unaccompanied status. While many of these restrictions are self-imposed, the author includes a number of stories about ways in which boyfriends, husbands, and other family members limit women's activities "for their own good." In this way, fear of crime perpetuates gender inequalities at the micro level and simultaneously controls the behavior of whole groups of women in the name of crime prevention.

Madriz also demonstrates that the constraints imposed by fear of crime vary with women's social circumstances. Her focus on class, race, and generational differences and their role in women's fear of crime is one of the strengths of this book. Madriz notes
that women of different races and ethnicities fear different types of crime and that teenage women were more likely than women in other age groups to report that they refuse to let fear of crime rule their lives. Using information from groups of teenage, adult and senior women who are white, African-American and Latina allows Madriz to discuss fear of crime in relationship to social and economic disadvantages that women, and especially women of color, face in the larger society.

Other important contributions of the book include provocative discussions on sexual harassment, “innocent” and “culpable” victims, the US criminal justice system, and fear of crime as a violation of human rights. Madriz makes particularly good use of women’s stories in detailing the social effects of fear of crime in women’s lives. While she also mentions economic effects, the role of crime against women and women’s fear of crime in shaping their economic status in the home and in the larger social structure deserves more scholarly attention.

This book is an important and interesting addition to the modest literature on fear of crime and will be of interest to everyone who is concerned about the well-being of women, crime, or social control. Those teaching courses on violence against women, gender studies, crime and criminal justice, race and ethnicity, qualitative research methods, and social welfare policy will find Nothing Bad Happens to Good Girls particularly useful.

Deborah Page-Adams
University of Kansas


In a scholarly collection of papers, Michael Tonry has edited a comparative cross-national perspective on the interrelationship among ethnicity, immigration and crime in nine Western industrialized nations (Australia, Canada, England, France, Germany, Holland, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United States). Following a common framework, the authors describe and analyze the overrepresentation of ethnic minorities and/or immigrants in the criminal justice system of these countries. Despite identifying a
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number of similar trends among these countries, Tonry, an Amer-
ican legal scholar, concludes that these racial and ethnic dispar-
ities reflect differences in actual offending rates rather than any
systemic patterns of discrimination in their respective systems of
criminal justice. Although these conclusions are consistent with
Tonry's earlier work on the American criminal justice system, they
are increasingly challenged by the contrary views of researchers
such as Randall Kennedy (United States), John Solomos (Eng-
land), and Anthony Doob (Canada) who argue persuasively that
there is ample evidence of racial and ethnic bias in the adminis-
tration of justice in these countries.

Major methodological difficulties in conducting this cross-
national study include: varying definitions of "race" and "eth-
nicity"; lack of statistical data on race in countries such as Ger-
many, France, and Sweden; the overlap between "immigrants,""for-
geners," and ethnic minorities in several countries; and the
variations in legal terminology and processing stages among
these countries.

Excellent reviews of the role of race in the United States
(by Robert Sampson & Janet Lauritzen), Great Britain (by David
Smith), and Canada (by Julian Roberts & Anthony Doob) yield
comparable findings that racial disparities in the criminal justice
system can be largely attributed to differential rates of offending,
severity of offense levels, and differential access to legal resources.
However, these authors acknowledge the possible biases that
occur at key points in the system, particularly where a prior arrest
for a minor offense may result in more punitive decisions for
minority defendants in subsequent encounters with the criminal
justice system.

The difficulties of distinguishing ethnic identity from na-
tionality or immigrant status (since all "immigrants" or "for-
egeners" are not visible minorities), are noted in case studies of
Germany (by Hans-Jorg Abrecht) and France (by Pierre Tournier).
In both of these countries, crime rates of "guest workers" or
immigrants of color have increased among the second and third
generations, paralleling the increase in discrimination against
these groups by the host societies. In contrast, the crime rate of
second-generation Swedish immigrants is generally lower than
among first-generation immigrants, perhaps reflecting the effect of Swedish social welfare policies.

Roderic Broadhurst's analysis of aborigines in the Australian criminal justice system reveals similarities to the experiences of native Indians in Canada, as the culture clash between Anglo-European and indigenous people sets up an adversarial situation that inevitably fosters conflict and confrontation particularly in situations where the native peoples are in the majority and resist acculturation.

The analysis of Sampson and Lauritzen about the subtle operation of "indirect racial (or ethnic) discrimination" in the United States is also relevant to these other countries, i.e., that ethnic minorities and immigrants are the victims of economic, educational and political discrimination, resulting in their social marginalization and reduced opportunities for mobility within the host society. In response, some members of these groups engage in illegitimate economic activities, inviting sanctions from the police and involvement in the criminal justice system. To complete the vicious cycle, these groups will then be perceived as a threat to the host society and, thus, in need of social control, political exclusion, and coercive treatment, further reinforcing their marginality and maintaining their low socioeconomic status.

Although their research indicates racial, ethnic or nationality disparities at various stages of the criminal justice system in most of these countries, very few of these authors were willing to raise critical questions about "official" police data and the subtle operation of racial/ethnic discrimination in the criminal justice system in their respective countries. More discussion should have been focused on the key points of the system where discretionary decisions are made that can result in a "cumulative disadvantage" to minority persons, from the initial police decision to stop or arrest a juvenile on a minor offense; to decisions about prosecution, bail or probation; to judicial decisions about the severity and length of a sentence for a convicted offender.

Finally, in the wake of recent well-publicized police brutality and prosecutorial misconduct charges in the United States (against African-Americans and Latino immigrants), Canada (against Native Indians and Afro-Caribbeans), England (against
Afro-Caribbeans and Asian Indians), and Australia (against Aborigines), their conclusions about the lack of systematic bias in the criminal justice system in these countries seem both too uncritical and too naive. However, most social scientists in this field would agree with the apparent consensus of these authors that "... disparities appear to result largely from the unfavorable economic, social, and legal position of ethnic minorities."

Jewelle Taylor Gibbs
University of California at Berkeley

As sociologists know, all human societies face the challenge of ensuring that individuals conform to the prevailing culture. In many societies, and particularly in pre-industrial societies, cultural expectations are clear, the mechanisms of socialization are effective and institutionalized means of sanctioning non-conformity are readily implemented. In industrial and post-industrial societies, where individualism is far more accentuated, the challenge of integrating individuals into the social order is more complex. In these societies, popular opinion, the search for identity and the manufacture of taste transcend traditional mechanisms for ensuring conformity. Indeed, the very nature of the social order is ambiguous. With competing interests interacting in complex ways, it is not only difficult to decide what the dominant culture expects, but what the dominant culture comprises.

These difficulties issues are examined in this racy, sometimes hilarious and sometimes frightening book. The author engages in a riveting polemic about the paradoxes of contemporary American culture, and its resurgent obsession with sin and vice. Unlike the 1960s, when many believed that individualism had at last triumphed over crass obedience to outmoded beliefs and customs, events of the 1990's are suggestive of a return to the nation's historical preoccupation with conformity. The good, the bad and the ugly are more starkly identified, and the means of exerting social control are more insidious than ever before. Despite greater apparent individual freedom, the pressures towards conformity intensify.

Although the book may be criticized for not elaborating its thesis with more systematic references to sociological theory, its message is an important one. It is eminently readable and well argued. Its prophetic tone calls for a greater understanding of the events of the time and for appropriate responses that foster
greater tolerance and, at the same time, ensure the survival of a vibrant, pluralistic culture.


Although violent crime comprises only a small proportion of all criminal acts, it receives the most attention and has the most devastating consequences for its victims; it also has the most chilling effect on those who learn about it. For many, mindless violence is perplexing. Why do some people engage in the most brutal violence often for minimal gain? In an attempt to answer this question, criminologists have offered a plethora of explanations. These range from accounts that emphasize the role of individual psychopathology to those that stress the role of negative social and environmental conditions in the socialization of violent people.

This fascinating book introduces yet another element into criminological explanations of violent crime, namely the role of the subjective experiences of violent criminals. Insisting that criminologists should not only study violent acts but the feelings, meanings and explanations of violent actors themselves, Lonnie Athens reports on a twenty-five year study of convicted violent criminals and the reasons they themselves give for their violent behavior. The book is replete with horrific but highly illustrative case studies which offer a very different interpretations of understanding criminal violence. Athens shows that an understanding of subjective meanings is critically important in the field. Since violent criminals range from the psychopathological to the ordinary, an interpretation of their careers more effectively informs understanding than explanations that utilize conventional explanatory theory.

This book will generate a great deal of discussion. In addition to his carefully documented interviews with offenders which richly illustrate the text, the author’s own experience of undertaking the research makes for interesting reading. Particularly frightening is his account of how prison guards on one occasion deliberately left him alone with a dangerous offender who then attacked him. It seems that some of those who are entrusted with
greater tolerance and, at the same time, ensure the survival of a 
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Lonnie Athens, *Violent Criminal Acts and Actors Revisited*. Cham- 
paign, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1997. $24.95 hardcover, 
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In certain circles, postmodernism has nearly attained cult status. The term is now widely bandied about at conferences and in discussions about the human condition. However, it remains poorly defined and relatively few social workers who use it know what it means. Equally few understand its implications for social policy and social welfare. While postmodernism is lauded for being anti-positivist and for promoting identity politics, its relevance for the future of social welfare is poorly understood.

Peter Leonard bravely attempts to explain what postmodernism means for social policy and social work. Wading through jargon and rhetoric, he manages to reduce postmodernism to its basic elements and to interpret its meaning in ways that are comprehensible. Of course, many other commentaries on postmodernism have been published, and while some of these provide even more comprehensible explanations, Leonard's book is useful for its discussion on the implications of postmodernism for human well-being. Coming as he does from a Marxist persuasion, Leonard's account of the normative implications of postmodernism is not an entirely happy one. He clearly recognizes the inability of postmodernism to offer a viable alternative to the social democratic project which he and many other Marxists defended against the radical right's onslaught. But, like many others, he recognizes that social democracy is increasingly ineffective and unappealing to electorates, and that alternative paradigms are needed. While he suggests that postmodernism can provide a normative basis for reconstruction, his argument is not wholly convincing. Nevertheless, his attempt to harness the potential of popular social movements to engage in effective activism is an interesting one. It is one of the few coherent explications not only of how postmodernism can provide a normative basis for social welfare but of how activism can be kept alive in a world which is increasing indifferent to human suffering, social causes and collective action. It remains to be seen whether his ideas and
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Peter Leonard bravely attempts to explain what postmodernism means for social policy and social work. Wading through jargon and rhetoric, he manages to reduce postmodernism to its basic elements and to interpret its meaning in ways that are comprehensible. Of course, many other commentaries on postmodernism have been published, and while some of these provide even more comprehensible explanations, Leonard's book is useful for its discussion on the implications of postmodernism for human well-being. Coming as he does from a Marxist persuasion, Leonard's account of the normative implications of postmodernism is not an entirely happy one. He clearly recognizes the inability of postmodernism to offer a viable alternative to the social democratic project which he and many other Marxists defended against the radical right's onslaught. But, like many others, he recognizes that social democracy is increasingly ineffective and unappealing to electorates, and that alternative paradigms are needed. While he suggests that postmodernism can provide a normative basis for reconstruction, his argument is not wholly convincing. Nevertheless, his attempt to harness the potential of popular social movements to engage in effective activism is an interesting one. It is one of the few coherent explications not only of how postmodernism can provide a normative basis for social welfare but of how activism can be kept alive in a world which is increasing indifferent to human suffering, social causes and collective action. It remains to be seen whether his ideas and
prognostications will be translated into a viable emancipatory project.


Although utopians have long dreamed of creating a world where all citizens are equal, this dream has not been realized. Instead, inequalities of various kinds continue to characterize contemporary societies. It is partly for this reason that the debate is no longer concerned with the possibility of attaining equality, but with the arguments that justify inequality in terms of acceptable social justice criteria.

On argument of this kind invokes the notion of equality of opportunity. Proponents of this view believe that inequalities between human beings are fair if everyone has equal opportunity to succeed. Usually this means open access to education and equal opportunity to utilize the knowledge and skills offered by schools, universities and other educational institutions. If everyone has equal opportunity to achieve, unequal outcomes may be justified.

This book examines the equality of opportunity argument with reference to a massive amount of statistical data for countries as varied as Britain, Japan, Russia, the United States and several East European nations. Although these studies show that educational opportunities have increased significantly in recent decades, they reveal that those who come from higher class families continue to have better life chances than those who come from lower class families. In addition, it found that people born into upper class families continue to do well even if they do not utilize educational opportunities. The authors conclude that class continues to be a fundamentally important determinant of success, and that enhanced educational opportunity is not an adequate justification for inequality.

This important book is not only academically interesting but important for social policy making. It suggests that the provision of educational opportunities is not a quick solution to the problem of inequality. Class barriers and other structural impediments continue to play an important role and must be addressed if equality and its negative consequences are to be overcome.
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It is rare to find a book that makes extensive use of theory to frame an account of a nation’s social welfare system. Most country case studies of social welfare are historical and descriptive, seeking to depict rather than explain why a particular nation’s welfare system has developed the way it did, and why it functions the way it does. Most studies of this kind make for dull reading and are soon rendered obsolete by changing social conditions and events.

Yuen-wen Ku’s study of the evolution and features of the Taiwanese welfare system is very different, and is to be commended for its explicit use of theory. It is particularly interesting that the author has chosen to frame his analysis by using what is described as “an integrated Marxist account.” Given the difficulties Marxist theories have encountered in recent years, and the ascendance of post-modernism as an alternative means for satisfying the aspirations of radicals, this is a valiant endeavor. But it is not really convincing. It is not simply that the analysis reads like a book that should have been published in 1977 rather than 1997, but that there are new and more helpful ways of looking at social welfare in other parts of the world.

For example, the study neglects accounts that emphasize traditionalism and traditionalist forms of statecraft in the region; these belie a simplistic Marxist explanations of the role of the state in social welfare. Similarly, the book’s Eurocentric perspective impedes a proper analysis of the role of indigenous systems of support that have been so amply documented in Japan. The Taiwanese state’s motives in creating a welfare system which would counteract the claims of its mainland communist archrivals is also neglected, and instead it is capitalism that is time and time again regarded as the primary motivation of state welfare in Taiwan. Despite this emphasis on capitalism as the driving force for welfare development, the author concludes that state welfare is underdeveloped and marginal to the nation’s economic aims.

Although it is a pity that the author was so constrained by a particular theoretical allegiance, this book deserves to be widely read by anyone working in the field of international social welfare
today. Its knowledge and use of theory is sophisticated, illustrative of how theory can be used to frame narrative accounts. The book also provides a useful account of state social welfare policies and programs in a rapidly changing region of the world.
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INSTRUCTIONS FOR AUTHORS
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JSSW welcomes a broad range of articles which analyze social welfare institutions, policies, or problems from a social scientific perspective or otherwise attempt to bridge the gap between social science theory and social work practice.

Submission Process. Submit manuscripts to Frederick MacDonald, School of Social Work, Western Michigan University, 1201 Oliver Street, Kalamazoo, Michigan, 49008. Send three copies together with an abstract of approximately 100 words. Since manuscripts are not returned by reviewers to the editorial office, the editorial office cannot return them to the authors. Submission certifies that it is an original article and that it has not been published nor is being considered for publication elsewhere.

Reviewing normally takes 120 days.

Preparation. Articles should be typed, doublespaced (including the abstract, indented material, footnotes, references, and tables) on 8½ x 11 inch white bond paper with one inch margins on all sides.

Anonymous Review. To facilitate anonymous review, please keep identifying information out of the manuscript. Only the title should appear on the first page. Attach cover pages that contain the title, authors, affiliations, date of submission, mailing address, telephone number and any statements of credit or research support.

Style. Overall style should conform to that found in the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, Fourth Edition, 1994. Use in-text citations (Reich, 1983, Reich, 1983, p. 5). The use of footnotes in the text is discouraged. If footnotes are essential, include them on a separate sheet after the last page of the references. The use of italics or quotation marks for emphasis is discouraged. Words should be underlined only when it is intended that they be typeset in italics.

Gender and Disability Stereotypes. Please use gender neutral phrasing. Use plural pronouns and truly generic nouns (“labor force” instead of “manpower”). When dealing with disabilities, avoid making people synonymous with the disability they have (“employees with visual impairments” rather than “the blind”). Don’t magnify the disabling condition (“wheelchair user” rather than “confined to a wheelchair”). For further suggestions see the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association or Guide to Non-Sexist Language and Visuals, University of Wisconsin-Extension.

BOOK REVIEWS

Books for review should be sent to James Midgley, Office of Research and Economic Development, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, LA 70803.

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