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The Poverty of Hard Work: Multiple Jobs and Low Wages in Family Economies of Rural Utah Households

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The combination of paid work and poverty, or near poverty, is a growing problem in the United States, one of which is often accentuated by residence in rural, low-wage communities where underemployment is more prevalent than in metropolitan areas. This paper examines the experiences of sixty rural families with inadequate employment using data from ethnographic interviews with a particular focus on the strategies they use to meet their family's needs in spite of low-wage work.

“We make ends meet by working every minute we’re awake.”

“Five forty-seven [an hour] which is the slowest way I know to get up in the world because even if I worked eighty hours a week, I’d still almost be poverty.”

Two women, both single parents, made the above comments to me during research interviews with low-wage workers. By current welfare policy standards, these women are success stories: they work hard at more than one job, maintain their households and children, and balance tight budgets well enough to satisfy the most frugal accountant. Their household income hovers above the official poverty line. Both households also used some form of social assistance during the year prior to the research: food stamps, school lunch programs, housing subsidies, or child care assistance. However, because they are working and their total income is above official poverty, they are part of a large group, the working near poor, who are often invisible to policymakers.
and social workers. Yet their struggles to make “ends meet by working every minute” highlight policy issues that are important in this era of “welfare to work.” Precisely because the “successful” exits from TANF are likely to be low-wage workers, at least for a time, we need to understand better the contexts and struggles of this population in order to support their momentum away from poverty. Otherwise, as I argue below, these workers are likely to continue to experience sporadic spells of poverty.

While the combination of paid work and poverty is not new in the United States, there is evidence that it is a growing problem. From 1989 to 1997 the poverty rate of workers aged 18–64 rose from 10.4% to 10.9%. It is also noteworthy that the number of full-time year-round workers earning below the individual poverty threshold in 1998 increased by 459,000 persons over the previous year, the largest one-year jump on record (Center for Budget and Policy Priorities 1999). This increase points to a disturbing trend of the growth in inadequate employment nationally.

Poverty and low earnings have long characterized rural (or non-metropolitan) residents to a greater extent than they have urban residents. While rural people comprise only one-fifth of the total U.S. population, rural areas have one-third of all poor people (Duncan and Tickamyer 1988). Rural people are more likely to be unemployed or underemployed, or uninsured for health care when compared to their urban counterparts (Rodgers and Weiher 1986). Although they are more likely to be married and to have more than one person in the household employed, rural workers have higher rates of poverty and near poverty than do workers in urban households (Shapiro 1989; Duncan and Tickamyer 1988). As recently as 1998, the U.S. Census Bureau reported higher rates of poverty in non-metropolitan areas than anywhere else, except in central cities.

Gorham (1992) noted that in 1979, 32% of rural workers were “low earners,” defined as those whose hourly wage or salary did not allow them to support a family of four above the official poverty line even if employed year-round on a full-time basis. By 1987, fully 42% of rural workers fit this description and were almost 50% more likely than their urban counterparts to receive wages this low (Shapiro 1989; Levitan, et al. 1993). These rural workers, whom Gorham (1992) identified as the new rural poor,
tend to be those who have lost better-paying manufacturing or mining jobs, those who are trying to support households on lower wages, or those who have started in low-paying jobs and are unable to move into jobs with higher pay. Added to these categories are workers who cannot secure full-time employment, those who live and work in seasonal economies, and those who work a series of low-wage, part-time jobs.

The decline in earnings among rural workers is noteworthy. Average annual earnings by non-metropolitan workers were $828 lower in 1987 than in 1979 when using constant 1987 dollars. A substantial part of the decline in rural workers’ earnings is due to the drop in wages paid for each hour worked. By 1987, 32.2% of non-metropolitan workers earned less than $4.35 per hour, and 11.8% earned minimum wage or less (Shapiro 1989; Gorham 1992). The prevalence of low-wage jobs provides rural workers with less protection from poverty, as well as a steeper path by which to exit poverty (Brown and Hirschl 1995).

Jensen et al. (1999) examine the nexus of low wages and poverty in rural areas more broadly by highlighting underemployment. As a general category of employment hardship, underemployment includes the working poor and near poor, as well as various types of inadequate employment. Across a 25 year period, from 1968 to 1993, they show that non-metropolitan areas have experienced higher rates of underemployment than metropolitan areas. In 1983 and 1993, underemployment in non-metropolitan areas reached rates of 29.3 and 24.5, respectively. Even more telling, non-metropolitan rates for underemployment have also exceeded those rates in the central cities. Jensen et al. (1999) note that rural location makes workers more likely to slip from adequate to inadequate employment, and less likely to exit once they are underemployed than urban workers. Not unexpectedly, rural women are doubly penalized for gender and place: they are less likely to be adequately employed, more apt to slip into underemployment, and more likely to stay underemployed than their urban male counterparts. The authors conclude, in part, that non-metropolitan workers are in a more precarious position economically when compared to metropolitan workers.

Inadequate employment puts workers in precarious straits not only because of low wages, however. Many of the underem-
ployed hold jobs defined as temporary or seasonal; many cannot get a full forty hour work week, either because of low demand or because the employer wants to avoid providing benefits or paying overtime. It must be noted, however, that many of these workers would remain near poverty even with increased hours and year round work, and thus cannot “work their way” out of poverty or near-poverty status (Kim 1998). Family businesses often employ relatives under circumstances similar to underemployment, as well, with low wages, sporadic hours and few, if any, benefits. In rural areas, employers may also control access to other resources, such as housing, leaving workers at risk for losing both shelter and wages, and giving employers a double advantage over workers in setting both wages and rent.

Rural researchers often rely on two theoretical explanations for the “rural disadvantage.” Human capital theory argues that workers’ wages reflect the skill, training, education, and experience that the workers bring to the labor market. Wages, then, are a “return” on a worker’s investment in developing her set of capital; greater investments should yield greater returns, or wages. When researchers have compared workers with similar sets of skills across rural and urban labor markets, the rural workers earned significantly less than their urban counterparts. Dual labor market theory posits that urban and rural labor markets are substantially different, hence explaining wage and poverty differentials. Urban labor markets are more diversified across types of production, service, and retail, while rural economies often rely on one or two types of lower-wage employers, such as agriculture, tourism, or basic manufacturing, decreasing their ability to absorb downswings in those sectors of the economy. While aspects of both theories help us see why the working poor are disproportionately present in rural communities, they do not deepen our understanding of the ways in which rural families experience working poverty, nor do they make visible the strategies people use to compensate for “lower returns on human capital” or the disadvantage of rural labor markets.

Methods and Participants

Sixty households in five Utah counties chose to participate in this study. They were recruited from the Food Stamps Only and
Reduced Price School Lunch lists via mail which described the general objectives of the research. The respondents had to return by mail a consent card in order to be contacted for the project. All participants were interviewed in person during the spring and summer of 1996; the average interview lasted ninety minutes.

The Food Stamps Only and Reduced Price Lunch lists were selected because the recipients of these programs would have household incomes between 100% and 185% of the official poverty threshold. Thus, I aimed to interview workers in near-poor households in which most of the income would be earned from employment.

The five Utah counties represented in this study were selected because they vary along dimensions of development. Washington and Summit counties can aptly be described as developing areas in the state; to a lesser extent, Grand county may be considered developing as well. Duchesne county is a low-income and low development county, suffering from major losses in the petroleum industry. San Juan is a persistently poor county, having had more than 20% of the population officially poor in every census since 1960. In these last two counties, 50% or more of the population falls below 200% of official poverty, largely due to the prevalence of inadequate employment conditions.

The participants in this project represented a variety of family compositions. Thirty-two were married couple households and twenty-eight were solo parent/single adult households. All but three had children, ranging from one to six children living at home; fully half of the households had two or three children, and ten households had four. Nineteen participants were renting their current residence, while thirty-five were making mortgage payments. The residential circumstances of the remaining six show the variety of living arrangements among low-income workers: one family had their housing included as part of the job, two families were sharing residential space with other family members and shared some expenses, two young women and their children lived with their mothers, and one single woman lived in a rustic “family cabin” and did not pay rent but took care of the upkeep. Among those who “own” their residence are two families who do own the trailer they live in, but pay rent for the space where it is parked and for the use of utilities; among the
renters was one family who rented to a boarder in order to defray the high costs of rent.

As a group, the participants are fairly well-educated, and, in that way may be fairly similar to those who are able to exit TANF with employment. All but two had earned at least a high school diploma or its equivalent, and forty-two had post-secondary training. Ten individuals had completed a college degree, three of whom had also completed graduate training in a profession. In these last three households, near poverty was due to a combination of low wages and family size in two, and a voluntary frugal lifestyle in the third. For most of these families, then, their levels of education and training indicate that they do not lack basic job skills.

Inadequate Employment

“I don’t really have a steady flow of income that I can count on for that week, that I’m gonna make this much money."

“I figure at some point in time I’ll get enough money by the hour that I’ll be beyond that [Food Stamps], but I haven’t succeeded yet.”

Underemployment encompasses four subgroups of inadequate work: the unemployed, discouraged workers, workers with low hours, and those with low income (Jensen et al. 1999). Among the sixty participants, the vast majority ($n = 51$) fell into the last two categories, with employment at reduced hours, wages that were too low for meeting basic needs, or a combination of both; three workers were unemployed.

Six households could be said to have adequate or close to adequate employment, earning more than $10 per hour. In the latter group are those adults in households who may feel they have to budget tightly to meet their needs, but are basically 95% or more reliant on wages, and are only using the Reduced Price School lunch program. They had no spells in the year previous to the research in which they needed to use Food Stamps or unemployment insurance, receive assistance from a food pantry or church, and they had fairly reliable monthly incomes. By definition, these households were those with incomes closest to 185%
of the poverty threshold. All six households with adequately employed workers had access to private health insurance.

The majority (54) of participants were inadequately employed, usually because of a combination of less than full-time hours and low wages. The hourly wages of workers in this group ranged from $4.75 to $9.60 in the job the participant reported as her or his main employment, with most earning about $7.50. The average hours worked hovered around 28 to 30 per week, with the range extending from 20 to 40. Thus, average gross income among those with inadequate employment extended from a low of $142.50 to a high of $288 per week, with most earning around $225.

Particularly for low wage and low income workers, access to health insurance for the worker and her family make a critical difference to family well-being. Among the 54 households with inadequate employment, 22 had access to private health insurance through their employer, 8 had access to public insurance (Medicaid or IHS), and 24, or 44%, were completely uninsured. When combined with low wages, or low household income, the lack of insurance puts families at serious risk of not getting needed medical attention, of receiving inadequate medical attention, and of accruing long-term debt as a result of out-of-pocket medical expenses. Lack of access to health care jeopardizes a family's physical health as well as its fiscal health over time often creating a cycle of poor health, greater debt, less ability to work, and diminished ability to meet the family's needs. It is this cycle that can lead many families to slip in and out of poverty and toward greater reliance on forms of public assistance.

Family Economies

When work pays poorly and consumes a great deal of time, the pressing questions of family economics become even more important. By family economies, I mean the systems and strategies people use to gather and allocate resources such as time, money, skills and relationships to meet family needs. In this context, work is understood broadly to mean activities that reduce necessary expenses as well as those that generate income. A subsistence garden is an example of the former, a waged job is one of the latter; however, doing childcare in one's home while raising one or more
children may be an example of work that fits both purposes. How do people meet their family's needs when paid labor consumes a high amount of one resource (time) and generates low amounts of another (money)?

The households participating in this research answered this question in a variety of ways. Multiple job holding is a common strategy among these workers. Fully two-thirds of the sixty participants held more than one job for pay, and one single parent reported holding up to four jobs at one time. Jill, a single mother with four children, is a good example of multiple job holding.

At one time I was working four jobs. It was when I was first divorced...about four years ago. I was working for the bank in town...thirty five hours a week. And then because...I have problems getting child support, I was working also in the evenings about three or four days a week...for a convenience store for minimum wage. I was doing typing for an insurance agent. I was doing his billing and his correspondence at home on my computer and then on weekends I cleaned house for people.

That year, she told me, she "made $9,000 total," several thousand dollars below the poverty threshold for her family; thus, while working four jobs, she qualified for AFDC. After a spell on AFDC, she wasn't eligible for Medicaid without a spend down or for Food Stamps because of her vehicle, and was uninsured for several years as a result. Two of her children have chronic medical conditions for which they need prescription medication, but health insurance through her job at the bank would have cost her over $200 per month and "we needed that money to live on." Food was watched carefully during that time: "we had a gallon of milk...this has got to last all week, kids. I was really thankful that my kids could get like free lunches at school and free breakfast. So they could go to school and eat and then they'd get a good lunch and we'd work out dinner."

Jill was able to keep up that schedule for about two years because her oldest daughter assumed many responsibilities at home, including meal preparation and child care. But the strategy of multiple job holding exacted some heavy costs on the family. "I was really lucky because my oldest daughter was very, very responsible and one of the reasons I quit was because...we still
needed the money, but my daughter’s grades were dropping in school because she was spending so much time helping” with the younger children. Jill quit the job at the convenience store in order to stay home in the evenings with the children. In addition to the effects on her daughter, Jill found those years took a toll on her, as well. “It was really hard emotionally. I really think I aged a lot in two years . . . just worrying. The stress of trying to carry on four jobs, make ends meet, you know, wondering how we were going to pay the next bill . . . . So I had no choice.” During the years of multiple job holding, Jill also availed herself of some church-based assistance, mostly for groceries. In her case, low wage work meant she “balanced” her budget by devoting more time to paid employment, depending on family-provided child care, using local resources for groceries, and foregoing health insurance.

Like Jill, Marty is a single parent; she has three children, and had just moved into a rental house at the time of the interview. She was working 35 hours per week, going to college full-time, and raising three children between the ages of 5 and 14 years. She worked for the State of Utah in human services and was earning $7.90 per hour, a “good” wage relative to the average wage of $5.00 per hour locally. Marty and her three children had come through some hard times, though. While married, Marty was in a violent relationship; when her husband left, she “was on full AFDC and everything for three months. . . . I went over there and they made me feel like a dirt bag and it was terrible.” Marty got a job and moved her family into a small, squalid two bedroom apartment where “the sewage overflowed quarterly” and the rent was $400 per month. At the time, her monthly income was $750.

As she worked herself into a better situation, Marty felt she was hampered by the constraints of the welfare system. The state finally made her job permanent and raised her wage to $7.90 per hour, for a weekly income of $276.50. Marty realized she was underpaid for the work she did, but the permanency and benefits of the job were a good tradeoff. As she put it, “Yes, I’m a real person now. I’ve a real job with benefits and everything. Yeah. Paid holidays. I know, I feel blessed. It’s been a long time.”

While her income and housing situation have improved, Marty still finds it hard to make ends meet. Through local con-
tacts she was able to rent a house with adequate space and in good condition; the rent, however, was $750 per month, a fairly steep amount even with her new job. The only way she could manage financially was to rent out one bedroom and bathroom to a boarder for $275 monthly. Her housing costs increased by only $75 per month, but her budget was still tight. “I don’t think it’s gonna be much easier than it was before the job change, I really don’t. Because I’ve lost most of my child care help from the state. I’ll have to pay $100 a month now. I lost $324 in food stamps. . . . If you take my income how it was before, I had the Food Stamps on top of it, so now I have everything that was on top of it taken away, so I’m actually at really the same level. . . . I didn’t get ahead at all.” Marty found that earning $200 more per month disqualified her from receiving Food Stamps, and required her to pay $100 more in child care; she gained $200 in income, and lost $424 in assistance. The net result of slightly better employment is that she and her family are in more precarious economic straits than before; it is exactly what Marty calls working “like dogs and getting nowhere.” Not unexpectedly, Marty’s recommendations for how communities can support low income families includes the suggestion that state assistance reductions be more incremental in order to allow families “to get on their feet, . . . [they should] do a gradual thing to give you a chance to get caught up.”

Underemployment for Marty has meant combining state financial and in-kind assistance with low paid work and renting house space. Like Jill, it has also meant being uninsured for periods of time that left Marty with debt. Prior to this new job, Marty and her family hadn’t “had medical insurance for two years. . . . My son had to have [emergency surgery] a couple years ago, and Hill-Burton funds paid most of it. I only ended up having to pay off about $2,000 myself. . . . Any spare dime I had went to that. I’m still paying off medical bills that we’ve accrued over the two years because I wasn’t poor enough to qualify for medical.” The combination of low wages and lack of access to health insurance resulted in debt that added to the financial stress of meeting the day to day needs in her family economy.

One half of the families interviewed were uninsured; virtually 90% had experienced significant time, at least one year or longer, without health insurance during their adult lives. Of the one-half
who were uninsured, the majority had accrued debts related to medical conditions, such as chronic illnesses, ongoing prescription costs, injuries, emergency conditions, and pregnancy and childbirth; among all households with outstanding debts, the vast majority owed money for medical expenses. The debts accrued precisely because they earned “too much” to qualify for Medicaid but were unable to afford or had no access to other avenues of insurance. This is not a new problem, but in the context of the family economy, it does indicate the importance of accounting for medical debts within the total financial picture of the household. That is, the low income worker is not only trying to meet basic daily needs for food, clothing and shelter for her family, but may also be trying to cover past indebtedness resulting from their lack of access to insurance.

The challenges of meeting daily needs with low wage work led most people to rely on social networks as part of the safety net for their households, too. Informal helping networks were a primary way of gaining access to goods and resources with minimal or no economic outlay, the main way in which expense reduction occurred. Among these households, there was scarcely a good or service not provided by an informal network. However, the main goods obtained from these networks were food, clothing, housing, and means of transportation. It was common among adults in households closer to the poverty threshold to talk about depending on grandma for groceries and meals; or, they acknowledged that the only way they could stay employed was to rely on grandma or another relative to provide free or low cost child care. While their children were still young, most working parents reduced clothing expenses by buying secondhand clothes, or availing themselves of free donated clothing.

Social support networks also provided help with major financial commitments, in some cases. Among the families making mortgage payments, many had received family help with the down payment on the house, or with the financing of the mortgage; in a few cases, families had received from their parents sizeable parcels of land on which to build houses. In one case, a young couple built most of their own home on their parent’s land and were able to have comparably low house payments. Thus, the combination of donated land and reliance on their own
labor resulted in stable, affordable, high quality housing. Another couple who "had tried for years to get a loan and couldn't come up with the money" bought their house from her parents: "we bought it for cheap because my dad owned it. So we bought it for thirty-eight [thousand] but it's appraised for sixty-three [thousand]." Their current house payment was $346 per month, including taxes and insurance.

The main services people reported receiving were job connections, child care, medical services from local paraprofessional providers such as EMT workers, household repair, and car repair. Several of the adults who had better-paying jobs ($9.00 per hour or more) located those jobs with the help of a friend or family member. In spite of hard times, most families provided help to other families, both relatives and friends, whenever they were able. One woman who was unemployed told me, "In the evenings we'd help the neighbors if they need help. There's an elderly lady that always needs help with her yard or her house or something so I'll go help them in the wintertime and go do their driveways. We keep busy and it's helping other people a lot. It's just the way we are."

Helping each other out was the key to survival for Jan and Leah in southern Utah. They were sisters and single parents, and had left abusive relationships with eight children between them. They spent the winter in a bus on the remote periphery of a small town, and worked for the same local establishment for $6.15 per hour. The jobs were seasonal, however, and provided about 35 hours per week during the seven month tourist season, and only about 20 hours per week during the other five months of the year. They also held part-time seasonal jobs in local motels. When they moved into town, they lived in two rented trailers on the same utility site and shared the space rental, and the electric and water costs associated with it. Leah had four young children and had a subsidy for housing and childcare; Jan, three of whose children were older, took as her second job the provision of childcare for her sister's children, which was paid for by the state subsidy. During the off season, the lower demand at the store meant one sister would work at the store while the other provided childcare and received unemployment; both would receive Food Stamps. They shared transportation and repair costs as well. The only way
they could establish economically viable households at the time was to dovetail their paid work schedules outside the home with their needs for childcare, distribute the value of their subsidies, and divide expenses.

Single parents are not alone in facing the challenges of low wage work in rural areas, though. Tom and Linda have two children and were unemployed at the time of the interview. They had just been laid off from their jobs in a local grocery store where they had worked about six years. Linda had held a management position, and was paid $6.00 an hour; Tom worked the night shift as a janitor and was also paid $6.00 hourly. "So between the two of us we was making a pretty good wage, you know, twelve dollars an hour, but we were never home. Most of that went for babysitting." Linda's sister provided child care for them and "only charged half of what she normally charges." Tom and Linda paid about $8 per day for child care while Linda worked. Their net income while working was about $1200 per month; on unemployment, it has dropped to $700. They had applied for Food Stamps, but were waiting for the application to be processed; in the meantime, she said, "if I didn't store food I wouldn't have no food right now." The transition period from working to unemployment had made Linda feel insecure; she wanted a job "that paid halfway decent... There's no job security out here at all unless you own the business and then still there's no job security... If they brought up the wages out here instead of paying people this minimum wage for years and years and years that they can get away with." Linda figured she needed to earn at least $8 per hour as a "halfway decent" wage, but she worried that she'd only be able to find a job at minimum wage.

The cycles of underemployment and unemployment are difficult ones to exit, particularly in rural communities where workers may go from the vulnerability of low wage jobs to the precarious support of unemployment and Food Stamps. Like Marty and others, Linda and Tom have accrued medical debts from past periods without insurance which they are trying to repay in spite of being unemployed. Linda's efforts to manage a tight budget while they are unemployed center on expense reduction: not paying for childcare, using food storage for meals, and subsistence food production: "I've got a big garden out there which will help
us a lot this next year with the vegetables.” In addition, she and Tom take on odd jobs that others don’t want: “we find jobs in the hot part of the day, we’ll go out and see if we can find jobs or, you know, pick up on these leads and go out there and pick up on those.”

Both Tom and Linda have a high school education and have consistent work histories in semi-skilled employment. Despite their human capital, however, job-seeking in their rural community has proven challenging for them. Additional education is one possibility for improving their job opportunities and incomes, though it is not an option that comes easily to many low income rural residents. One young woman who worked as a waitress said “I’d like to have a regular nine to five office job. I’m waiting and saving to go to school. I’d like to have some sort of profession, at least.” While she has aspirations and plans for her future, she admitted that she could not go to school “anytime soon. I have to wait till I have the money and the time. And the two are—you know, if I’ve got the money, then it means I’m working and I don’t have the time.” This is precisely one of the major binds created by low wage work: if the worker takes on multiple jobs to get enough hours to make ends meet, there is very little surplus time (or energy) to get training or education to improve job skills. If the worker decreases hours to accommodate schooling, rarely will the income earned be sufficient to cover the costs of education, and the family as a whole suffers.

One single mother of four children managed to surmount this time bind of low wage work. When Pat was married, she supported her husband through four years of professional education working the midnight shift for a packaging company. “Then, when I got divorced, my settlement was good, but never, ever got collected on so I had no money. So I tried to look for a job and even though I had some college, it still was really hard to find a job. In fact, I couldn’t find a decent job.”

Pat and her family have cycled in and out of poverty, on and off of public assistance, primarily because of difficulty getting child support from her ex-husband who lives out-of-state. Twice she has gotten caught in the “transition” between receiving child support one month, getting off of state assistance, not receiving any support the next month and having no income at all. Pat
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tried to stabilize her household income by working two part-time jobs, the only types of jobs she could find. "Actually I was trying just to find one good decent job and you just couldn't find one decent job. And at the clinic it's considered a good place to work and they started me at $5.15 [an hour]. The convenience store is not a good way to make a living because they're just $4.25 [an hour] and you bust your butt doing it." Neither job offered health insurance, but Pat's income was low enough to qualify her and her children for Medicaid while she worked more than forty hours per week.

State assistance provided cash, Food Stamps, and Medicaid for Pat's family; Farmer's Home Administration subsidized the mortgage on her house. But Pat felt she couldn't make any progress on public assistance.

"It seems like when I was on it the hardest thing was if I worked hard, and I worked hard at work, they'd take money away from me instead of giving . . . I couldn't get further. . . . And I would bust my butt to do what I believed to be right and to get myself out. Every time I did it would seem like I would get further behind. It seemed more practical to spend more time trying to get my education than to work hard. Not that education isn't working hard, but I could see it was just a dead end just to work. Whether I worked hard or whether I didn't work hard, it just didn't seem to work very well either way."

So Pat started to look for educational programs that would lead to a career in a "higher paying bracket than five dollars an hour." She was accepted into a health professions program, but the single parent program she was in "wouldn't back me up. They actually said they weren't an education oriented program and they probably aren't." But Pat was determined, and enrolled in school anyway. She commutes three hours per day to school and still works part-time on the weekends and full-time in the summer. She receives $450 in state assistance, $200 occasionally in child support, plus Food Stamps. The Jobs Training Partnership Act contributes to tuition expenses and occasionally to car repair costs; she has also received Pell grants for education expenses.

Like Jill who worked four jobs at one time to make ends meet, Pat's regular day starts at 4 a.m. with her commute to school. She
returns home by 6 or 7 p.m., and spends the evenings focused on her children and their activities. She acknowledges that time and money have been "really tight because even like when I get my income tax returns, I can earn through earned income credit, I can get $2000 returned on my income tax which always gets taken away." Pat is referring to income tax refunds that are garnished to cover debts incurred by her ex-husband. At the time of the interview, Pat had already completed one year of this program, and was planning on graduating by the following spring. With her degree and professional license in hand, she estimated she could earn $20 to $25 per hour, making the present sacrifices worthwhile.

With great determination, Pat is well on her way toward her goal of earning more per hour so she can spend time with her family. She wanted to get out of the entrapping rules of AFDC as well as escape the time-money bind of low wage work through education and self-improvement. Pat offered a sharp critique of welfare-to-work reform strategies:

"The state has really irritated me. They have been my lifesaver and yet when I was trying ... when what I thought was a good option and a good way to get me ahead, it seemed like they were doing the opposite. They have tons of programs to get women's self esteem up, people on poverty to pull themselves out, to get out in the job field. But it seems to me that their program is get them out working no matter what. It doesn't have to be a good job. They feel successful if you're working. I don't agree with it. I think if you're working and making a successful life without killing yourself then I'd say "Yeah." And I'm just really pro-education and they're not. So I disagree with them 100 percent. I don't see how they cannot see me handing them a letter from a doctor who will hire me at $20 to $25 an hour is not a positive change for my family versus working my butt off at a clinic that is going to pay me $5 an hour and stay on the program. I don't see how they think that is a good thing."

Low wage work, even with public assistance, is not progress; workers find the assistance demeaning and the employment a "dead end." Low wage work without public aid entails many hours and still leaves families experiencing serious hardship. As Edin and Lein (1997) point out, many women realize that low wage work does not make economic sense for their families. Only
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because Pat knew that education and training could change her employment options was she able to bypass the eligibility worker and other obstacles in human services to achieve her goals. In spite of the "system," Pat is successful by her definition: she is working toward a job with a salary and benefits that will allow her to generate income and care for her family in a way she thinks is responsible.

Policy Directions

"You shouldn't be poor honestly."

Pat made the above statement, commenting on the low wages prevailing in the local labor market; she believed a fair wage should not leave the worker eligible for poverty programs. She is in agreement with authors such as David Ellwood (1988) who argue that "we need to make work pay," underscoring the need for structural responses to the problem of inadequate employment. Yet recent welfare reform legislation does not focus on structural responses; instead, Congress passed and President Clinton signed the "Personal Responsibility and Work Act" of 1996, emphasizing human capital improvement for poor single mothers with the singular goal of reducing the number of recipients on AFDC, not the number in poverty. Welfare "reform" in this case also failed to address the structural problem of low wages, and allowed the government to abdicate any responsibility for intervening in the labor market.

Making work pay, however, is easier said than done. Raising the minimum wage is a common recommendation, and certainly is worthwhile as it would affect workers at the lowest hourly rates. But it is not likely to do much for the working poor and near poor who are struggling while earning $7 or $7.50 per hour. Several authors advocate increasing the range of workers served by the Earned Income Tax Credit. The EITC is an important supplemental source of income for many low income workers and their families. In this study, families reported using it to cover past debts, to accomplish major repairs on cars and houses, to purchase necessities such as clothing and bulk food items, and to pay for children’s school activity expenses. While
no single recommendation will magically ease the burden of low income workers, a group of combined legislative changes may arguably have a more salutary effect. On the basis of the experiences and struggles shared by the workers in this study, I recommend a strategy that combines several of the above ideas with attention to critical areas of health, child care, and low cost loan programs.

The legislative “reforms” of welfare recently passed are problematic because the expectations are contradictory and place low income women in a bind. TANF requires most impoverished women to work in the paid labor force, regardless of the fact that the wage earned may keep her and her family below poverty, or hovering just above the poverty threshold. This is called self sufficiency, personal responsibility, or moving away from “dependence” toward “independence.” Low wage work does not seem to bring “self sufficiency” to most workers because they have to rely on several forms of assistance to balance their budgets and meet their family’s needs. Low wage work also leaves many families vulnerable to the hardships of poverty and near poverty: health crises, transportation problems, inadequate or unaffordable housing, and difficult choices regarding childcare. Thus the policy recommendations below stem from my assessment of the supports low income families need, particularly in rural communities, in order to maintain their households above the poverty threshold.

We need policy supports that buffer the working near poor from slipping into poverty, and that lift the working poor out of poverty. In short, we need a moral commitment to a fair wage that guarantees a full-time, year-round worker will not be impoverished. The Earned Income Tax Credit program should be expanded incrementally each year to help lift all working families above the poverty threshold. In addition, policies must incorporate adequate access to health care and health insurance, through public or private mechanisms. Access to health care must be considered a universal right for all workers, a benefit that could be taxed back at the upper income levels. Costs for childcare are currently subsidized for very low-income workers; yet the need for expansion exists, along with the need to fund high quality early childhood education. Again, this could be a
universal benefit, as it is in many western nations, with those able to contribute paying for some or all of the service. In rural areas and urban areas with poor transit systems, transportation is a major cost of employment for low income workers. Investment in public transportation would benefit local businesses and large employers as well as low-wage workers, yet the workers would be among the primary beneficiaries. At the very least, I would argue that debts incurred because of health and work-related transportation expenses be considered in the family’s budget when determining eligibility for programs like Food Stamps.

Finally, the experiences of many of the participants indicates that low income workers may be quite diligent about debt repayment. As mentioned earlier, many families had accumulated debts related to medical costs that occurred during periods of under-insurance or no insurance. All of these families were repaying those debts, some as little as $10 monthly. It may be worth considering a low-cost, small loan program that could help workers with the kinds of costs that often impede them from improving their circumstances: small loans in the areas of transportation, education, or even small business start-up funds could help improve the economic security of many workers and their families.

These recommendations are intended to support the current notion of personal responsibility for low income workers. However unpopular, we also need to consider the flip side of the coin, that of corporate responsibility. As a nation, it should be unacceptable to the American people and the government that employers can pay sub-poverty wages and/or not insure their workers for medical care. Fair wages and health insurance should be part of the requirements of doing business in the United States. Once that is established as a normative, corporate responsibility, it will make logical sense to emphasize personal responsibility and human capital improvement for all workers.

References


Family and Community Integrity

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Family and community are two of the most significant social institutions in the development and daily lives of individuals. This article offers a model to conceptualize the relationship between family and community derived from research conducted in Holyoke, Massachusetts between 1995 and 1997, and inspired by Erik Erikson’s concept of individual integrity. A brief profile of the City of Holyoke is presented followed by a discussion about the relationship between family and community, including consideration of the relevance of group membership and social identity, and the importance of social cohesion and community efficacy. The research results are presented within a model framework of what constitutes family and community integrity.

Family and community are two of the most significant social institutions in the development and daily lives of individuals. Together they shape who we are, instill us with values, define what we consider to be normal and abnormal and teach us about what is possible and not possible. Our families and communities print the many inner maps that we carry to orient ourselves to the world.

Although family and community are often studied independently, they are inextricably and reciprocally related to one another. The viability of the family as a social institution has always relied on the support of the local community (Bellah, Madsen, Sullivan, Swidler & Tipton, 1991) while vibrant communities are characterized by active and engaged families. Communities are the context where families prosper and flourish or flounder and fail. Practitioners, policy makers and researchers benefit by having a better understanding of the complex, dynamic relationship between family and community.
This article describes a paradigm of family and community integrity. The model is inspired by Erik Erikson's (1963; 1982) concept of individual integrity and evolved from exploratory research conducted with families and professionals in Holyoke, Massachusetts between 1995 and 1997. The research involved interviews with members of families representing a cross-section of the city as well as an extensive document review of historical and contemporary demographic data. The interviews explored the experience and meaning of the intersection of family and community.

For the purposes of this research, I focussed on families with children and defined a family as having the following characteristics:

• At least two people live together
• At least two generations, with at least one person below the age of 18
• Members of the family view themselves as family and rely on one another economically, socially, psychologically, and emotionally.

As the community studied was a small city, in this paper community refers to an urban environment: either a city or a neighborhood in a city. My working definition of community was as a geographic and political entity but beyond that I let the research participants define what community meant to them.

In this article, after offering a brief profile of Holyoke, I review literature about families and community, considering the relationship between family and community, the importance of group membership and social identity, and relevant research about social cohesion and community efficacy. The research methodology and results are briefly described leading to a discussion of what constitutes family and community integrity.

A Brief Profile of Holyoke

Holyoke was founded as a planned mill city by a group of Boston investors in 1847 (Green, 1939; Hartford, 1990). The early mills manufactured textiles, but eventually paper became the dominant product in Holyoke which was at one time known
as the "Queen of Industrial Cities" and "The Paper Capital of the World" (Greater Holyoke Chamber of Commerce [GHCC], 1996). Holyoke's population peaked in 1920 at 60,203 and in 2000 is projected to be 43,310 (Pioneer Valley Planning Commission [PVPC], 1992).

Holyoke was a city of working class immigrants from the beginning (Green, 1939; Hartford, 1990). From its earliest days, the city experienced high rates of crime, domestic violence and social problems and by 1880 had the third highest rate of overcrowding in the nation (Green). The first major wave of factory workers were Irish but by the late 1850's factory owners had recruited French-Canadians, who were viewed as being more docile and less prone to unionization (Green; Hartford). The hostile response of the Irish to French Canadians resembles the reaction of today's white population to the migration of Puerto Ricans to the city since the 1950's. In 1990 Holyoke's population was 65.3% white, non-Hispanic and 31.1% Hispanic (PVPC, 1992).

Industry in Holyoke went through the same process as the rest of the country, shifting from civic to national capitalism beginning early this century (Cumbler, 1989) culminating in the mergers, consolidations, relocations and eventually globalization and de-industrialization (Bluestone & Harrison, 1982). By the early 1990's, only 24% of workers were employed in the manufacturing sector, while 36% were employed in the service sector (Lewis & O'Connor, 1993).

In 1990 the statewide poverty rate for Massachusetts was 9% and 26% for Holyoke. Compared to the rest of the state, Holyoke has high rates of unemployment, illiteracy and school drop-out, single parent families, low birthweight infants, teenage pregnancy, HIV infection, and the highest rates of reported child abuse and neglect in the state (Commonwealth of Massachusetts, 1993; Department of Social Services, 1996; Lewis & O'Connor, 1993; Massachusetts Department of Public Health, 1996). Hispanics in Holyoke have much higher unemployment and poverty rates than do Anglo residents (Lewis & O'Connor). They tend to be younger, poorer, have lower levels of education and resources, and less access to job networks and political power. There are regular reports of police harassment of Hispanic residents (Vannah, 1997). Out of the 79 appointed officials listed in the Chamber
of Commerce's description of the city, only 3 have Hispanic surnames, 3.8% of the appointments (Greater Holyoke Chamber of Commerce, 1996). There has never been a Hispanic mayor.

The central downtown has declined and is considered by many residents, of all backgrounds, to be unsafe at night. Most local banks have either failed or become branches of national banks. In many ways Holyoke has gone from being an industrial city to a social service city. This is perhaps symbolized by the fate of the largest downtown building in Holyoke that went from being the home of Steiger's Department Store to the Steiger's Building, home of the State's Department of Social Services.

Family and Community Integrity

The concept of family and community integrity evolved by integrating Erikson's (1963; 1982) developmental concept of individual development with theoretical and research based literature on families and community, group identification and membership, and social cohesion and community efficacy.

The Relationship between Family and Community

The relationship between family and community is historically and materially situated while continually constructed and re-constructed. Some important influences are the family's life cycle stage, needs, resources and history with the community. McAuley and Nutty (1985) found that families with children often seek deep community ties and are influenced by their level of financial investment in the community (such as home ownership), involvement with political and social organizations and emotional and geographic closeness to relatives, friends and neighbors.

The internal models of community carried by the family also shape family/community relationships. Reiss (1981:224) found that families have a "family paradigm" that organizes their world views and meaning systems, and that part of this is a "community map" (284), a spacial rendering of community that orients family members to places of importance, investing value in different locations. Csikszentmihalyi and Rochberg-Halton (1981) also found that specific places in the community have symbolic meaning that reinforces a person's sense of self. Neighborhoods and buildings
can symbolize both the pleasure of the past as well as the pain of the present.

**Group Membership**

Families not only are constituent units of communities but also identify with ethnic and racial groups, social and economic classes, religious groups, etc., creating in-groups and out-groups. In Holyoke, religion has been an important aspect of social identity, particularly when Irish Catholics were working for Protestant Yankee mill owners in the 19th century (Green, 1939). However, ethnicity became the dominant group distinction, particularly between the Irish and French Canadians (Green, Hartford, 1990). Today there is severe ethnic tension between residents of European descent (Irish, French-Canadian, Polish, German, Yankee) and Hispanic residents (predominantly Puerto Ricans). In previous eras of ethnic migration, competition and tension there were factory jobs and a sense of hope and optimism; the city was growing with a promising economic future. But more recently, Puerto Ricans have arrived in large numbers at a time when many blue collar jobs have been lost, the city has become deindustrialized and is in serious economic decline (Hartford; Miller, 1999).

When there is severe ethnic conflict, which in Holyoke is often constructed as racial conflict, ethnic and racial group membership becomes a significant source of identity for many families. Other important facets of social identity are community longevity (an identity as a long-term resident or as a relative newcomer), religion and socio/economic class.

In summary, social identity is part of a family's self-generated story about who they are: what their position in the community is, whom they are close to or distant from, comfortable or uncomfortable with, and what it means for them to live in their community.

**Social Cohesion and Community Efficacy**

Why do some communities exhibit strong social cohesion, when others, despite having similar income levels and demographic composition, appear fragmented and characterized by alienation? Why do some families experience a sense of efficacy,
while others feel powerless, despite living in seemingly comparable neighborhoods? It may be helpful to define social cohesion and to explore how it is achieved.

Wilson (1995) defines the social cohesion of a community as being the degree to which residents can achieve communal objectives while maintaining effective social control. He believes that the two major factors that determine social cohesion are the ability to exert supervision over the community or neighborhood and the presence of richly cross-joined social networks.

It is likely that social capital contributes to social cohesion. Putnam (1993:1) defines social capital as "the features of social organization, such as networks, norms and trust that facilitates coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit." Brooks-Gunn (1995) believes communities have varying degrees of social capital—accessible community information, opportunities for economic advancement, stability of residence—all of which can contribute to social networks. Social capital can include agreed upon norms of parental supervision and acceptable child behavior leading to what Sampson, Raudenbush and Earls' (1997) have termed "collective efficacy:" trust in the community, common values shared by residents, and a willingness by parents to act on these values, including interventions in public places, such as parks and street corners. Their comparative longitudinal study of Chicago neighborhoods has found that communities with collective efficacy have lower rates of delinquency and violence.

Collective efficacy appears to be related to families' sense of power in their community (Miller, 1994). There are many forms of power in the community: corporate, political, economic, law enforcement, the ability to influence and intimidate. But for families, a sense of power is a function of both the power structure of the community and their internal sense of efficacy, what they believe they can control, influence and accomplish (Miller). Every family has a narrative about themselves, a story that can have the power of a heroic myth or a saga of failure, hopelessness and despair. This sense of agency, or lack of, can effect how much a family believes in itself in relation to its community and ultimately its willingness and ability to participate in collective attempts to influence the community. If families perceive themselves as being without power, they are also less likely to maintain relationships
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with neighbors, thus weakening their social ties to the community (Geis & Ross, 1998). This, in turn, threatens the integrity of both family and community.

Family and Community Integrity

Integrity means soundness, completeness, honesty, an unimpaired condition (Webster’s Ninth, 1990). It implies being authentic, whole and undivided. The psychologist, Erik Erikson (1963, 1982) used the notion of integrity to depict the highest level of adult functioning. He described “integrity” as the final psychosocial achievement in adult development. While models derived from individual psychology are never completely applicable to other social units, such as family and community, they can, however, provide useful metaphors and analogies. There are three aspects of Erikson’s notion of integrity that inform the discussion of family and community integrity. The first is that individual integrity, in his view, involves the capacity to move beyond narcissism and to genuinely love and care for others. The second is that integrity encompasses the ability to integrate the past with the present. The third is the ability to mesh one’s inner self with the social world.

Erikson’s construct of integrity can be adapted to both family and community and taken together describes a relationship where families actively participate in community life in a way that strengthens community and, in turn, communities offer families a supportive, nurturing environment. By family integrity I mean the ability of the family consistently to provide its members with the emotional, psychological, social and economic foundations to support their engagement and involvement with the community. By community integrity I mean the capacity of a community to provide for its families a safe, economically viable and meaningful place to live, with equal justice for all. (This could be expanded further to social, economic and political integrity, which communities need for their survival but that is beyond the scope of this paper).

For communities to receive support from families, it is important that families are able and available to look outward towards the community and are not exclusively concerned about their family life and survival. Communities are poorly served when families retreat into their home life to the exclusion of community
engagement. Vital communities need families to make collective, multi-faceted investments in them. However, in order for families to have the will and energy to do this, it is important that they have a belief in their own efficacy, that is, a certain level of collective self-esteem, and an ability to constructively effect their environment. When families feel under siege and there are not viable and legitimate economic and social opportunities available for them to meet their basic needs, it is difficult to expect them to contribute to their community.

Research Methodology

The research attempted to understand how participants viewed their families and communities from their own perspectives and in their own words. It consisted of in-depth, semi-structured interviews with residents and health and social service workers in Holyoke between 1995 and 1997, and also creating a community profile by conducting an extensive document review. In all, twenty people were interviewed: thirteen members of eight different households and seven key informants (health and social service professionals working in Holyoke). A journalist and a local pediatrician served as consultants to the research. Families volunteered to participate in the research project and were mostly recruited through the major local pediatric practice in the city. Participants represented a range of socio-economic backgrounds, which reflected the demographic make-up of the city based on census data. This included middle class professionals, chief executives, blue-collar workers, para-professionals, unemployed single parents, and gang members. In two-parent families, parents were usually interviewed together. I was the principal researcher and compiled the data and conducted all interviews, with the exception of two families who were interviewed by family therapists under my supervision.

Semi-structured interviews with families were based on a phenomenological model (Seidman, 1991) and divided into three parts. The first part of the interview explored how the family arrived in Holyoke, the second their experience of living in the city and the third asked them to reflect on the meaning of living
in Holyoke. Key informants were asked a number of questions about their experience of working in Holyoke and perspectives on what living in Holyoke is like for families with whom they have contact.

Interviews were tape-recorded, transcribed, coded and sorted by themes. Profiles were made of the research participants. In addition to the principal researcher, a team of three family therapists read the transcripts and helped identify themes and patterns.

The community profile was compiled from a document review of local history books, oral history projects, census data, reports from state health and social service agencies, reports by local planning commissions, local newspapers, Chamber of Commerce publications, city planning reports, annual reports of local health and human service agencies, needs assessments conducted by the local United Way, and the guidebook to the annual St. Patrick’s Day parade, the city’s major cultural event.

Findings and Model Construction

After coding and sorting the responses from the interviews, I created profiles of each participant family and categorized themes. Themes were organized according to what respondents said was and was not working for Holyoke and their families. I then combined these into the framework of family and community integrity, trying to state in the affirmative what families need from communities and vice-versa, based on the research participants’ responses. The results are listed in Figure 1. As is often the case with exploratory, qualitative research, the model construction was an evolving process involving an interaction between data analysis and application of theory.

Every person interviewed for this research project identified racial/ethnic conflict between Anglos and Hispanics as a critical issue facing the city today. There were numerous instances of this and almost any conversation led to this topic. For example, a married couple that I interviewed had grown up in a working class neighborhood, “The Flats,” that was a great source of pride for them. Now, the neighborhood that had been French-Canadian, Irish and Polish, when they were growing up was predominantly
Figure 1

Aspects of Family and Community Integrity

Family Integrity
1. A collective, multi-faceted engagement with the community.
2. An adaptable internalized community model.
3. A commitment to the community as well as to family—to look outward as well as inward.
4. A family's belief in their efficacy.

Community Integrity
1. Safe schools that educate all children.
2. Distinct wards and neighborhoods and choice about where to live.
3. Safety for all citizens.
4. Vibrant civic associations and unifying rituals.
5. Jobs and adequate public transportation to them.
6. Valuing families from all ethnic and racial groups and equal access to power and resources.
7. Social networks.
8. A community sense of power and efficacy.
9. An adaptable community identity—the ability of the community to reinvent itself so that there is an optimistic future as well as an honorable past.

Puerto Rican, and to them represented their community's decline. The husband described revisiting the apartment where he had been raised:

I knock on the door and this Spic [Sic.] opens it. I was gone for four years and knowing what the neighborhood was like when I left and seeing it when I come back was a shock. It looked like hell. When I left it wasn't bad—you didn't have to worry about walking up and down the streets and you could leave your car unlocked. But in four years, things really turned around.
As the quote illustrates, the perceived deterioration of the neighborhood is framed in derogatory ethnic terms (rather than focusing on socio-economic factors such as de-industrialization) and suggests that the respondent's sense of self is reinforced and bolstered at the expense of the other group that now occupies space that has personal, if not sacred meaning. All Hispanic respondents described pervasive white racism. (The dynamics of this conflict are described in greater detail in Miller, 1999).

This was a small sample of families and key informants commenting on their relationship to one community so any conclusions should be taken as speculative and may or may not be applicable to other communities and families.

Discussion

The two constructs, family and community integrity, are linked by the premise that there is a reciprocal relationship between them: family integrity contributes to community integrity and communities with integrity nurture and support families.

Family Integrity

1. Having a collective, multifaceted attachment to the community.

A collective, multi-faceted attachment to the community means that multiple members of the family are engaged with their community in a variety of ways. Such an attachment provides a foundation of individual and collective investment in community institutions and organizations. This can occur through work, attending local schools, civic and political involvement, recreational activities, commercial ventures, neighborhood associations, and a wide variety of informal networks, contacts and activities. Community attachment can be bolstered, vertically through intergenerational involvement with the community, or horizontally by multiple transactions by nuclear and/or extended family members.

Families interviewed who lacked multiple, intergenerational community attachments felt alienated from their community. For example, one white, upper-middle—class family had a four generation history with Holyoke on one side of the family and both parents were involved with community boards and charities. However, after sending their children to private schools outside of
the community, they felt less attachment and future commitment to the community.

2. Having an Adaptable Internalized Community Model

The family is the collective repository of its members' meaning-making systems and models and maps of community. Communities are continually evolving and changing but the model of the community, held by the family, is often outdated and frozen in time. Narratives sustain the family's image of community, stories about the community that family members tell themselves and share with one another. Often, these narratives are idealized portraits of the past, with the blemishes air-brushed out. Adhering to idealized, out-dated community models can create dissonance between the way that people remember the community or want it to be, and how it actually is. In Holyoke, the paradigm for the community carried by many of the white respondents, particularly those who had grown up there, was of a virtually all white, industrial city, devoid of serious urban problems. This has led to anger and blame for the perceived deterioration of the city, often expressed at Puerto Ricans, who are seen as the cause of the community's demise. A viable community model for families, one that can be adjusted and adapted to the inevitable changes that occur in all communities, enables families to maintain a vital connection with their community. This can connect them with other families and allow for constructive community engagement and participation, rather than fearful or angry withdrawal into the bunker of home life.

3. Commitment to the Community

Although some respondents were involved in community activities—running for office, serving on boards and commissions, volunteering for social groups—others had withdrawn into their home life. Family members need to look outwards to the community as well as inwards to the home to contribute to vital communities. The important value of taking care of and nurturing family has, ironically, often been at the expense of community involvement (Bellah, et al., 1991). In its most extreme form, such intense family involvement and lack of community investment can be viewed as a form of narcissism, an ethos of valuing one's relations but caring less for one's neighbors and fellow citizens. Concretely this can be manifested by a withdrawal from public
life and institutions, such as sending children to private schools, a trend that Robert Reich (1991) has termed the “secession of the successful.” Lack of local community commitment has been exacerbated by many factors, such as the ability to commute so that work and residence are bifurcated. Also, technology that permits people to tune-in to national and international news, shopping, culture, and entertainment can diminish local investment by families. There are many ways to express community commitment—through volunteer and civic work, engagement in local political life, affiliation with religious and secular organizations, or simply by sending children to public schools.

4. A Family’s Belief in their own Efficacy

A reason that most respondents offered as to why they are not more actively involved with their community was a sense of hopelessness and helplessness, of being overwhelmed by the magnitude of the challenges. Holyoke was repeatedly described as being dangerous, racially divided and lacking an economic foundation for economic security and future prosperity. Larger social forces that emanate from outside of the community, such as deindustrialization and globalization exacerbate this feeling. An understandable sense of powerlessness can ensue.

Families need to believe in their ability to influence their local environment to justify the effort. They require adequate incomes, time, social relationships, accessible information networks and opportunities for economic success from the community while they also require human capital (skills, knowledge) and psychological capital (confidence in themselves) (Brooks-Gunn, 1995). A family’s belief in their efficacy is a function of both the family’s internal resources and what is provided by the community and is thus a fitting place to close the consideration of family integrity and open the discussion of community integrity.

Community Integrity

1. Safe schools that educate all children.

All families who participated in this research placed a high priority on their children receiving quality education. One middle class Puerto Rican family felt that the public school system had low expectations for their children because they were Puerto Rican, assuming that they required bi-lingual education even
though they had been born and raised in Holyoke by English speaking parents. An upper middle class family had placed their children in private schools, even though they had hoped that their children would attend local neighborhood schools because they did not believe they would be safe in these schools. Community integrity means that families of varied backgrounds can trust their children will receive safe, quality education, without prejudice, from their local school systems.

2. Distinct Wards and Neighborhoods

People who live in cities, even small cities like Holyoke, often identify with their local neighborhood or ward. Schweitzer (1999) has broken this down further, studying differential attachments and social capital that residents experience block by block within a neighborhood. Most of the respondents viewed themselves as "Holyokers." Many were identified with their wards and felt most comfortable in their section of the city. The diversity of urban life can cause tensions and strains between groups and individuals leading some with resources to move. Suburban flight hastens urban demise as tax bases shrink, properties decline and the city’s civic infrastructure is weakened. Conversely, those cities which have retained a social and economic diversity of citizenry are more likely to be prosperous (Rusk, 1997). One way of maintaining community integrity is to create and maintain a variety of neighborhoods where families feel comfortable, safe, and willing to invest themselves. This can mean diverse and heterogeneous neighborhoods and also neighborhoods that are more socially and economically homogenous. There is a fine line that must be carefully observed between people seeking sameness and safety in a neighborhood versus segregation. Segregated neighborhoods are illegal and destabilize a community’s integrity. A dynamic city needs a variety of options to attract and retain diverse families that foster choice rather than restrictions.

3. Safety for All Citizens

All of the research participants felt unsafe in Holyoke, although for different reasons. Latinos felt unsafe when visiting white neighborhoods. For example, a man running for City Councilor always wore t-shirts emblazoned with his name and campaign information, so that residents and police would not mistake his intentions when he was campaigning in predominantly white
neighborhoods. White residents and workers expressed concerns about driving through predominantly Puerto Rican neighborhoods and walking in the city after dark.

One white respondent expressed fears of Puerto Rican induced crime at a drug store located near his home, so he would always drive his children to the store. Ironically, a Puerto Rican respondent, who is a policeman in another city, complained that whenever he went to the same drugstore, he could hear the click of car locks, as he walked past white patrons waiting in their cars.

A sense of safety is a literal and constructed notion. People feel unsafe because they have actually had frightening experiences and encounters or subjectively assume a lack of safety based on social indicators, such as the ethnic or racial composition of a neighborhood, or from community stories and narratives about danger. Whatever the source, feeling unsafe inhibits families from participating in community life which, ironically, leads to a less safe community (Geis & Ross, 1998).

4. Vibrant Civic Associations and Unifying Rituals

Another aspect of community integrity is the presence of civic and public institutions that braid families to the community and public events that weave them together. Public institutions in many cities, such as libraries, parks, schools, swimming pools, and playgrounds, have been neglected and under-funded, particularly when middle class families move from the city or opt for using private services (Reich, 1991). Many civic associations in a city such as Holyoke descend from prior eras, when the city was an industrial powerhouse and generated wealth and resources. Organizations such as the Elks, Knights of Columbus and the Junior League have gender, class and ethnic biases that exclude many citizens from participation. One middle-class Puerto Rican woman respondent declared that she would not join the Elks or Knights of Columbus because she believed that she would need to accommodate to an Anglo culture and compromise her ethnic identity. Many respondents expressed a desire to participate in community life if two requirements were met: 1. They felt welcomed and respected. 2. They believed that their involvement was relevant and had meaning. Without meaningful community roles, people felt marginalized, redundant, estranged from the community.
What are needed are civic associations that foster community engagement, commitment, pride and leadership and that are open to and inclusive of the diverse families that inhabit the community. Family members of all ages are more likely to become involved with successful community projects when there are clear tasks and a commitment to develop local leadership in all phases of the project: planning, researching, networking and implementing (Annie E. Casey Foundation, 1998).

Public events and rituals are also important for a community because they are opportunities for people to celebrate and interact together and they create a public narrative about the community. In Holyoke, the major public celebration is the St. Patrick’s Day parade. Although originally an Irish celebration, today the event has meaning for other European descended ethnic groups—French-Canadians, Poles, Italians—but leaves many Puerto Ricans feeling excluded or pressured to leave their culture at the parade grounds. Communities can reinvent holidays and celebrations to include the traditions of all of the disparate ethnic and racial groups that constitute a community. Even a traditional historical commemoration, such as July 4, can be a relevant and unifying event for all families if it is conducted to acknowledge the unique heritages of the diverse groups that constitute a community (Etzioni, 1997).

5. Jobs and Adequate Public Transportation to Them

A productive economy that produces jobs and access to these jobs is an essential component of a viable community. Younger Puerto Rican respondents either could not obtain jobs or had to surmount considerable barriers ranging from lack of opportunity to blatant prejudice and discrimination. All of the European-descended participants of adult age were employed but many expressed fears for their economic security. It is difficult for a community to be efficacious and prosperous if significant numbers of its citizens cannot earn a decent living through working. If family members are unable to earn a living through legitimate means, they may turn to illegitimate means to survive, such as crime or gang membership, as happened with some of the respondents in Holyoke. Access to jobs means not only the creation of jobs but the ability to commute to them, the skills to manage them,
the ability to apply for them without encountering racial/ethnic discrimination, and support services that enable people to leave their families to work, such as day care.

There have been examples of communities that have understood this aspect of community integrity. For example, in San Antonio, Project Quest offers community college degrees, childcare, transportation, supplies, uniforms, food stamps, subsidized housing, weekly motivational meetings and counseling, as part of federal, state, local government and business collaborative (Walljasper, 1997). This exemplifies a holistic and comprehensive community project that contributes to community integrity.

6. Valuing Families from all Racial and Ethnic Groups and Equal Access to Power and Resources

Racism runs deep in communities, in institutions, political and economic structures, neighborhoods, culture, police and fire departments, and in the murals and billboards that surround a community. In 1987, a campaign poster for the successful Holyoke mayoral candidate depicted a Hispanic young male smoking a cigarette; it read “The people who really should read this can’t. We have a problem. Our community isn’t working together: In fact a whole lot of us aren’t working at all” (Kraft, 1995:5). In the late 1990’s, a group of school children painted a public mural depicting the confluence of Puerto Rican and United States traditions. A “white” city community leader threatened to paint over the mural because she was insulted by the fact that the Puerto Rican flag appeared to be higher than the United States flag. Not only did Hispanic participants describe many instances where they had personally experienced racism but Anglo residents shared instances of their own overt and covert racism in interviews.

In communities such as Holyoke, invidious comparisons are frequently made between poor, recently arrived immigrants and older, more affluent and settled residents, usually contrasting decent with decadent values. This fosters us and them thinking, reinforced by an unequal social structure, where difference is viewed as a threat. This, in turn, leads to alienation, isolation, discrimination, and oppression and exacerbated inter-group tensions. Racism serves to undermine community integrity and maims families and individuals.
7. Social Networks

Social networks are a major component of social capital (Brooks-Gunn, 1995; Putnam, 1993). One upper-middle class, Anglo couple described their decision to remain in Holyoke like living on a "shrinking island." A young Puerto Rican woman stated that she did not trust anyone in Holyoke except for her parents and kept to herself as much as possible. Social networks, such as friends, extended families, churches, and working associations form the net that connects families with one another and their community. Without social networks, it is difficult for families to direct their dynamic energy outside of the family system: there are no pathways or connecting cables. Dickinson (1995) has argued that the inexorable loss of informal networks, formerly dependent upon the unpaid work of many women, has led to social disintegration in modern urban America. Many families in this study described a diminishing latticework of social networks and an increasing tendency to fortify the family boundary against the community, as if the family was an independent entity.

8. A Community Sense of Power and Efficacy

When families feel a diminished sense of power and efficacy in their community, their tendency is to withdraw and turn inward, and this diminishes family integrity. It is particularly difficult for families to maintain a sense of efficacy if the community lacks a sense of power. The de-localization of communities has exacerbated this. Many small cities like Holyoke have become branch towns, as banks, businesses and companies become sub-units of larger corporations. Local government is increasingly dependent upon state and federal aid to run many of their services and institutions and must adhere to regulations that accompany such assistance. Communities such as Holyoke are dependent on their credit ratings from bond firms to be able to raise and attract capital, much like poor countries depend on the World Bank and International Monetary Fund. Local branches of companies can be closed down by decision-makers in other parts of the country or the world. When this happens, volunteerism, community pride and civic spirit decline (Rimer, 1996). No community stands on its own, nor should it, but if a community has lost its economic viability and sense of independence and agency, then the consequent loss of pride and efficacy will also dis-empower families.
Community integrity requires that a local community has some ability to act autonomously and effectively on behalf of its families. State and national social welfare policies must foster this capacity. It is also important for a community to be able to define itself positively. Research participants were aware that the image of Holyoke is one of an unsafe, deindustrialized community with serious racial tensions. This was a source of consternation, embarrassment and even shame, lowering community morale. Many respondents sought symbols and indicators about Holyoke, drawn from its history as an industrial powerhouse and its cultural and geographical landmarks, to engender a sense of pride in their community. The community narrative needs to inspire hope and honor for its families.

9. An Adaptable Community Identity

A community identity is based on history and tradition and gives meaning to its institutions and culture, plans and activities. It enables communities to respond to questions raised by the lives of its families. Community identity is both shaped by a community's historical and social circumstances and its collective narrative. Examples of identities are a 'thriving industrial city', 'a decaying and declining neighborhood', 'the inner city', 'a wealthy suburb', 'a college town', 'a bedroom community'. Such collective self-definitions give meaning to the lives of citizens within the context of the community.

Unfortunately, as communities change, which they inevitably do, they can be saddled with identities that evolved from earlier eras and are no longer appropriate to make sense of current dilemmas or provide solutions to vexing social and economic problems. Such is the case with Holyoke, which is no longer a thriving mill town while a viable and meaningful community identity has not yet evolved. There are many questions that the old paradigm of Holyoke can no longer answer: Can it reform its public education system to be accessible to all families? Can it reform its political system so that all families within the city are fairly represented? Can it rebuild its local economy and participate in a global economy so that all of its able-bodied citizens can work for a living wage? Can it become a community where Hispanic families feel respected and accepted and Anglo families want to reside? Therefore, a task for Holyoke and other communities is
the capacity to reinvent themselves to provide an identity and framework for confronting the new challenges and tasks that they face, so that the community can foresee an optimistic future built on its honorable past.

Conclusion

In this article I have presented a model, a framework derived from Erik Erikson's concept of individual integrity and based on exploratory qualitative research conducted in the City of Holyoke to conceptualize how, ideally, families and communities interact and sustain each other. The concepts of family and community integrity illustrate the reciprocal relationship between a community and its families and may be useful when designing future research, policy and service planning.

References

Family and Community Integrity


Group Work’s Place in Social Work: A Historical Analysis

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This paper uses a political/economic lens to explore the relationship of social group work to the larger social work profession. The author studied the group work collection at the Social Welfare History Archives, the journal THE GROUP from the 1940s and 1950s, the proceedings of the re-born group work organization, Association for the Advancement of Social Work with Groups, and interviewed several prominent group workers who were active in social group work from the 1940s. The author concludes that group work’s decision to merge with NASW in 1955 provided the hoped-for professional identity. However, there were consequences for group workers that were not anticipated and, ultimately, resulted in the disappearance of group work as an integral part of social work education and practice.

We held hands fast, joined in the circle,
and stood facing one another,
links of a chain.
World stood around us, ourselves we must release.
One laughed and laughed
and surrendered.
Yet another tore and tore,
and a bleeding red wound
opened
as he tore the chain that bound us.
In gray work he unswervingly creates,
yet red drops run unceasingly.

Gisela Konopka, age 15 (Schiller, n.d.)

There is great value in reading, studying, and analyzing history for what it can help you understand about the past and
inform you about the present. Studying history provides several challenges. No historian's account ever really corresponds with the past. The past was not an account, but rather a series of events, interactions, and situations. No matter how carefully one studies primary documents comparing one to the other, interviews persons who have knowledge of the subject, and sifts through relevant secondary sources, the end product is a personal, ideological construct. This construct is open to change and inevitably will be as new knowledge, perspectives, and simply the passage of time affect it.

This paper is a story of social group work over time and its relationship to the burgeoning social work profession. Particular focus is on three periods of time: (1) the formation of a group work association, 1930s; (2) the merger into the National Association of Social Workers, 1950s; and (3) the rebirth of group work, 1970s. Documents utilized included the NASW Records' section on the American Association of Group Workers at the Social Welfare History Archives; readings from The Group (1940s and 1950s) and other journals of that era; published proceedings from 1979 onward of the reborn AASWG; secondary sources on group work, and interviews, non-randomly selected, with five prominent group workers to whom I am particularly indebted. Paul Ephross, Hans Falck, Gisela Konopka, and John Ramey, were interviewed in 1998; Ruby Pernell was interviewed in 1999. Their perspectives cover a period of 60 years of social group work practice

Political/Economic Perspective

Looking at social group work from a political/economic perspective helps clarify the role of group work in the larger organization of social work. Professions cannot be seen outside of their social, political, and economic context. Under this definition, an organized group or occupation is a profession when it has obtained control over the production, distribution, and consumption of a commodity that society has indicated that it needs (Wenocur & Reisch, 1989; Larson, 1977). Supporters of this perspective have made sound arguments for studying professions not just in the context of a division of labor but as part
of a network of social and economic relations (Andrews, 1984). To be able to control a market of professional services, a profession must establish sufficient expertise, appeal and legitimacy to attract consumers to use their services. The successful claim to a monopoly leads to higher economic rewards and prestige; in exchange, society asks for responsible performance of a socially required function.

Professions, which are directly related to social class, must align themselves to a sufficient degree with the dominant, elite group to achieve stature and receive needed sanctions. Social group work and the larger profession, social work, have class interests on the one hand; on the other hand, they have humanitarian and democratic ideals, which can conflict with their aspirations toward professionalization (Wenocur & Reisch, 1989). Thus a political/economic perspective assists us in exploring and understanding the complicated relationship between social group work and social work.

Historical Overview of Group Work in the United States

The continuity of social group work is clearly articulated in the documents. Group work was seen as a movement before it became a field. From a field, it became a method, and back to a field (Papell in Middleman and Goldberg, 1988). Group work played an important role in dealing with a number of shifts in U.S. society in the late-19th century and early-20th century: the industrialization of the U.S.; large population shifts from rural to urban centers, and; the enormous wave of immigration, mainly to U.S. urban areas (Konopka, 1972; Garvin, 1997). Group work emerged out of several organizations including both those which focused on self-help as well as those which focused on recreation and informal education: settlement houses, neighborhood centers, Y's, Jewish centers, camps, scouts, and labor union organizing.

From its beginnings, group work practice and theory has been rooted in "social reform; social responsibility, democratic ideals, and social action as well as social relatedness and human attachment" (Lee, 1991, p. 3). The work done in groups was seen as purposeful activity that involved a process that considered both the individual in the group as well as the group as a whole
as well as the larger community. It was not until its affiliation with social work that it became defined as a method of social work practice. Even as late as the 1960s, it was acknowledged that “[g]roup work as a method of social work is only a recent concept” (Konopka, 1963, 2).

During its early years, there was no particular professional identification among group workers; instead, they were far more likely to identify with their agencies. Group work’s eventual identification with social work was associated with the desire to professionalize and the need to “find a place” in the University. Some social work programs began offering group work courses by the 1920s and eventually group work concentrations. This moved group work closer to social work (Konopka interview, 1998) and, according to some (Falck interview, 1998; Ramey interview, 1998), blunted the radical spirit of group work. Inevitably, the University’s conservative culture affected practice and knowledge building (Falck interview, 1998).

Mary P. Follett (1926) and John Dewey (1933) provided important intellectual contributions to early group workers. Follett strongly believed in the power of the small groups formed in communities to solve social problems that neighbors had in common. Dewey, through his progressive education movement, advocated working with small leisure-time groups (Fatout, M., 1992). Their influence on leading thinkers in group work reinforced an individualist perspective that became engrained in group work (Falck interview, 1998).

After the National Conference on Social Work formed a group work section in 1935, group work became more closely associated with social work. This remained somewhat informal until 1955 and the founding of the National Association of Social Workers (Toseland & Rivas, 1998). A small cadre of group workers (15–20 people) met in New York City in the early 1930s to have informal discussions. This group proposed a gathering of group workers at the NCSW. As a result, a special meeting of group workers met at the Atlantic City NCSW Conference in 1936 with 50 people in attendance. This group created the National Association for the Study of Group Work under the leadership of Arthur Swift. “It was a ‘missionary spirit’ which motivated this early group” (Kraft, p. 13).
Some of this spirit was an outgrowth of being a relatively small group and of feeling under scrutiny by the far larger, more powerful caseworkers. For example, Gertrude Wilson, attracted to the belief in the importance of the group to promoting democratic ideals, was strongly encouraged to drop her interest in group work while a student at the University of Chicago in the 1930s. Sophonisba Breckenridge, one of her social work teachers, argued that Wilson was "wasting" herself by being a person who worked with groups (Gertrude Wilson memoir, 1979, p. 34).

When Louis Kraft, then Executive Director of the National Jewish Welfare Board, sat down in 1947 with an editor of The Group to reminisce about group work, he spoke directly to the passion of early group workers and their movement. "We were a group of zealots", he said. He found the beginnings of the American Association for the Study of Group Work (NASGW) to be "one of the most satisfying associations of [his] entire career" (Reminiscing with Louis Kraft, 1947, pp. 12–13). This passionate expression is common in movements and causes. It has been present during several periods of group work history. It occurs when there is a sense of mission and, as Kraft indicated, a belief in "common elements in philosophy and method" (Kraft, p. 12–13).

By 1939, the organization had become the American Association for the Study of Group Work, and in 1946, the American Association of Group Workers was formed with membership reaching 1,811 by 1948 (NASW records, AAGW section description. P. 21, SWHA). The organization cut across all agency, religious, racial, and occupational lines. From 1936 to 1946, AAGW worked on knowledge-building and developing common objectives and common terminology (Neely, 1947). A description of AAGW’s nature and functions written in 1947 clarifies group work’s philosophy at that time:

Group work is a method of group leadership used in organizing and conducting various types of group activities. While group work developed first in connection with recreation and voluntary informal education... its use is not confined to those fields. It is increasingly being used in various types of institutions, in hospitals and clinics, in the extra-curricular activities of schools and in similar situations. The guiding purpose behind such leadership rests upon
the common assumptions of a democratic society; namely, the opportunity for each individual to fulfill his capacities in freedom, to respect and appreciate others and to assume his social responsibility in maintaining and constantly improving our democratic society (NASW records, AAGW section, folder 806, SWHA).

A milestone of group work history occurred in 1946 when Grace Coyle presented a paper at the National Conference on Social Welfare where she said that group work “as a method falls within social work as a method . . .” (Coyle, 1946, in Trecker, 1955, p. 340). Even though there were advocates within group work of achieving profession status by affiliating with other professions, after 1946, group work was on a direct path toward joining professional social work. Maintaining a separate autonomous group work organization that would result in professional status for its members was not seen as feasible. Group workers who strongly identified with social work dominated AAGW. Harleigh Trecker, for example, announced in The Compass in 1944 that “group work is a method in social work . . . not a profession—social work is the profession” (Trecker, 1944, p. 4).

This direction, however, provided group work with some challenges. The challenges related to the nature of the work (which included games, social events, community activities and mutual aid), the setting of the work (more non-traditional settings with less traditional work hours and conditions), and the nature of the workers themselves (not necessarily trained social workers; included recreation workers, volunteer workers, street workers, etc.) (Ramey interview, 1998). Group work was “not just talking, but also painting, playing . . . It wasn’t just a method to be taught, but a philosophy that opened doors” (Konopka interview, 1998). As a result, group work was not seen by caseworkers as “serious enough” nor “intellectual enough” (Ramey interview, 1998). Students entering graduate social work programs in the late 1940s with a concentration in group work often felt they had entered a concentration that was rejected by the more dominant concentration, casework (Falck interview, 1998).

Ruby Pernell (interview, 1999), then a young social group worker, remembers the 1946 meeting she attended in Cleveland
where the decision to alter the name of the group work association from American Association for the Study of Group Work, to the American Association of Group Workers was made. She recounted that there was a big debate about the name change:

You have to remember that at that period the people who were interested in group work were not just people who were working in the social work field. You had social psychologists, the recreation people, the education people. They were all part of this. So, the question was should it become this kind of loose research kind of organization where people can develop their ideas, research or whatever, or should it become a membership organization. So, it became a membership organization.

Ruth Middleman (1992, p. 25) points out that group workers have always been a “special breed of social workers with different roots, traditions, history, and heroes.” Group work, rooted in liberalism, attracted liberal to left-leaning members. Many were immigrants. Immigrants brought experiences to this country that affected their decision to enter social work, particularly social group work. Group work agencies often served “sort of as halfway houses for immigrants who became social workers” (Ephross interview, 1998).

The philosophical underpinnings of group work were strengthened by the influence of Jewish refugees from Nazi persecution, such as Hans Falck and Gisela Konopka, who held strong humanistic beliefs in the rights of group members and a passion for democratic participation. Falck (interview, 1998), who emigrated to the U.S. in the late 1930s, decided to become a social group worker to “do something, as a Jew, about the problems of this country to make sure Hitler cannot happen here.”

Konopka (interview, 1998) escaped from Germany in the late 1930s after several years as a Nazi-resistance fighter and imprisonment, and eventually found a home in the U.S. in 1941. Her life experiences brought with her the strong belief in the humanization of all social services and the ability to enhance individuals while also helping them to be concerned for others. Her unwillingness to give up when hope seemed gone in her own life helped Konopka provide hope to others throughout her
group work career. "From the day the Nazi spit in my face", she says, "and I sat helplessly in the cell, I learned to say to myself, 'I may die here, unknown, unsung. But I may come out and then I'll be there!'" (Konopka, 1997, 58).

Within social work, Jewish men and women were drawn to group work because Judaism as both a religion and a culture is distinctly communal—"even if you're not a sinner, you're responsible for the sins of the community" (Ephross interview, 1998). Ephross explains that for Jews, group work enabled them to practice a commandment to "repair the world". This concept, akin to similar concepts in Catholicism and other religions, lends moral sanction to group work community building.

U.S. group workers learned from these immigrants the importance of community life and the strength of the group. At the same time, they also heard the "story of the disastrous power of group associations and of the skilled misuse that could be made of them... It forced them to look deeper into human movement to learn about the unique forces within each individual and not to rely alone on programs and group process" (Konopka, 1972, 6).

By the 1940s, particularly after the War, many activities engaged in by social workers, especially the practice and ideology of group workers, came under attack by anti-Communists. The post-World War II atmosphere of oppression received a boost by Senator Joseph McCarthy who, from 1950-1954, engaged in witch hunts that resulted in thousands of citizens, including many group workers losing their jobs. Group work, with its focus on humanism, equality, democracy and social action was particularly affected by McCarthyism (Andrews & Reisch, 1997). From group work's beginnings, it had been committed to such concepts as building relationships, mutuality, understanding others, and tolerance of diversity (Northen, 1994). These were concepts that became increasingly unpopular with many conservative elements at the time.

Harold Lewis (1992), himself a victim of an anti-Communistic witch hunt, suggests that group work was one of social work's first casualties of the Cold War period. He lamented:

This was a serious loss, since this method of social work was the most democratic in the profession. The core concept of group work and
the goal of its major proponents was participatory democracy . . .
What survived was the method's narrower function, therapeutic aid
(pp. 41–42).

For radical group workers, it was often the end of a career. "Left wing group workers—many of our leaders—got cleaned out of organizations. Rightly or wrongly, these people had achieved positions of power and ended up marginalized" (Ephross interview, 1998). Group workers Ira Krasner and Verne Weed were investigated for radical activities. Even Saul Bernstein had an article of his withdrawn from publication (later rescinded) because someone with the same name as his was an alleged communist (Andrews & Reisch, 1997).

During the post-War period, group work was acknowledged for its leading role in the promotion of democratic premises within social work, but criticism for not having a clear theory of practice continued. Their efforts toward clarification of the group work method were more successful (Garvin, 1997). Group workers were willing to speak up and take unpopular stands both in support of those with whom they worked and in support of larger social work issues. Thus, it is not surprising that a large number of social work leaders came from the group work field despite its minority status within the profession (Andrews & Reisch, 1997). Despite their small numbers, group workers "assumed leadership roles . . . far out of proportion to their actual numbers in the profession [and] played a vital role in the creation of NASW" (Middleman, 1992, 27).

The Merger—Formation of NASW

By the late-1940s, social workers were members of seven different practitioner organizations based primarily on fields of practice. Each organization had its own eligibility requirements. AAGW membership included anyone who worked in the broad area of group work: recreation workers, social workers, teachers, social psychologists, and volunteer workers, for example. With each organization specifically focused, they were able to be "a vehicle for the advancement of practice, and perhaps a lobbying force with the schools of social work to include and update practice content . . ." (Lewis, 1988, 219). The unanticipated outcome
of the merger was that group work's ability to continue having this kind of influence regarding curriculum content in social work education was blunted.

In the fall of 1947, the American Association of Schools of Social Work called a meeting to organize a procedure to become one unified professional social work organization. A committee was formed of members of the various social work associations. Not until 1950 did a more permanent organization emerge that became the Temporary Inter-Association Council of Social Work Membership Organizations (TIAC). Group worker Sanford (Sandy) Solender served as chair of TIAC from 1953-1955. Other group workers, as well, had major roles in the merger (Pernell interview, 1999). While many group workers were opposed to the merger, particularly the large cohort who were not professionally trained social workers, many desperately wanted the identification of the larger social work organization. The supporters were those who had been trained in schools of social work and saw themselves as social workers with a social group work concentration. Ironically, it is from this group of original supporters, that disillusionment soon set in.

The National Association of Social Workers was born in 1955 with five practice sections: group work, medical social work, psychiatric social work, school social work, and social work research. It was decided that community organization would be a committee rather than a section and could apply for section status at a later time (NASW, TIAC Papers, SWHA).

Group workers who were concerned about the merger received some comforting words from the TIAC representatives (who included H. Gibbs, J. Jorpela, J. McDowell, H. Rowe, S. Solender, and H. Trecker) who published a memo to all AAGW members (6-17-54) in which they assured group workers that they would be "blanketed in" to NASW and explained why the merger was good for them. They explained that NASW would provide better services to all its members, provide a united approach to common concerns, and eliminate overlapping efforts. "It represents our coming to maturity as a profession", they proclaimed. They emphasized that the group work section would be able to concentrate on group work issues with "the advantages of increased staff service, travel budget, overall office operations."
The theme of maturity was continued by the editorial committee (headed by Frank Fierman) of *The Group* (1954, 2) by underscoring the anticipation: “The present period of anticipation prior to the birth of NASW is not unlike the tense and happy months experienced by expectant parents who await the arrival of a new baby.” In explaining that *The Group* would no longer be published, he said, “It has served our field of social group work well during the adolescence of our profession, but must make way for our new tools which will serve us in our maturity.” Just as the era of *The Group* was ending, AAGW president Harleigh Trecker pulled together some of the most significant contributions to the journal since 1939 and published them in a book, *Group Work: Foundations & Frontiers* (Trecker, 1955).

Grace Coyle (1955, 7) announced in *The Group*: “Having decided by vote of the membership to throw in our lot with social work, we have accepted wholeheartedly an identification with its aims and its place in the community.” Yet, she warned that “...it has been clear, as the process of merger went on, that members of specialized groups must continue to have opportunity to study their specialized problems, to confer among themselves to develop research and written materials, and to represent their specialized interests in dealing with the field of practice and the other parts of social work.”

Most group workers nonetheless applauded the creation of NASW. They believed that the union would enable them to continue to study their specific group work issues in the newly created practice sections of NASW. As the merger played out, it became clear that group work as a distinct philosophy would be diminished.

Catherine Papell (1997, 6) refers to that time as a “renaissance, a period filled with a new vitality in social work’s professional journey and a thrust toward integration, toward unification and finding the essence of the social work helping process.” At the same time, she acknowledges that there were “consequences for engaging so eagerly in the generic thrust” because “[g]roup work was a sector of the generic whole that was neglected” (9).

While Gisela Konopka later would reflect with concern about the merger and its consequences, she wrote in the first edition of her book, *Social Group Work: A Helping Profession* (1963, p. 13) that
One of the insights gained from work with groups is that any person entering a group constellation changes through his interaction with others: Social group work changed through its close association with the profession of social work and also with the older method, social casework. In turn, it changed the profession and widened the concept of the social welfare field . . . The recent trend of a more aggressive and more outgoing approach in casework is related, for example, to the original more informal and neighborhood-related practice of group work while the more conscious purposefulness seen in modern group work practice is influenced by the clear and more formalized approach of social casework.

She added, in parentheses, a criticism: “Caseworkers and group workers do not always credit each other for the help they gain from each other. Sibling rivalry also exists in the realm of ideas.”

At the time of the merger of these organizations into NASW, the membership of AAGW was 2,846 representing 44 chapter in major cities, a small minority of the larger social work membership of around 22,000. The small numbers made it difficult for group work to maintain its focus despite Harleigh Trecker’s (1955, 5,6) assertion that group work was merging at a time when it was at its’ strongest. He declared: “Never before has our Association been stronger. It has vigorous potentials for a rich and a growing future . . . [There will be] an opportunity for the group work section to concentrate on the development of group work practice, the enrichment of group work skill, and the deepening of group work research.”

Group worker Alan Klein (1970, 109) suggests that, because of its small numbers, “social group work, awed and influenced by social casework, demoted social action and prevention from their places of importance in its theory and practice in order to conform to the therapeutic and corrective stance of the majority specialization.” Gilbert and Specht (1981), too, found that group work lost an important element by attempting to “copy” casework:

Social group workers and community organizers tried to make their modes of practice look as much as possible like social casework . . . Thus, social group work gradually became more clinical and less focused on citizenship training and community action . . . (234–235).
The minutes of an AAGW Executive Committee Meeting at the time of the merger (1-13-55, NASW: AAGW Collection, folder 812, SWHA), underscored how important it would be for the new group work section in the larger NASW organization to continue relationships with allied professions. The Executive Committee was right to be concerned. It soon became clear that the merger into social work while providing an identity and a way to pursue issues from a stronger position, would, at the same time, cost group work its relationship with recreation and education.

As Pernell, (1986, 13) upon reflection, reports, "...social group workers made a historic decision about their identification and affiliation and let go the identifiable bonds with recreation and informal education." A result was that social group work moved closer to a problem oriented philosophy and problem oriented agencies and away from more leisure time activities and more recreational agencies. "[T]he richness of the varied membership we'd had before" the merger was now gone, noted Pernell (interview, 1999). Some saw it as "the death knell of group work as a unique methodology" (Glasser and Mayadas, 1986, 4).

Middleman (1981), talking to an audience of the first symposium of the newly formed AASWG in 1979, said out loud what many other group workers were thinking when she declared that while there were gains associated with merging into NASW, there were also significant losses, "largely not remembered or discussed" (198). She refers to four main losses (187–205):

The flight from activities in favor of talk

"To fit in, the social group workers played down their involvement with and knowledge about using activities and the special interests of group participants as a point of engagement and became, like case-workers, helpers who talked."

The move beyond members' interests

"In leaving education and recreation behind, group workers also interpreted more vigorously ‘starting where the person is’ to include subtle pursuit of more than the ‘where’. . . . It was not unusual to find interracial objectives foremost to the worker and basketball winning foremost to the group members."
Study and research on group process.

"Group workers also parted company with the early group dynamics movement... social group workers increasingly used groups to help individuals grow and change and adopted new... theories to guide their work."

Focus upon the group to meet common problems and needs

"Instead of a focus on ‘the group’ and its potential and interests, the focus gradually shifted to the individuals in the group."

Gisela Konopka (interview, 1998) like many group workers who were also closely identified with social work, did not object to the merger when it occurred nor did she fight the push for a generalist perspective. She said, “Group work was not a cause for me. The ideas behind group work were my cause” (Konopka, 1998, interview). In retrospect, she feels that group work made a mistake aligning itself formally with social work. At the opening plenary of the first meeting of AASWG in Cleveland in 1979, she declared

The roots of social work are too closely anchored in authoritarian and bureaucratic historical developments. The acceptance of something as revolutionary as social group work was too hard for this profession... As a whole, the social work profession wanted its practitioners to be totally ‘in charge!’ The power of members was feared (1981,115).

In short, the merger of AAGW into the new, unifying organization, NASW, shifted the focus of group work away from social reform, community building and a more radical group work. Ramey (interview, 1998) believes that “It was not conscious on the part of group workers and I don’t know if it was conscious among the other groups, but the merger resulted in the de-radicalization of group work.”

The End of Practice Sections in NASW and the Emergence of “Generocide” (Abels & Abels, 1981)

Group workers continued to hold out hope in the merger for the first few years. It soon became apparent that the void left by the end of The Group was not going to be filled by the new journal
Social Work. Many group workers felt that group work articles were few and far between and that articles that were published seldom, if ever, cited group workers (Ramey interview, 1998). The loss of The Group was doubly felt because The Survey, published by Paul Kellogg, ceased publication in the early 1950s. "The end of The Survey left a void in the literature that has never been replaced." It represented "the progressive voice, particularly the settlement and thus, group work, voice" (Ramey interview, 1998).

The NASW practice sections remained the hope of group work identity. Yet, in 1962, the NASW Delegate Assembly voted to disband with sections in the name of unification. Ramey (interview, 1998), who considers this period the biggest crisis in the history of group work, refers to the decision to abandon practice sections as "the telling event" and adds, "It was not an unconscious decision." Group work, with its' small numbers found themselves unable to mount a significant fight to maintain the group work section and thus, their identity. Pernell (interview, 1999) adds that "...we went through [the] problems of being first, a group work section, then becoming a group work commission to being nothing ... [It affected] what [we were] paying attention to and what [we] permit[ed] to happen without a lot of protest."

The end of sections coincided with the decision on the part of NASW to view social work in the most generic sense by under-scoring commonalities rather than differences. Separating methods through the various sections was no longer functional for the new generalist push. This resulted in a period in social work which "found many writers as well as group workers seeking to conceptualize social work as a single method" (Garvin, 1997).

Falck (interview, 1998) asserts that the abolishing of specialization resulted in a generalist perspective that was nothing more than "the same old thing with a few new words." He reminds us that "the social work tradition is a group work tradition" and that the generic thrust "represents the dropping of tradition, starting anew" (Falck interview, 1998). The move away from group work concepts toward more practical, concrete areas was exacerbated by the decline and death of Gertrude Wilson whose book (with Gladys Ryland) Social Group Work Practice (1949), was referred to by many as the "Green Bible" (Falck interview, 1998). Ramey
(interview, 1998) saw group work being “washed out” of social work during this period of unification of concepts. Middleman and Goldberg (1988, 234) agree: “The outcome of this effort was catastrophic for social group work, as the supposedly generic was and continues to be weighed toward the side of work with individuals and families.”

The generic push resulted in social workers less likely to identify themselves as group workers. Group workers up until this time tended to be, according to Ephross, (interview, 1998), “very bright and committed, so that social group work was a first choice career for them.” As the 1960s moved into the 1970s, one seldom heard anyone described as a group worker. The more the generic perspective became accepted, the quicker schools of social work dropped group work sequences. Group work content, if offered at all, was included in generic practice courses (Garvin, 1997).

Ironically, as group work struggled to maintain even a small identity within social work, group workers themselves were actively theory-building and writing. In 1966, Catherine Papell and Beulah Rothman distinguished groups by articulating three models: Social goals, reciprocal, and remedial. This conceptualization became very important for understanding social group work. The social goal model took on strength from the activist nature of the 1960s. But, in the end, group work became less associated with this model as it became more associated with community organization (Gitterman, 1981). The reciprocal model became the mediating model and then the interactional model while the remedial model evolved into the organizational/environmental approach (Middleman, and Goldberg, 1988).

The Group Work Department at Boston University under the direction of Saul Bernstein engaged in serious theory building in the 1960s publishing their Explorations in Group Work in 1965. This monograph included a model for stages of group development (Garland, Jones, & Kilodny, pp. 12-53).

The War on Poverty in the 1960s energized group work for a period, particularly in the area of community groups. Well-known group workers like Gisela Konopka, William Schwartz, Helen Phillips, Hans Falck, Helen Northen, Ruth Middleman, Alan Klein, Robert Vinter, and others wrote many group work books in the 60s and 70s. Yet, to all appearances, group work was

The lively wave of group ideas became damned up in the 1960s . . . Group work's demise was not the result of any inherent error in moving into the generic approach, but rather, that group workers were so few in number that they were submerged by the numbers of caseworkers who were continuing the development of casework theory.

They referred to this as the "generocide of social group work" (10).

Group Work Comes Back

Much of the "rebirth" of group work can be attributed to the persistence and energy of Catherine Papell and Beulah Rothman who approached Bill Cohen of Haworth Press with the idea of a group work journal to be titled Social Work with Groups: A Journal of Community and Clinical Practice. It began its publication in 1978 with Papell and Rothman as editors. Shortly thereafter, at the Annual Meeting of the Council on Social Work Education, some group workers congregated under the leadership of Catherine Papell, Beulah Rothman and Ruth Middleman. They pulled in others including John Ramey, Paul and Sonia Abels, and Ruby Pernell (Ramey interview, 1998; Pernell interview, 1999).

Out of a concern that nothing was being presented at conferences about group work, the group decided to plan a group work conference. To continue to spread the interest, the originators posted a sign in the conference hotel lobby which said, "If you are interested in meeting about social work with groups, come to this room." Middleman (1992, 28), describes the meeting: "It was a dinner hour in a small room on an upper floor. About 60 people piled in, sitting on the floor and planning for a kick-off symposium . . . the rest is history." This historic meeting was similar to the earlier meeting of group workers at NCSW in 1936 who, like this group, were brought together by a spirited sense of mission.

The idea kept growing and, in the end, more than 350 people attended the First Annual Group Work Symposium where the Committee for the Advancement of Social Work with Groups
was formed. To honor the work of Grace Coyle, the conference was held in Cleveland, Ohio. Papell (1997, 10) remembers the "excitement and thrill which consumed the social group workers" at the conference. "It felt like a group work party!" she said.

Norman Goroff, Ruth Middleman, Beulah Rothman, Catherine Papell, Paul Abels and Paul Glasser incorporated the Committee in 1981. In 1985, when the membership voted to become a membership organization, the Committee became The Association for the Advancement of Social Work with Groups, International (although incorporation as AASWG took several more years) (Ramey, 1998b).

Conclusion

Group work has survived through difficult times. Its' resiliency is a testament to the persistence of a core of people as well as the strength of the method (Ramey interview, 1988). What kept group work going during the "quiet" years were "individuals and legendary teachers and proselytizers like [William] Schwartz, [Saul] Bernstein, the [Sonia & Paul] Abels, and [John] Ramey" (Ephross interview, 1998). The people who came together to begin AASWG, with their "wonderful spirit of inclusion, validation and humanity that is imbedded in group work ideology" (Papell, 1997, 10) determined that group work should survive.

Group work ideology has stood up well over time because it is rooted in a clear understanding of the realities of human lives and the human condition. Concepts of citizenship, participation, community, mutual aid, and democracy are still powerful. According to Ephross (interview, 1998): "We were right then, we're right now." Middleman and Goldberg (1988, 234) remind us that "it is group work that has anchored and continues to anchor social work in its tradition of social reform and concern for oppressed people . . ."

Regardless of one's perspective regarding ideological issues, most would agree that history has taught us that group work, with its small numbers, struggled to maintain identity in the midst of a large social work organization. The merger with social work led to the hoped-for professional identity, but at a cost. Social group work today continues to celebrate its philosophy
and practice through local workshops held by state chapters of AASWG, an international symposium held annually, and linkages with other professions who embrace group work. While "social group worker" is seldom the term applied to a professional position, many social workers (often with no training in philosophy and practice of the group work process) spend a substantial amount of their jobs facilitating groups. Yet, schools of social work seldom offer more than a foundation course in group work (if that); yet, a handful still offer a concentration in social work with groups and others are increasing their group work offerings. Let history guide us as we move forward to strengthen the place of social group work in social work.

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The Impact of Privatized Management in Urban Public Housing Communities: A Comparative Analysis of Perceived Crime, Neighborhood Problems, and Personal Safety

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A quasi-experimental design with non-equivalent groups assessed the impact of privatized management on crime and personal safety in large public housing communities in Miami, Florida. A randomly-selected sample (N = 503) of low-income African Americans living in 42 different housing "projects" were surveyed. Privatized sites had greater mean values for break-ins and thefts (m = 2.03, S.D. = 1.47, p<.01) and vacant apartment usage. Publicly-managed sites had higher mean values for shootings and violence (m = 2.52, S.D. = 1.67, p<.01). While there were no statistically significant differences in perceived personal safety, publicly-managed respondents expressed greater satisfaction with police services. Privatized management did not result in significantly more positive outcomes and social services utilization was associated with less violent crime. Implications are discussed for public housing crime, federal housing policy, and future research.

The idea of “privatizing” state, local, and federal services has been a tradition in the United States for many years (Barnekov, Boyle, & Rich, 1989; Hays, 1994). Privatization occurs when government sectors transfer partial or full responsibility for a variety of public services to the private sector (Bendick, 1985). By using grants, purchase-of-service contracts, and different types of reimbursement mechanisms, a complex partnership was developed between governments and private, non-profit agencies to deliver a wide range of human services (Abramovitz, 1986; Gilbert, 1986; Salamon, 1993).
In the 1980s, the Reagan Administration ushered in an ideological shift toward a different type of privatization—that involving private, for-profit firms (Kamerman & Kahn, 1989). This new philosophy was crystallized when President Reagan appointed a Privatization Commission and subsequently integrated the philosophy into many of his Administration’s operational and policy decisions (Reid, 1995). The assumption behind the thinking was that private firms would improve management and implementation based on a perception of market discipline, superior management skills, and the profit motive, characteristics which are supposedly lacking in the public sector (Van Horn, 1991). The 1990s were characterized by an accelerated momentum in the provision of public welfare services by for-profit firms (Netting, McMurtry, Kettner, & Martin, 1994; Salamon, 1993; Stoesz & Karger, 1994), including services such as hospitals, nursing homes, home health, child care, social services, and housing (Pack, 1991; Reid, 1995).

The current study examines privatized management of public housing (“projects”) and its comparative impact on the incidence of crime, neighborhood problems, and personal safety as perceived by public housing residents. The research is based on a 4-year public housing privatization experiment conducted under the auspices of the Miami-Dade Housing Agency (MDHA), which is the official Public Housing Authority (PHA) for the City of Miami and unincorporated Miami-Dade County. The MDHA is also the 8th largest PHA in the United States with 20,653 family and elderly housing units under their jurisdiction countywide (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development [USHUD], 1999). An independent research team was contracted by Miami-Dade County to do a comparative assessment on the impact of privatization and develop recommendations on the feasibility of the MDHA expanding the managerial scope of privatized property managers (Becker, Bowie, Dluhy, & Topinka, 1998). After going through an extensive competitive bidding process, the MDHA selected four national property management companies with good “track records” and considerable experience, and the firms were given maximum administrative and operational flexibility. The overall assessment was multi-faceted with an emphasis on cost-containment variables, but a major component of the
study was an empirical examination of perceived crime, personal safety, and levels of satisfaction with police as perceived by public housing residents. A fundamental question to be answered was whether "traditional" public housing managers or profit-driven, private sector managers achieved better results in the aforementioned areas.

USHUD, which provides operating revenues for public housing nationwide, has been severely criticized for years because of management ineffectiveness and substandard performance (National Housing Task Force, 1988). The public housing system is widely perceived as being a colossal failure, with problems that include substandard construction, physical deterioration, social disorganization, epidemic levels of drug abuse and drug trafficking, violent crime, and vandalism. The consensus view is that addressing these widespread problems will require major changes in how public housing is operated (Hula, 1991).

Significance

The sheer numbers of people who live in public housing communities and their socio-demographic characteristics make privatization policies a salient issue. Approximately 3 million people live in public housing "projects" nationwide. Almost 70% are minorities, 48% of whom are African Americans and 18% Hispanics. Seventy-six percent of the families in public housing have female heads of household with no spouse present. Almost 75% of public housing residents have annual household incomes of less than $10,000 and 23% have incomes of less than $5,000. The proportional age distribution for public housing households nationwide is as follows: 25–44 years (36%), 62+ years (33%), 45–61 years (20%), and under 25 years (11%) (USHUD,1999a).

The study also has important implications for current federal housing policy, particularly the HOPE VI Program underway by USHUD. HOPE VI is a major federal strategy for revitalizing severely distressed public housing. The overall goal of the policy, which was enacted in 1998, is to replace 95,000 units of the worst public housing in the country by 2003 and replace them with new, viable, economically-thriving communities. As of 1998, HOPE VI grants were awarded to 52 different PHAs in 26 states. The level
of financial resources involved was indicated by the USHUD 1999 appropriation request of over $550 million for demolition, rehabilitation, and new construction of public housing (USHUD, 1998). A key aspect of this housing policy involves the establishment of public housing communities that are safe, secure, and free from violence and drug trafficking. In this respect, an examination of crime and personal safety issues is timely. The success of USHUD in controlling crime in public housing neighborhoods is vital to the success of HOPE VI and could influence continued public support for the policy and related public housing programs.

Literature Review

In the last 40 years, there has been a considerable amount of scholarship regarding the problem of crime in public housing communities. The focus of the literature, however, has been somewhat different in each of the decades from 1960 through the 1990s. In the 1960s, for instance, the emphasis was on conceptual analyses of the problem. Authors focused their attention on the physical aspects of public housing and how structural features of buildings could reduce or enhance the probability of crime or the prospect of detecting offenders. Wood (1961) discussed how physical characteristics of public housing minimized communication and informal gathering among residents, and thus inhibited development of a sense of community. Jacobs (1961) expanded on this idea and addressed ways that residential safety was facilitated by natural surveillance, continuous use of community facilities, and overlapping patterns of pedestrian movement. Another study analyzed how the physical environment impacted the incidence of crime by defining territories, reducing or increasing accessibility through the use of barriers, and increasing observability by residents and/or police (Angel, 1969).

The emphasis changed over the next two decades, with scholarship evolving from conceptual analysis to more empirically-oriented research. A series of studies sponsored by USHUD made it clear that (1) there was a disproportionate level of serious crimes (i.e., murder, rape, burglary, robbery, aggravated assault, grand larceny, and auto theft) committed in public housing communities, and (2) the fear of crime was just as salient a factor as actual
crime committed, in terms of reducing the quality of life in public housing communities (Brill & Associates, 1975, 1977a, 1977b, 1977c, 1977d; Law Enforcement Assistance Administration, 1977). The studies were conducted in the urban areas of Los Angeles, Washington, DC, Baltimore, Miami, and Boston. In each city, the incidence of serious crimes in the public housing communities was consistently two to ten times higher than both the respective citywide and national crime rates.

Public housing residents also indicated a great fear of crime, even in cases where the actual incidence of crime was not high. In their comparative analysis of four public housing sites in Boston, for instance, Brill and Associates (1975), discovered that substantial percentages of residents reported that it was "very dangerous" waiting for a bus at night (75%), shopping at night (71%), riding elevators in their buildings at night (60%), walking down hallways at night (59%), and being alone in their apartments at night (40%). Research by Lawton, Nahemov, Yaffe and Feldman (1976) found that the fear of crime was especially pronounced among elderly public housing residents.

Several empirical studies documented the inverse relationship between surveillance opportunities and level of crime in public housing (Luedke & Associates, 1970; Molumby, 1976; Newman, 1972, 1975, 1978; Pope, 1977). Theses studies repeatedly indicated that a major contributor of crime are areas where surveillance by residents, management, security personnel, or police is severely restricted. Many areas of the grounds are not visible from windows, have poor lighting, or have unmonitored and obscure stairways, halls, and entrances. Other factors cited as key contributors to crime in public housing are low levels of social organization, minimal social cohesion, and weak informal social controls (Rainwater, 1970; Rosenthal, 1974; Wilson, 1975; & Montgomery, 1977). This literature cites the negative impact of mutual distrust among public housing residents, lack of responsible involvement, and residents looking out, for the most part, only for themselves and their own personal well-being. This type of community fragmentation only serves to empower and embolden the perpetrators of crime (National Advisory Committee on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals, 1973). Finally, lack of proprietary interest (Rosenthal, 1974), trained security
personnel (Brill, 1973, 1975, 1977a, 1977b, 1977c, 1977d), social services for residents (Brill, 1975; Rosenthal, 1974), supervision and organized activities for youth (National Urban League, 1978), employment opportunities for residents (Brenner, 1976), and poor management practices (Brill, 1975) were identified as contributing to the proliferation of crime in public housing.

In the 1980s, the level of research on crime and safety in public housing was less than in the previous decade. Huth (1981) conducted a comprehensive analysis of the problem and developed concrete strategies for reducing crime in public housing communities. Farley (1982) contradicted conventional wisdom and concluded that crime levels in St. Louis public housing developments was not significantly higher than in the city as a whole. The author pointed to (1) the socioeconomic status of public housing residents and (2) the reality that most urban public housing communities tended to be located in areas that already have high crime rates, as factors that are associated with violent "street" crimes, burglary, and theft. Weidemann, Anderson, Butterfield and O'Donnell (1982) assessed public housing resident perceptions of satisfaction and safety in an Illinois housing development. They found an interdependence between the physical environment and the residents and managers of the community. Like the research in the 1970s, the authors pointed out the relationship between physical and social changes, the actual problem of crime, and the fear of crime. They added that perceived safety and satisfaction will improve only when positive physical design is supported by consistent enforcement of PHA management policies. A final study in the 1980s examined fear and perceptions of crime by elderly residents (Normoyle & Foley, 1988). Using Newman's (1972) defensible space model, they found that high rise public housing buildings had a significant effect on respondent reactions to crime, even though there were variations among elderly residents who were segregated within these buildings.

In the most recent decade, the literature was characterized by research on more specific types of crime and social problems in public housing communities. The issues examined included crack cocaine trafficking by adolescents (Dembo, Hughes, Jackson & Mieczkowski, 1993), weapons possession and violence among public housing adolescents (Durant, Getts, Cadenhead, & Woods,
1995), the relationship between family structure and drug trafficking among children and adolescents (Okundaye, 1996), and youth and alcohol/drug abuse (Rodney, Mupier, & O’Neil, 1997; Williams, Schier, Botvin, Baker, & Miller, 1997). Other scholars (Popkin, Olson, Lurigio, Gwiasda, & Carter, 1995) investigated resident perceptions of the effectiveness of the Public Housing Drug Elimination Program (a comprehensive USHUD anti-crime initiative) and analyzed methodological issues involved in conducting research in dangerous public housing neighborhoods (Gwiasada, Taluc, & Popkin, 1997).

There was limited research in the literature that indirectly integrated the issues of privatization and crime in public housing communities. Aulette (1991) addressed of crime and safety in her description of a public housing privatization experiment in Charlotte, North Carolina. The Granville Corporation (1983) and Miller, Dickerson, and Greenstein (1984) addressed the crime problem in their comparative study on privatized management in different public housing communities around the United States. Even though the major focus of their analysis was on cost-performance measures, perceived crime and social problems were also examined as secondary issues.

**Research Questions**

The research questions for the current study were as follows:

1. Are there significant differences in the extent and types of neighborhood crime perceived between residents of publicly-managed and privately-managed public housing communities?

2. Are there significant differences in perceptions of personal safety and levels of satisfaction with police services between residents of publicly-managed and privately-managed public housing communities?

**Method**

**Sample**

The sample consisted of 503 heads of households who lived in public housing developments operated by the MDHA. Most
of the sample lived in family units and the others lived in elderly units. For study purposes, the MDHA aggregated 42 public housing developments within general proximity to one another into major "sites," four of which were managed by MDHA property managers and four operated by different private companies. Table 1 is a comparison of the major publicly-managed and privately-managed sites, as well as the number and classification of housing units assigned to each.

The sample had to be stratified to ensure that residents from all developments were represented in the sample. To accomplish this stratification, the sites were further differentiated by all housing developments which constituted each site. Within each development, housing units were classified as family or elderly units. Fifteen percent of these were then calculated for elderly and

Table 1

Comparison of Privately-Managed and Publicly-Managed Housing Sites

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Private Firms</th>
<th>Management Company</th>
<th>Elderly Units</th>
<th>Family Units</th>
<th>Total Units</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Site Name</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scott Homes</td>
<td>Russell</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>742</td>
<td>742</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gwen Cherry</td>
<td>Dominium</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>276</td>
<td>276</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Naranja</td>
<td>Pinnacle</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>310</td>
<td>344</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mays Village</td>
<td>Insignia</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>326</td>
<td>374</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>82</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,654</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,736</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Miami-Dade Housing Agency</th>
<th>Elderly Units</th>
<th>Family Units</th>
<th>Total Units</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Site Name</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberty Square</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>753</td>
<td>753</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homestead</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>187</td>
<td>279</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modello</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>213</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perrine</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>272</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>186</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,331</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,517</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
family units within each development. This process resulted in an optimal sampling frame of 503 units. Residents of individual units were then randomly selected from a master list provided by MDHA.

**Respondent and Neighborhood Characteristics**

The age range for the sample was 19–93 years, with a mean age of 40 years (S.D. = 13.0). Most of the sample (91.1%) were African Americans and a negligible number were Hispanics (6.6%) and non-Hispanic Whites (1.4%). Almost 92% of the respondents were females and the mean educational level was 11th grade (S.D. = 2.2). Seventy-two percent of the heads of household had school-aged children (5–17 years old) and 25% of the respondents reported having at least one person in their household with a disability. The mean number of years the respondents had lived in public housing was 10.5 years (S.D. = 9.8). The mean number of years they had lived in their current residence was 6.2 years (S.D. = 6.9). Approximately 33% of the respondents were either working full-time or part-time or had another adult living with them who was employed. Fourteen percent of the households had at least one adult in the home who was attending some type of educational or training class.

All of the public housing sites (N = 42) were located in socially distressed neighborhoods. The family incomes and percent of the population below the poverty level were compared to national averages. The census tracts in which target neighborhoods were located had significantly lower incomes and greater percentages of people living in poverty than national norms. There were, however, no significant differences in the incomes and poverty levels of the publicly-managed and privately-managed sites.

**Data Collection**

Data for the study were collected from heads of household who lived in each of the housing units that were selected from stratified sites. Alternative housing units were also randomly selected in the event a respondent was non-cooperative or not available after three visits to their homes. All respondents who lived in targeted housing developments were notified of the study from a letter sent to them from their property managers. The
letter outlined the purpose of the study, how it would benefit the residents, and requested their cooperation if they were selected to participate. They were also advised that they would receive a $5.00 incentive if they were selected and completed the interview.

Data were collected over a 3-month period in the summer of 1998 by public housing residents who were hired as research assistants (RAs). The survey was administered in the respondent's homes by the RAs. In order to qualify for an RA position, residents were required to participate in one of three separate 5-hour training sessions that focused on all aspects of survey administration and other logistics of data collection, including personal safety, appropriate survey response protocols, unexpected situational responding, and so forth. The training and retrieval of data was coordinated by a team of field supervisors who collected and logged in surveys weekly, implemented quality control procedures, and verified survey completion with telephone calls to respondents. The field supervisors also coordinated respondent payments through management offices, investigated suspicious survey response patterns, and provided reassurances to RAs about their abilities to succeed in data collection.

Several problems and issues surfaced and had to be addressed during the data collection phase. These included strategies for assessing the literacy of RA trainees, accelerating the process of compensating RAs (the original plan was to pay RAs six weeks after the data collection was completed), extensive traveling to study sites throughout Miami-Dade County, and trying to assure personal safety in dangerous neighborhoods while carrying large sums of cash for compensating RAs. All problems and issues were successfully addressed and 100% of the surveys were completed and usable for analysis.

Variables

The independent variable in the study was management type, that is, whether the public housing sites were managed by private firms or by the regular, county-employed property managers. The dependent variables were (1) resident perceptions of crime in their neighborhoods, (2) resident perceptions of personal safety, and (3) resident levels of satisfaction police services in public housing neighborhoods.
Instrumentation

Data for the study were collected by using a modified 55-item Resident Satisfaction Survey that was developed jointly by the Survey Research Center of the University of Illinois at Chicago and Abt Associates (1997) for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban and Development. The survey was adapted in consultation with MDHA officials to meet and address local conditions and needs. In addition to demographic items, the survey had questions regarding physical condition of their units, time responding to repair orders, treatment by property managers, and so forth. It also included eight questions about the extent of specific types of crime problems in their respective neighborhoods, two questions about how safe they felt alone or outside their buildings at night, and two questions regarding satisfaction with police services in their neighborhood.

The items on crime problems were in Likert format and allowed a range of scores from one to five, with one indicating ‘no problem’ and five indicating ‘major problem.’ The personal safety questions were in Likert format (1-5), with one indicating ‘very unsafe’ and five indicating ‘very safe.’ The questions on satisfaction with police services were also in Likert format with one indicating ‘very dissatisfied’ and five indicating ‘very satisfied.’

Research Design and Data Analysis

A quasi-experimental design with non-equivalent control groups was used for the current study. Three different types of statistical analyses were utilized. Frequency distributions were computed for each of the demographic and study variables in order to do a profile analysis of the sample, assess response patterns for survey items, and determine measures of central tendency. The independent samples t-test was conducted to assess whether statistically significant differences existed between mean scores based on the dependent variable (management type). Finally, data from the dependent variable survey items (perceived neighborhood crime and personal safety, satisfaction with police services) were subjected to a reliability procedure to assess internal consistency and establish alpha coefficients.
Results

Reliability

Three sets of survey items were used as scales to measure the dependent variables. There were eight (8) items on the scale that measured resident perceptions of crime, two (2) items on perceived personal safety, and two (2) items on levels of satisfaction with police services. The alpha coefficients were .86 for perceived crime (N = 492, Item mean = 1.9), .70 for perceived personal safety (N = 488, Item mean = 3.9), and .62 for satisfaction with police services (N = 482, Item mean = 4.0).

Perceived Neighborhood Crime

There were statistically significant differences in perceived neighborhood crime in three categories: (1) people breaking in homes and stealing property, (2) people using vacant apartments, and (3) shootings and violence. The privatized sites had the highest mean values for break-ins and thefts (m = 2.03, S.D. = 1.47, p < .01) and vacant apartment usage (m = 1.62, S.D. = 1.2, p < .01). In the third category (shootings and violence), the publicly-managed sites had the highest mean value (m = 2.52, S.D. = 1.67, p < .01) (See Table 2).

Personal Safety and Satisfaction with Police Services

As Table 3 indicates, there were no significant differences in perceptions of personal safety between residents of publicly-managed and privately-managed sites. There were statistically significant differences regarding satisfaction with police services. Residents in publicly-managed housing communities had the higher mean value, indicating a higher degree of satisfaction with police services (m = 4.14, S.D. = .97, p < .01).

Discussion and Implications

The current study examined privatized and public management of conventional public housing communities and the comparative impact on perceived crime, neighborhood problems, and personal safety. Data from a randomly-selected, stratified sample of 503 heads of household were collected from non-equivalent control groups in 42 housing sites and analyzed with the independent samples t-test.
Table 2

Comparison of Perceived Crime and Neighborhood Problems, by Management Type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions on Survey</th>
<th>Management Type</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>Significant at .05 level?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How much of a problem is: people breaking in or sneaking into homes to steal things?</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>1.513</td>
<td>1.047</td>
<td>p &lt; .01</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>261</td>
<td>2.027</td>
<td>1.469</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How much of a problem is: people using vacant apartments?</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>1.321</td>
<td>0.849</td>
<td>p &lt; .01</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>1.623</td>
<td>1.194</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How much of a problem is: people being attacked or robbed right outside your building?</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>239</td>
<td>1.678</td>
<td>1.210</td>
<td>p = .363</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>262</td>
<td>1.782</td>
<td>1.363</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How much of a problem is: people selling drugs?</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>239</td>
<td>2.209</td>
<td>1.644</td>
<td>p = .691</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>261</td>
<td>2.153</td>
<td>1.491</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How much of a problem is: people using drugs?</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>239</td>
<td>2.117</td>
<td>1.551</td>
<td>p = .665</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>261</td>
<td>2.176</td>
<td>1.488</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How much of a problem is: groups of people just hanging out?</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>239</td>
<td>2.238</td>
<td>1.544</td>
<td>p = .813</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>262</td>
<td>2.206</td>
<td>1.520</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How much of a problem is: shootings and violence?</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>239</td>
<td>2.519</td>
<td>1.660</td>
<td>p &lt; .01</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>261</td>
<td>2.042</td>
<td>1.476</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How much of a problem is: rape or other sexual attacks?</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>1.217</td>
<td>0.789</td>
<td>p = .163</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>1.319</td>
<td>0.853</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questions on Survey</td>
<td>Management Type</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Std. Deviation</td>
<td>p</td>
<td>Significant at .05 level?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>--------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How safe do you feel being alone inside your apartment at night?</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>4.063</td>
<td>1.214</td>
<td>p = .900</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>262</td>
<td>4.076</td>
<td>1.248</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How satisfied are you with the police service in your area?</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>228</td>
<td>4.136</td>
<td>0.977</td>
<td>p &lt; .01</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>257</td>
<td>3.825</td>
<td>1.217</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How safe do you feel or would you feel being out alone in the parking lots, the lawns, the street or sidewalks right outside your building at night?</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>235</td>
<td>3.681</td>
<td>1.286</td>
<td>p = .794</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>253</td>
<td>3.711</td>
<td>1.306</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How satisfied are you with the way the police treat you and your guests?</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>237</td>
<td>4.143</td>
<td>0.981</td>
<td>p = .888</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>261</td>
<td>4.130</td>
<td>1.109</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The privatized sites were reported to have more problems with residential thefts, unauthorized apartment usage, and assaults or robberies. The problem of shootings and violence was most evident in publicly-managed communities. In fact, this issue received the highest mean score on all crime-related survey items, which denoted the most severe neighborhood problem. The mean survey scores for the problems of drug trafficking, loitering, and rape or other sexual attacks was roughly equivalent for both management types.

The issue of social services availability may have explanatory value in relation to comparative levels of violent crimes and property crimes (e.g., theft, burglaries, etc.). In a related privatization study, it was reported that the publicly-managed public housing sites had more social services available than the privately-managed sites. The extent that residents actually utilized the social services, however, was considerably higher at the privately-managed properties for all type of services reported (Bowie, 2000).

The report of more social services may be explained by the MDHA history prior to the introduction of privatized management. The MDHA had a “Resident Services Division” that was in place for over last twenty years that worked as a social services branch and procured external funds for community programming. An example is the Public Housing Drug Elimination Program, which has funded several different social programs since the early 1990s. The privatized management firms, on the other hand, had to develop their social work programming independently, or in conjunction with existing agencies. The increased rate of social service utilization at the privately-managed sites may be a result of more effective outreach or “marketing” strategies by the property managers (Bowie, 2000).

A possible factor in the different types of crime prevalent in publicly-managed and privately-managed communities may involve management eviction policies for residents who engage in drug trafficking and other criminal behavior. For instance, if the privatized managers had more latitude to evict these perpetrators, it could help explain the lower indications of violent crimes. As it turns out, both the private and public managers are bound by identical MDHA policies regarding evictions for
drug trafficking and other criminal activity (R. Johnson, personal communication, December 15, 2000). These include hearings and appeal procedures available for accused residents. It is conceivable that if the privatized sites had more administrative independence regarding managerial responses to criminal activity—as property managers do in the private sector—it would be a factor that could be readily isolated as a possible detriment to violent crime in neighborhoods.

Residents of privatized and publicly-managed public housing had comparable survey scores on the two items that addressed personal safety. There were also comparable survey scores on personal treatment by the police, but there were significant differences in satisfaction with police services. Residents in privately-managed sites were considerably less satisfied than those who lived in publicly-managed sites. A logical reason for this could not be ascertained. In fact, since the publicly-managed sites reported higher levels of violent crimes (which are more visible than property crimes), it seems that they would perceive the police as being ineffective in carrying out their duties.

Study results make it evident that serious crime is a major problem in these public housing communities, irrespective of management type, especially shootings and physical assaults. About 72% and 63% of respondents in privatized and publicly-managed housing, respectively, reported that they personally heard gunshots in their neighborhood during the last 12 months.

In spite of these statistics that clearly point out the crime problems in public housing communities, many respondents appeared to be content with the situation. For instance, 75% of the residents in publicly-managed sites indicated that they were "somewhat satisfied" or "very satisfied" with their residence as a place to live. Almost 67% of the respondents from the privatized sites had expressed the same sentiments. In a similar vein, substantial numbers of respondents reported feeling safe when home alone at night. This may be an indication that high levels of crime and violence in public housing communities is perceived as "normal" and residents have become desensitized to it, to a large degree.

These findings have implications for law enforcement and for current public policy regarding the upgrading and renovation of public housing communities. Police presence, per se, does not
Privatized Management

appear to be an issue. Over 80% of the sample reported that police patrol their area by walking or driving through. The findings suggest that different policing strategies, greater numbers of police, and/or more frequent or aggressive patrolling may be required to curtail the level of crime in public housing neighborhoods. This is a serious issue in relation to current nationwide attempts to re-vitalize public housing communities and help change the negative image of public housing in America. These well-intentioned housing policy efforts will not be effective in a vacuum. Regaining control of public housing streets and neighborhoods and establishing a sense of safety and security among the residents will be an important aspect of the improvement efforts. The current renovation efforts in public housing (HOPE VI) represent a long-term strategy that is occurring in incremental stages, and the extent to which policymakers can demonstrate reductions in crime can affect the level of public and political support for continued financial resources.

The current research did not support the idea that privatized management in public housing leads to greater operational efficiency as it relates to resident perceptions of neighborhood crime and satisfaction with police services. As pointed out above, the increased levels of social service utilization in privatized communities were associated with less violent crime outcomes. Beyond that, the differences on the research questions were negligible, except in the case of satisfaction with police services, which favored the publicly-managed housing sites.

This study raises some questions and directions for future research on crime and personal safety in public housing communities. One feasible area of inquiry may be to examine what contributes to different crimes being prevalent or differential perceptions of police service in privatized versus publicly-managed communities. The identification of contributing factors can facilitate the development of new strategies for reducing or suppressing crime, or modification of existing efforts to do the same more effectively. Future studies should also attempt to determine the reason for differential perceptions of policing by residents of privately and publicly-managed public housing communities.

In spite of the attention given to research design and statistical analysis, the author warns against generalization of the current study findings. A limitation of the study is that the data were
based on resident perceptions of neighborhood crime. While the literature did establish that the resident fear of crime is as salient as actual crime committed, the analysis would have been further strengthened by police reports of criminal activity at the sites. Unfortunately, the site-specific data required for the current research were not available. The research, however, does contribute to the very limited body of knowledge about crime in public housing communities and how it may or may not be influenced by privatized management.

References


Privatized Management

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Serving the Homeless: Evaluating the Effectiveness of Homeless Shelter Services

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University of Georgia  
School of Social Work  
ROBERT L. FISCHER  
Families First  

The effects of homeless assistance services at the local level are tremendously difficult to ascertain. In this study, a four-month sample of homeless persons served by a local homeless shelter and case management program were contacted nine to eleven months after receiving services. The findings suggest that the program had some initial success in assisting the homeless clients to locate housing within the first year after leaving the shelter. However, the housing costs paid by these formerly homeless were quite high, with nearly three-quarters of them spending forty percent or more of their income on housing.

Homelessness continues to be a major social issue facing the United States. Depending on the criteria used to operationally define homelessness, the national incidence of the problem has been estimated to range from a low of 300,000 homeless persons to a high of 3.5 million homeless persons (Cordray & Pion, 1990; Rossi, P., Wright, J., Fisher, B., & Willis, G., 1987). In all, an estimated 34 percent of homeless service users are members of homeless families, and 23 percent are minor children (Interagency Council on the Homeless, 1999).

Policy Context  
While the multiple causes of homelessness can be attributed in part to the scarcity of low-income housing and the inadequacy of
income supports for the poor, clearly there are specific groups of homeless persons who are in need of special services (Burt, 1999; Jencks, 1994; Rossi, 1989; Rossi, 1994). These groups include those with chronic mental illness, alcohol and drug abusers, persons with HIV disease, and families with small children (Cohen, 1989; Cohen & Burt, 1990; Fischer, 1989; Homes for the Homeless, 1998; Lamb & Lamb, 1990).

While the debate over the principal causes of has continued several key findings have been identified. First, there is a persistent group of the poorest members of the population, and among the poorest are children, with some 13 million living in poverty in contemporary America (A. Johnson, 1989) and an estimated 1.5 million homeless youth age 12–17 each year (Ringwalt, Greene, Robertson, & McPheeters, 1998). Fifty percent of African-American children and forty percent of Hispanic children live in poverty, and the single-parent African-American family constitutes the fastest-growing segment of the nation’s poor and homeless populations (A. Johnson, 1989). Second, the number of African-Americans who are homeless is disproportionately higher than the percentage of African-Americans in the general population in this country. It has been estimated that, nationwide, nearly 60 percent of all homeless persons are African-American (Homes for the Homeless, 1998), while statistics from the metropolitan Atlanta Area indicate that approximately 80 percent of all local homeless persons are African-American (Atlanta Task Force for the Homeless, 1992). Third, the gap in available housing for the poor versus the number of households in need of low-income housing has widened. In 1993, an estimated 10.6 million units of low-income housing were available for 14.3 million households (Low Income Housing Information Service, 1988). Between 1995 and 1997, the number of affordable units available to low-income households nationwide dropped from 44 units per 100 families to 36 units per 100 families (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2000).

Prior Evaluations of Homeless Services

The amount of research devoted to evaluating programs aimed at preventing or remedying the problem of homelessness is exceeded by the numbers of purely descriptive or qualitative
studies (Blankertz, Cnaan, & Saunders, 1992; Johnson, & Cnaan, 1995). Some recent work has focused on services for particular categories of the homeless, for example, the homeless mentally ill (Caton, Wyatt, Felix, Grunberg & Dominguez, 1993; Segal & Kotler, 1993), and homeless families (Fischer, 2000; Rog, Holupka, & McCombs-Thornton, 1995; Rog, McCombs-Thornton, Gilbert-Mongelli, Brito, & Holupka, 1995). In addition, the challenges of conducting research with homeless and formerly homeless clients continues to be examined (Orwin, Sonnefeld, Garrison-Mogren, & Smith, 1994). Overall, the existing research on housing outcomes of homeless shelter services consists of primarily small-scale samples of clients, obtained from single communities, and with considerable attrition in the sample at follow-up.

Program Context

Homeless shelter services in northeast Georgia have expanded considerably during the last two decades. In 1974 only four shelters for homeless persons could be found in the metropolitan Atlanta Area, whereas presently approximately one hundred shelters are available (Atlanta Task Force for the Homeless, 1992; Research Atlanta, Inc., 1997). In the local area of Athens, Georgia, during the period of this study, over 3,300 persons were at risk of living in the streets, in shelters, and in overcrowded living circumstances, and thirty-six percent of persons that stayed in area shelters were children under the age of eighteen (Glisson, 1992). The primary local shelter for the homeless in Athens, Georgia, is the Athens Area Homeless Shelter (AAHS). The AAHS placed over 250 persons into permanent housing through its case management services and shelter program during the year in which this study was conducted. However, follow-up information on formerly homeless persons regarding the "durability" of these placements has not been available. An exploratory program evaluation of the AAHS was undertaken in an attempt to determine what happens to the former clients of the homeless shelter after they leave the facility.

Method and Procedures

The present study involved an effort to evaluate homeless shelter services at the local level. The research included a review
of program case records and a post-program follow-up with a sample of formerly homeless individuals.

Homeless Shelter Site and Program Services

The Athens Area Homeless Shelter (AAHS) was established in December 1986 and can accommodate up to 32 individual homeless persons in a dormitory-style arrangement, with separate dorms for men and women. Parents and their children can reside in three separate private rooms, each sleeping up to persons.

The intervention used with these homeless individuals consisted of a comprehensive set of services including physical shelter, meals, employment counseling, case management services, supportive counseling, health care referral, clothing supply, and other social services. The primary goal of the AAHS program is to assist clients in obtaining safe, affordable and relatively permanent housing following their departure from the shelter. Secondary goals include assisting shelter clients to obtain employment and to improve their health through proper nutrition and medical care.

Research Design

The base client sample consists of all persons who received AAHS residential services during a four-month period (June to September, 1991), and had a history of residing in the vicinity of Athens, Georgia. Attempts were made to contact all these individuals by telephone or by personal interview approximately 9-11 months following their departure from the Shelter.

A one-page semi-structured interview protocol was developed to assess the following aspects of the lives of former AAHS clients: respondent’s current living situation, living costs, length of time at current address, employment and income, perceptions about the safety of their home, and views regarding the AAHS services they had received. The post-test-only design used in this evaluation enables a determination as to what happened to former shelter clients, but not an unambiguous attribution of causation for any positive outcomes, due to the lack of controls inherent in such a research design. Nevertheless, since the AAHS (and most other homeless shelters) had little systematic information on the housing disposition of their clients after they left the
Serving the Homeless

shelter, the present inquiry was seen as a valuable first step in documenting the possible outcomes of shelter services.

Survey Results

For the purpose of this study, the unit of analysis is a "head-of-household" and represents either an individual person who sought shelter services solely for him/herself, or the head of a family (e.g., a husband/wife, or a single parent with one or more children). A total of 124 households (individuals or heads of families accompanied by family members) representing 166 men, women, and children had received residential services during the sampling time frame. Based on client records maintained by the AAHS, at entry into the program, 75 percent of the sample group's earnings were below the federal poverty line for the relevant size of household groups. Sixty-six percent of the sample group members were African-American, 30% were white, 4% were Hispanic, and less than one percent was Asian. Although African-Americans make up the majority of homeless persons served at the AAHS (as well as of our sample group), African Americans comprise only approximately one-quarter of the general population in the Athens metropolitan area. The sample groups' stay in the AAHS averaged nearly three weeks, but ranged from one night to six months.

Of the 124 households, intake information indicated that 100 households (81%) had a history of residing in the Athens vicinity. The researchers with the assistance of AAHS staff sought out these individuals and families for the purpose of conducting a follow-up interview. The follow-up efforts resulted in contact with 71 of the 100 Athens-resident households (71% response rate) for follow-up interviews. The remaining 24 households were not contacted due to a lack of information in their client file and were unable to be traced. Thus, the housing circumstances of these 24 nonrespondent households are unknown. However, a follow-up contact rate of 71% is a substantially higher than would be expected, considering the nature of homelessness (A. K. Johnson, 1989).

At follow-up, which ranged from 9–11 months (average of 38 weeks) following the client's departure from the AAHS, 41 of the 71 former clients (58%) held contractual agreements (i.e.,
leases) in their own name, indicating that they occupied relatively permanent housing. The former clients had, on average, resided in their current home for eighteen weeks, with a range from one week to 50 weeks. Some of the housing characteristics and living circumstances of the former AAHS clients are presented in Table 1.

Nearly a third (31%) of the clients had maintained their follow-up home for six or more months, and 35% had lived in their home the entire period of time since leaving the AAHS.

Data on monthly housing costs were obtained from 51 of the 71 former clients (72%); the remaining 20 persons did not provide this information or had no direct housing costs, such as instances in which the individual was living with a relative. For these 51 respondents, their monthly rent averaged $186 and utilities averaged $47, for a mean total monthly housing cost of $233 (range = $50 to $645). Monthly income for the 51 clients reporting housing costs averaged $503, and thus these individuals expended approximately 46% of their monthly income on

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1 Housing Environment and Living Circumstances of Shelter Clients Contacted at Follow-Up (n = 71)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Housing Type at Follow-up</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apartment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobile home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single-family home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duplex</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rented room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Living Circumstances at Follow-up</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Living alone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Living with relatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Living with own child(ren)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Living with friend(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Living with boy friend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Living with spouse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Living with roommate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other circumstances*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* includes living on the streets, in a shelter, etc.
housing. Of the 51 households reporting, 39 households were residing in private housing and 12 households were in public housing. Overall, 20 households' (28%) percentage of monthly income spent on housing costs was over 50 percent. Surprisingly, 6 of the 12 households living in public housing (50 percent) reported spending 50 percent or more of their income on monthly housing costs. Although the clients' rents were set at 30 percent of their monthly income, utility costs pushed half of these persons' monthly housing costs above the 50 percent threshold. Additionally, 14 of the 39 private housing households (36%) reported monthly housing costs of over 50 percent of one's monthly income. Sixty of the 71 respondents provided information about their monthly income, and according to these data, 55 of the 60 households (92%) earned less than the federal poverty standard ($9,100 for a single individual in 1992; $13,700 for a family of three). For the African-American households reporting housing costs, monthly housing costs consumed 50% of their monthly income, while for the white households these costs amounted to 39% of their income. White and African-American households had entered into contractual housing agreements (i.e., leases) in approximately the same proportion (60%). African-American households moved fewer times (M = .88 times) than white households (M = 1.4 times) and, on average, the 51 African-American households had lived in their present living arrangements for 18 weeks while white households had done so for 16 weeks.

One key dimension of a desirable housing situation for homeless individuals and families is the level of safety. Overall, the clients' average perceived safety rating of their present home was 3.0 (O.K.), but a difference was present in that those living in public housing (n = 12) provided an average safety rating of 2.3 while that for the 32 respondents residing in private housing gave a mean rating of 3.2. Clearly former clients living in public housing projects felt less safe in their home and environment than those in private circumstances.

Discussion

The findings presented here can be cautiously seen as positive. A majority of the respondents (58%) were residing in stable housing situations at the time of the follow-up interview, and
nearly half (45%) had resided in their current dwelling for about four months since their departure from the homeless shelter. On average, the formerly homeless persons rate the safety of their homes as acceptable.

In relative terms, the housing costs of these formerly homeless individuals and families are high: 36 of 51 respondents (71%) spend 40% or more of their income towards housing costs, well above the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's standard of 30% as an appropriate proportion of one's income which should apply towards housing. Only 6 of the 51 respondents (12%) paid less for housing than this federal standard. Thus, it would seem that most of the AAHS clients remained at-risk in terms of their ability to maintain a stable home situation, given the large proportion of their income going towards housing costs. After a short stay in the homeless shelter, the majority of these individuals are able to locate relatively safe, affordable and stable homes. It should be noted, however, that the majority of the AAHS former clients continued to live in poverty and perilously on the verge of a return to homelessness.

References


The Role of Social Capital in Reclaiming Human Capital: A Longitudinal Study of Occupational Mobility among Displaced Steelworkers

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This paper examines the employment and income effects of job training, education, and social network contacts over a 10-year period among a random sample of steelworkers who lost jobs to plant closings in the early 1980s in a manufacturing community in Western Pennsylvania. First interviewed in 1987, a majority of the 102 respondents were unemployed or underemployed. A second round of interviews was conducted in 1997 with 87 of the original respondents to examine changes in income and employment status, the types of training and education that had been pursued over the course of 10 years, and their use of social network contacts in the job search process. The study found that short-term training was not effective in providing training-related employment or in advancing hourly wages above the sample mean. Social network contacts were the primary means by which the respondents secured manufacturing work and other skilled positions.

Following the loss of hundreds of thousands of manufacturing jobs in the 1980s, research and media accounts carried stark reports from the Rust Belt and other industrial communities of abandoned mills, economic recessions, and manufacturing workers resigned to working at low-wage service sector jobs (Buss & Redburn, 1983; Dudley, 1994; Illes, 1995; Pappas, 1989). Research indicates that in the past most displaced industrial workers experienced substantial earnings decreases in the years following their job losses, with few blue collar workers having the education or professional experience to enter higher paying jobs in the growth sector of the service economy (Hamermesh, 1989; Jacobson,
In addition to economic development, policy analysts have debated the effectiveness of employment assistance including human capital investments in job training and education, and the utilization of social network contacts and social capital to connect job seekers to employment (Council of Economic Advisors, 1996; Indegaard, 1999; U.S. Department of Labor, 1995). While much policy research has focused on the effects of training and education, some analysts contend that social capital is equally if not more important than human capital for socioeconomic advancements (Lin, 1999; Lin et al, 1981; Marsden & Hurlbert, 1988).

This article examines the roles of both social and human capital in the occupational mobility of a group of former industrial workers. The results were drawn from a 10-year longitudinal study of a random sample of steelworkers who lost jobs due to plant closings in 1983 and 1984 in a community in Western Pennsylvania. When first interviewed in 1987, four years after their job losses, a majority of the 102 respondents had experienced extensive downward mobility: most were working at low-wage service-sector jobs such as janitor and almost one-third reported incomes below the federal poverty line. A second wave of interviews was conducted in 1997 with a panel of 87 respondents to track changes in their income and employment status over the previous decade. Using in-depth interviews, the study solicited both quantitative and qualitative information to gain insight into the processes by which these displaced workers attempted to regain middle-income status including job training, education, and the utilization of job contacts and social networks, and examined the types of personal and employment strategies that yielded long-term economic gains.

As work provisions have become a more common feature of many social programs, attention within the field of social welfare has increasingly focused on understanding the methods that poor and low-income individuals use to obtain employment and higher wages. However, most of the extant studies on the applications and interactions of social and human capital have focused on middle-class and professional employees, and relatively little empirical information is available on poor and low-income groups (Schneider, 2000; Reingold, 1999; Zippay, 1990). While
not generalizable, this study raises questions for further research by exploring how this sample of low-income workers mobilized resources over the course of 10 years to gain employment and higher wages.

Background

Earnings Losses among Displaced Workers

The percentage of the population employed in manufacturing has decreased from 40% in 1950 to 13.5% in 1998 (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2000; Meisenheimer, 1998). In the first five years following job loss, most workers displaced from manufacturing jobs have difficulty finding re-employment at a wage comparable to those of their lost jobs and many suffer substantial earnings losses, a pattern that has been documented by numerous case studies and national quantitative surveys including the Bureau of Labor Statistics Displaced Workers Survey (DWS) and the University of Michigan Panel Study of Income Dynamics (PSID) (Hammermesh, 1989; Kletzer, 1991; Levitan & Magum, 1994; Ruhm, 1991). The few studies that have estimated effects over 10 years or more have found that many displaced industrial workers suffer significant sustained losses, with wage decreases averaging 20 percent for those re-employed in manufacturing, and 40 percent for those working in non-manufacturing jobs (Jacobson, LaLonde, and Sullivan, 1993; Moore, 1996). Prolonged unemployment and underemployment are most severe among older individuals (aged 45–64), less educated workers, those with long job tenure, those who shift occupations, and those who reside in non-metropolitan areas and locales with depressed economies (Howland & Peterson, 1988; Moore, 1996; Podgursky, 1989).

The factors contributing to these earnings losses have included the nature of the jobs in the growth sector of the service economy, and the changing characteristics of available manufacturing jobs. Across all occupational categories, individuals are increasingly hired and rewarded for higher education and skills (Council of Economic Advisors, 1996; Murphy & Finis, 1993). The rate of unionization among wage and salaried manufacturing workers dropped from 28% in 1983 to 17% in 1998, and many firms have adopted two-tier wage systems in which new employees
are hired at a lower wage rate (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1999a; 1999b).

**Human Capital Investment**

It has been argued that, to gain entrance to the post-industrial high-paying service sector, most displaced workers require significant human capital investments in the form of advanced training and education to acquire new job skills (Becker, 1993; Council of Economic Advisors, 1996). While many displaced manufacturing workers are highly skilled, their abilities are often firm-specific and not easily transferred to other occupations (Jacobson, LaLonde, & Sullivan, 1993; Kletzer, 1991; Seitchik & Zornitsky, 1989). Occupational shifts typically require starting over with no seniority, low benefits, and a lower wage. Analyzing data from the Displaced Workers Survey, Farber (1993) has argued that most earnings decreases are due to the loss of job tenure, which is never regained. While some analysts advocate for intensive and advanced retraining, most of the job training available to displaced workers through public programs has focused on short-term training with participation rates averaging 14 to 30 weeks through programs including the Job Training Partnership Act (Titles III and II-A), the Economic Dislocated Workers Adjustment Assistance Act (EDWAA) (which amended JTPA Title III), and the Trade Readjustment Assistance Act (for workers displaced because of foreign competition). A comprehensive review by the U.S. Department of Labor (1995) of controlled evaluations of these programs found that short-term training did not produce earnings gains among displaced manufacturing workers, and the reports of numerous other case studies and national evaluations echoed these findings (Corson, et al, 1993; Koppel & Hoffman, 1996; Lafer, 1994). A review, however, of longer-term training among displaced workers and studies of older college students and community college attendance have found positive impacts on earnings (U.S. Department of Labor, 1995; Kane & Rouse, 1995).

Despite the fact that manufacturing represents a declining rather than an expanding occupational sector, research indicates that many displaced manufacturing workers prefer re-employment in a familiar blue collar setting (Buss & Redburn, 1983; Hathaway, 1993). Analyzing data from the Current Population Survey,
Seitchik & Zornitsky (1989) found that 54% of displaced manufacturing workers found reemployment in factory positions, and that these workers were much less likely to experience downward mobility than those re-employed in non-manufacturing jobs. Their job searches, however, were typically longer and more difficult because of the scarcity of manufacturing openings. Drawing on this research, some policy makers suggest that assistance strategies should focus on reemployment in manufacturing or other blue collar trades (Jacobson, LaLonde, & Sullivan, 1993; Seitchik & Zornitsky, 1989).

Social Networks and Social Capital

Social capital has been described as the resources that are accessed through social networks (Lin, 1999). Job seekers are expected to benefit from possessing social capital in the form of personal acquaintances and civic associates whose information, influence, and relational obligations can connect them with resources including employment opportunities (Burt, 1997; Coleman, 1988; Lin, 1998; Putnam, 1995). The structure and function of social capital can be explained in part by social network theory, which describes the social environment as a web of interpersonal and intercorporate connections that can be analyzed according to characteristics including size, composition, intimacy, density, reciprocity, and the content of the resources exchanged (Bott, 1955; Boissevain, 1974; Marsden & Lin, 1982). Networks that are large in size and contain a variety of close and weak (distant) acquaintances are hypothesized as providing access to the greatest number of resources (including job contacts), while networks that are limited in size and diversity can constrain resource mobilization and opportunity mobility (Granovetter, 1973; 1995; Montgomery, 1992). Network analysts assert that close friends are most likely to share similar social worlds, while more distant acquaintances often have connections to somewhat different social environments and opportunities.

Research indicates that many job seekers locate employment through personal acquaintances, and that the ability to access contacts with higher socioeconomic status is a critical factor in status attainment and upward economic mobility (Brieger, 1982; Granovetter, 1973; Patterson, 1998; Powell & Smith-Doerr, 1994).
Lin (1999) maintains that the "strength" of the weak ties proposition may be that distant acquaintances are more likely to provide bridges to vertically higher social or economic contacts, who can facilitate instrumental actions such as job acquisition. Numerous empirical studies, most conducted with middle class or professional employees, have found that contact status affects the status of attained employment (Ensel, 1979; Hsung & Hwang, 1992; Lin et al, 1981; Montgomery, 1991; Wegener, 1991). Other researchers maintain that the interaction of social and human capital is a logical and significant dynamic: those with strong human capital (education, training, and work experience) tend to have stronger social capital (larger and more diverse networks and contacts with higher education, training, and work experience) (Boxman et al, 1991; Lin, 1999). The few studies of social capital and job search among poor, low-income, or unemployed groups have found that the poor (particularly those living in high poverty neighborhoods) often have networks that are smaller in size, less diverse, and have a higher percentage of kin than those of the non-poor (Fernandez and Harris, 1992; Patterson, 1998; Stack, 1975; Zippay, 1990). As with other income groups, some studies have found that network size and composition (including acquaintances of higher socioeconomic status) positively affect employment outcomes (Schneider, 00), and that network composition and the use of social contacts for job search varies by gender, ethnicity, and immigrant status (Reingold, 1999).

Research Questions

Research questions for the study of displaced steelworkers in western Pennsylvania included: In what employment sectors did the respondents find jobs and what were their paths to mobility? What were the long-term effects of job training and education? What role did social contacts play in facilitating occupational mobility?

Setting

The site for the study was the Shenango Valley in Western Pennsylvania, located 90 miles north of Pittsburgh. The Shenango Valley is made up of a cluster of small towns with a population
of about 60,000. For over one hundred years manufacturing employed the majority of its workforce, and steel production and fabrication were the dominant local industries. In the early 1980s, a series of 7 plant closings displaced an estimated 6,500 workers, and sent unemployment levels soaring to 24% in 1983. The manufacturing decline continued through the 1980s as a number of other mills shut down or contracted.

By the early 1990s, the stronger national economy began to be reflected locally. Several older mills that had survived the 1980s downturn experienced rising demands for their products. Several national retail chains opened stores in the area and, following national trends, a number of specialty mini-mills were opened in the Valley (Barnett & Crandell, 1986; Scherrer, 1988). The numbers of available manufacturing jobs rose slightly, though service jobs, particularly in restaurants and retail sales, continued to dominate the economy. By 1997, the unemployment rate had dropped to 5.3% (Penn Northwest Development Corporation, 1997).

Methodology

In 1987, in-person interviews were conducted with 102 randomly selected displaced steelworkers who were residing in the Shenango Valley. All had been employed as hourly laborers at two local steel fabrication plants that terminated operations in 1983 and 1984, and the interviews were conducted four years after the first plant shut down to examine longer-term income and employment effects. The numbers of hourly manufacturing workers employed at these plants was 1,050 and 950. The sampling frame consisted of the United Steelworkers of America (USWA) list of union members employed at the plants at the time of their closing. The 90-minute interviews, conducted by the author, were held in the respondents' homes or at a community center. The response rate was 86%. It is estimated that between 10 to 15% of local displaced workers relocated after the shutdowns. Only individuals who were still residing within a 60-mile radius of the Shenango Valley were included in the sample of 102 respondents.

The study used a mixed methodology, collecting both quantitative and qualitative data (Patton, 1990; Tashakkori & Teddlie,
1998), and used a structured interview schedule to collect information on current income and employment status, job searches and job retraining, social service utilization, and emotional and behavioral reactions to job loss (Zippay, 1991a).

10 Year Follow-up:

Telephone interviews were conducted by the author in 1997 with a panel of 87 respondents who had been interviewed in 1987. Using a mixed methods approach, a structured questionnaire was utilized to collect both quantitative and qualitative data. (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998). Information was solicited on current income and employment status, job searches, recent work history, and education and training efforts. The respondents were also asked to describe their current work environment, and to discuss the social and economic transitions that they and their families experienced over the past 10 years. The interviews took about 60 minutes to conduct. The qualitative information was analyzed using cross-case analysis, in which the answers to each question were grouped and coded for themes and patterns (Patton, 1990).

Attempts were made to contact all of the original 102 respondents. Five were deceased, two refused to participate in a follow-up interview, and 8 had non-current phone numbers or addresses that could not be updated through the telephone directory, post office, or the files at the local steelworkers union. The response rate was 90%. All of these 87 respondents still lived in the Shenango Valley or surrounding communities.

Characteristics of Respondents

The 102 respondents interviewed in 1987 were primarily long-time Valley residents who had worked their whole lives in the mills. Their mean age was 44, and they averaged 16 years of seniority at the plants. All but three were male, 86 were white, and 14 were African American. Eighty-two percent were married. Most had at least a high school education or more: 4% were college graduates; 17% had some college or post-secondary training; 60% had a high school diploma only; and 19% did not graduate from high school. In 1983, their hourly wages at the mills averaged $12, with a mean individual annual income of $25,000.
The demographics of the respondents interviewed in 1997 included: 99% male, 90% white and 10% African American. Their ages ranged from 42 to 79, with a mean of 54. Seventy-five percent were married, and 85% had completed at least 12 years of school.

Results

Changes in Employment and Income over 10 Years

Table 1 lists the key changes in employment and income status from 1987 to 1997. One of the most startling findings of the 1987 study was the degree of downward mobility experienced by the former blue collar, middle-income respondents. At the time of the first interview, 36 of the 102 respondents were not working including 14 who were unemployed and 11 who had dropped out of the labor force because they were discouraged by job search failures. Among those who were working, the majority were employed in low-wage service jobs with a modal wage that was the minimum of $3.35. Over one-quarter reported household incomes below the federal poverty line.

By 1997, a majority of the respondents had made economic and employment gains, with many once again employed in

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1987</th>
<th>1997</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>14 (14%)</td>
<td>1 (.01%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retired</td>
<td>9 (9%)</td>
<td>17 (19%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income below poverty</td>
<td>27 (27%)</td>
<td>6 (7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average hourly wage</td>
<td>$6.50</td>
<td>$12.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median household income</td>
<td>$14,500</td>
<td>$32,500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Employment sector

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employment sector</th>
<th>Employed N = 65</th>
<th>Employed N = 61</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>14 (22%)</td>
<td>29 (47%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low-wage service sector</td>
<td>39 (60%)</td>
<td>9 (15%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-factory blue collar</td>
<td>5 (8%)</td>
<td>10 (16%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative/professional</td>
<td>7 (11%)</td>
<td>9 (15%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
manufacturing or other non-factory blue collar trades (such as electrician or carpenter). Average hourly wages had almost doubled, and the poverty rate had fallen to 7%. Only 1 of the respondents was unemployed, 70% were employed, and 19% had retired. Among the employed, union membership had risen to 40% from 17% in 1987.

Despite the gains obtained since 1987, however, most of the employed were not earning as much as they had when their plants closed in the early 1980s. Adjusted for inflation, the 1997 hourly average of $12.14 represented a loss of 48% from the mean of $12 hour they were earning as steelworkers in 1983 and 1984. In addition, most had much less generous health, vacation, and retirement benefits in their current jobs.

Manufacturing and Service Employment

In a major occupational shift, only 9 (14%) of the 61 respondents who were employed in 1997 were working in the low-wage service sector positions. Almost one-half were employed in manufacturing, 16% were working in other blue collar jobs such as construction, electrician, or carpenter, and 15% were in supervisory, managerial, or professional positions including teacher, attorney, small business owner, and social services program administrator. In contrast, in 1987 over half of the 65 who were working held low-wage service sector jobs, 22% worked in manufacturing, 8% in other blue collar trades, and 11% held administrative or professional positions.

There were sharp differences in the wages and benefits of those employed in nonprofessional service jobs versus the other occupational areas. These service jobs tended to be entry level positions such as store clerk, janitor, and security guard, with average hourly wages of $6.42 compared to $13.35 for manufacturing jobs, and $15.93 for other blue collar trades. While only 11% of manufacturing and other blue collar jobs did not provide health insurance, 7 of the 9 low-wage service sector positions carried no health benefits. All of the respondents who worked in manufacturing or other blue collar positions worked full-time, and the majority also worked extensive overtime. Among the nonprofessional service employees, one-half were employed 30 hours a week or less. Salaries for the individuals who held professional
and managerial jobs were available for 8 of the 9 respondents, and their annual incomes ranged from $28,000 to $78,000, with a median of $46,000.

*Human Capital Investments: Job Training and Education*

At the time of the first interview, 23% (N = 23) of the respondents had participated in some form of job training or education. Most of the training was short-term, such as a two-month typing course, a 6-month program in engine repair, and bartending school. Few respondents obtained jobs related to that training. Because of high local demand and severe underfunding, only 8 respondents had training funded through the federal Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA), and 15 financed it themselves (the respondents were not eligible for Trade Adjustment Assistance). The analysis in 1987 found that there was no difference in the income and employment status between the respondents who participated in job training and education and those who did not, with both groups averaging hourly wages of $6.50 (Zippay, 1991b).

Despite these lackluster results, many of the respondents interviewed in 1997 had continued their efforts to achieve upward mobility through increased education and training. Among the 70 respondents who were not retired, 19% (N = 13) had participated in some form of education and training during the previous five years. Three of the respondents' training was JTPA-funded (after they had been displaced by another plant closing), and the rest had paid for the training themselves. In contrast to the training received in the 1980s, it tended to be more advanced and skill specific. For example, two completed BA's in business and education, one completed an apprenticeship as a cement mason, two were trained as high-tech medical equipment repair persons, and one obtained a commercial truck driver's license.

The long-term effects of this training on income and employment were examined by comparing the current hourly wages of the non-retired respondents who participated in training in the 1980s and 1990s (N = 28) versus those non-retired respondents who had no additional training or education over the last 10 years (N = 32). The hourly wages for those who had pursued training and education were significantly higher at $13.80 compared to $10.97 (t = 2.13, df = 39.44, p < .039). However, the
higher wages were associated with the more advanced studies. Among the respondents who had college level education or advanced training in blue collar trades \( (N = 14) \) hourly wages were $14.60 compared to $10.90 for those who had a year or less of entry-level training \( (N = 14) \) (such as 8 weeks of computer programming).

Table 2 lists examples of the types of training and education obtained over the past 10 years that led to current jobs related to that training, and examples of the kind of training that did not. Of the 28 respondents who had pursued training or education, 13 had jobs linked to that training. As illustrated, related jobs tended to be associated with training that was the most advanced or skill-specific: law school, an associates degree in biotechnology, a BA in business, a BA in education, and a trade apprenticeship. Not one of the 14 respondents who had completed short-term training of one year or less had a job related to that training.

Table 2

*Job Training by Current Employment*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of training</th>
<th>Current employment</th>
<th>Hourly wage/salary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Examples of training unrelated to employment</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 weeks computer programing</td>
<td>Ironworker</td>
<td>$15.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 month course, engine repair</td>
<td>Welder</td>
<td>$11.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bartending course</td>
<td>Machinist</td>
<td>$12.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Correspondence course, mechanics</td>
<td>Baker, cookie factory</td>
<td>$9.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locksmith course</td>
<td>Welder</td>
<td>$11.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GED</td>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Examples of training related to employment</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electrical apprentice</td>
<td>Electrician</td>
<td>$25.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cement mason apprentice</td>
<td>Cement mason</td>
<td>$19.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BA, education</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>$28,000 year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BA, business</td>
<td>Product manager</td>
<td>$75,000 year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JD, Law school</td>
<td>Attorney</td>
<td>Not available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associates degree, biotechnology</td>
<td>Medical technician</td>
<td>$16.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial driver’s license</td>
<td>Truck driver</td>
<td>$11.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carpenter’s apprentice</td>
<td>Carpenter</td>
<td>$25.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How did some former steelworkers come to pursue training and careers as attorneys, business managers, and teachers? Their stories had common themes: a confidence in their intellect and a nagging feeling while employed in the mills that they could do better; a network contact that was involved in their new profession who provided information and support regarding a career-shift (the father of the attorney, for example, was a lawyer); and resources to finance the education or training (a working spouse, substantial savings, and/or college financial aid).

**Social Capital: Job Search and Social Networks**

In 1987, most of the respondents had described job searches following the plant closings that were both intensive and extensive. Most had "pounded the pavement," visiting scores of manufacturing and blue collar employers within a 60-mile radius of the Valley to submit in-person applications. If no job was found, they typically extended their search to service sector establishments such as stores and restaurants. With a majority of respondents eventually accepting low-wage service sector positions, most continued an ongoing search to seek higher wages. Turnover was high, and the respondents typically gained incremental wage increases by moving from one low-wage position to another that was slightly higher-paying. Many also eventually used network contacts to secure a better job.

By 1997, "pounding the pavement" had ceased to be part of a long-term search strategy. Rather, most respondents had relied almost exclusively on their social networks in seeking job upgrades over the previous decade. With a few exceptions, most of the respondents employed in services sought to return to manufacturing or other blue collar work, areas of employment in which they were skilled and comfortable, and which offered better pay. The respondents were unanimous in declaring that "knowing someone" was the only way to get a job in the fiercely competitive bidding for mill work. Most respondents described a similar job search strategy: let all of your friends and acquaintances know you would like a manufacturing job, keep in touch with anyone employed in factory work, and ask about openings whenever you see them.

Of the 65 respondents who were working in 1997, 48 (74%) had obtained their current job through a relative, friend, or
acquaintance. Among the 29 employed in manufacturing, 25 (86%) had obtained their job through such contacts. These connections were tapped in various ways.

I was working as a gardener for the President of [local mill]. I just kept pestering him till he got me a job at the plant.

I had a friend who worked at [local mill]—I seen his wife at Bingo and she says, "I hear they're hirin', go put in an application."

A friend told me they were hiring at the mill. I went down and the girl [receptionist] said, "We aren't taking applications." I asked to see the boss and told him my friend had sent me. He said, "Get your hood and I'll give you a welding test right now." I passed and started work the next day.

One local plant has formalized and systematized this networking process. When job openings occur, the social security numbers of current employees are put into a lottery, and those whose numbers are drawn can refer two acquaintances for the position. Each of the three respondents who worked at this plant in 1997 had gotten their position that way.

Because the respondents' close friends and relatives tended to be other factory workers, these intimate ties were the most frequent job sources for those re-employed in manufacturing and other blue collar work. Among those employed in professional or advanced technical jobs, more distant acquaintances and friends of friends were their most common job contacts. One respondent who obtained an Associate's degree in biotechnology described the effects of these multi-tiered contacts:

When I first went back to school a friend of mine who worked in the hospital got me an entry level job there. Then when I finished my degree it was someone from the second circle of acquaintances that I met at the hospital that got me the technician's job.

While social networks played an important role in connecting respondents to employment opportunities, 74% (N = 75) of those interviewed in 1987 described cutting back on social and recreational activities as one of their means for reducing expenses after the plant closings:

My wife cut out bowling and I cut out my sports club.

We stayed home a lot—cut back on everything and stopped going out.
Job Upgrading

As described, most of those employed in the service sector in 1987 were continually on the lookout for better paying jobs, and used social network contacts and job training and education in seeking upward mobility. Of the 27 non-retired respondents who had worked in the low-wage service sector a decade earlier, 14 made wage gains by 1997 by moving into manufacturing or other blue collar positions, and often secured substantial wage increases. For example, one respondent who was working as a gardener for $6.10 an hour in 1987 was earning $22.50 as a plant foreman in 1997. Another four respondents secured wage gains by obtaining supervisory positions within the service sector as, for example, an aide at a school for the mentally retarded ($5.89 hour) who rose to a program administrator position ($10.91). However, nine men who had worked in low-wage positions in 1987 remained in entry-level, low-paying jobs with incremental wage increases that were often startlingly low. One who was employed as a security guard making the minimum wage of $3.35 in 1987 was earning the minimum wage of $4.75 in the same position 10 years later. Another who was working as a gas station attendant making $3.43 in 1987 was earning $6.00 as a sales clerk in 1997. Thus, of the 27 current non-retired respondents employed in the low-wage service sector in 1987, only 4 achieved job upgrading within that sector.

Discussion

Among this sample of displaced steelworkers, regaining middle-income status was achieved through reemployment in a manufacturing or other non-factory blue collar job, or through advanced education or training that led to a professional or managerial position. The most significant wage gains came by moving from a nonprofessional service job to another employment sector, and almost all of those still holding nonprofessional service positions in 1997 continued to earn low-wages and benefits.

Among all respondents, social capital in the form of personal contacts were the primary means by which they obtained work, and were especially crucial for gaining access to factory
jobs. The respondents kept tabs on those close friends and more distant acquaintances employed in manufacturing, and persistently asked about openings. Because their closest friends and relatives tended to have social and employment backgrounds similar to their own, they were the most frequent connections to manufacturing work. Network contacts were also important to the mobility of the respondents who moved into managerial and professional positions: all had a network contact working within that occupation who provided initial information and encouragement for the career move. As these respondents entered less familiar occupational roles, more distant and diverse acquaintances became their primary job sources. Despite the importance of social connections to employment opportunities, the majority of respondents reported that they cut back on social activities as a cost-cutting measure in the years following the plant closures when they were unemployed or underemployed.

Well aware of the evolving post-industrial economy, a large number of workers in this sample sought job upgrading through training and education. In accord with other findings (Department of Labor, 1995), short-term training was not effective in providing training-related employment, or in advancing hourly wages above the sample mean. Also in line with previous research, a majority of these displaced workers expressed a preference for blue collar or factory work for reasons including familiarity, wages, or pride in their manufacturing craft or skill.

Reclaiming Human Capital

Obviously, many of the job gains of the sample would not have occurred in the absence of a healthier local and national economy, increasing manufacturing orders, and the opening of new minimills (which were spurred, in part, by plummeting local wages for skilled factory labor). However, the labor market for good paying jobs was competitive, and it was the network contacts of most respondents that allowed them to reclaim or activate their human capital to gain access to available jobs. Critical to this mobility were contacts that provided the respondents with vertical access to better jobs: moving, for example, from a janitor to a welder, or from a hospital aide to a medical technician. Because
of their hierarchical position or the information they possessed, these network contacts were able to facilitate the instrumental action of job acquisition.

There were limits, however, to the economic mobility that such access could provide based on the nature of the respondents' human capital and the parameters of the job market. While those employed in manufacturing had made gains relative to their positions in 1987, and relative to the situation of those working in the low-wage service sector, their average wages and benefits adjusted for inflation were below what they received in 1983, reflecting changes in the structure of local and national industry. The only respondents whose earnings kept pace with inflation were those in professional and some managerial positions, and the blue collar trades of electrician, carpenter, and cement mason. Among the nine respondents who remained in low-wage service jobs, it is unclear to what extent their inability to access a higher-paying job was due to some combination of factors related to lack of network job contacts, personal attributes such as age, education, or health, job availability, or other personal or resource issues.

Implications

While this study is not generalizable, it generates questions for job search and mobility research with other low-income groups. The salience of network contacts to job upgrading suggests, for this sample, the importance of maintaining community and social contacts throughout the initial and later periods of unemployment and occupational transition, and the potential positive effects of persistently pursuing both close and "weak" network job connections over the course of many years. It could be argued that the findings imply the importance of maintaining network-sustaining recreational and social programs (from bowling leagues to civic associations) in low-income and working class communities.

The results also suggest that, among these respondents, training could have favored more advanced education, or training that purposefully built on existing skills. Examples of career-enhancing training that was based on extant human capital
included two respondents who had previously worked as millwrights, received advanced training in repairing high tech medical equipment, and were employed at high wages in that field.

While most of the respondents returned to manufacturing or other blue collar work, the range of their new jobs—including medical technician, business manager, teacher, and attorney—belied expectations and stereotypes regarding manufacturing laborers. Their experiences underscored, for this community, the importance of attending to the range of individual abilities and occupational visions among displaced industrial workers, and the many ways in which variations in training and education, personal connections, personal attributes, and job availability served in combination to promote employment and mobility. Social capital was used by many to activate human capital in a series of synergistic applications. Further empirical research can explore with more specificity the ways in which low-income individuals mobilize both social and human capital to gain employment and higher wages, and the ways in which variables such as geography, ethnicity, gender and class affect these processes and their outcomes.

References


Social Capital and Human Capital


Adolescence and Old Age in Twelve Communities

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This paper disputes the theory of universal stages of development (often called the epigenetic principle) asserted by Erikson (1963; 1982; 1997) and later developed in detail by Newman & Newman (1987, p. 33). It particularly disputes that there are clear stages of adolescence (12–18), late adolescence (18–22), old age (60–75), and very old age (75+). Data from twelve communities around the world suggest that the concept of adolescence is socially constructed in each local setting, and that the concept of late adolescence is totally absent in some communities. Further, the stage of old age (60–75) is much shorter in some communities, and that the stage of very old age (75+) is not found at all in some communities.

In 1996, a debate took place between the senior author of this paper and another faculty member at the Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences, Case Western Reserve University. The debate centered around the following topic:

the model of human development, as proposed by Erik Erikson, is a very important tool in social work education, but represents a Euro-centric bias, a social class bias (favoring the upper classes in a social class hierarchy), and a regional bias (i.e., European and North American) in a world system.

* The authors of this paper are deeply indebted to the following persons in four continents: Army D’Aprix; Cornel Celmare; Manu Chatterjee; Marian Chatterjee; Mark Chupp; Samir Dasgupta; Mahasweta Devi; Kiku Ellis; Ovidiu Gavrolovici; Victor Groza; Maria Humphries; Romaniuc Mehai; Sharon Milligan; Pushpa Mishra; Manish Raha; Rotoraut Roy-Chaudhury; and Anindita Roy.

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The senior author took the “yes” position (i.e., favoring the topic, and opposing the universality of the Erikson model), and another social work educator from the Mandel School represented the “no” position (i.e., against the topic, and supporting the universality of the model). The research undertaking reported below began is a result of this debate, using the “yes” position of the debate as a working hypothesis.

Theoretical Background

Both in sociological and anthropological theory, there is a voluminous literature that biological roles (such as male/female, child/adult, parent/child) and their related role expectations are defined by local cultures (Elder, 1992; South & Crowder, 1999). These local cultures vary in numerous ways, not the least of which is technological complexity, which can be due to the fact that they are horticultural in nature, or agricultural in nature, or industrial in nature. In these examples, horticultural societies are lowest in technological complexity, and industrial societies are highest. Within industrial societies, market-oriented capitalist societies seem more complex than formerly socialist industrial societies. This can be ascertained by various measures. Seen from this perspective, societies can be placed in an ordinal position according to their technological complexity. (Later in this paper, we offer a measure of technological complexity.)

A great deal of current research in human behavior published in the United States takes the concept of life stages of development for granted (often in the Eriksonian manner). For example, adolescence has been an assumed life stage and used as either an independent variable or as a dependent variable (cf. Bulcroft, Carmody, & Bulcroft, 1998, Rosenfeld, Richman, & Bowen, 1998; Gavazzi & Law, 1997; Garnier & Stein, 1998). The culture-bound nature of adolescence as a life stage, or the concept of adolescence as a social construction, within societies and between communities within each society, are not generally seen as important to assess.

It should be noted that theories of development—about biologically-based roles and human development related to those
Adolescence and Old Age

roles—assume a relevance to the societies within which they are developed, and perhaps only to those societies. For example, Hall’s (Hall, 1916) biogenetic theory of adolescence, Freudian and neo-Freudian psychoanalytic theory (A. Freud, 1948; S. Freud, 1933; Hartmann & Lowenstein, 1946) of adolescence, Spranger’s (1955) Geisteswissenschaftliche theory of adolescence, Gesell’s (1948; Gesell, Ilg, & Ames, 1956) theory of adolescence, or central or east European stage theories of adolescence (Kroh, 1944; Lersch, 1951; Remplein, 1956) are advanced from observation in European or American societies. But more often than not, their generalizability is assumed, rather than specified to their particular context and time. This is not to argue for relativism, which has its own significant drawbacks, but to propose (not at all in the original) that neither position be accepted without critical assessment.

Socio-Cultural Differences

Socio-cultural context is relevant to the understanding of human behavior for many reasons, as much of the sociological and anthropological literature have shown. In particular, it is apparent in numerous ways that within and between societies the social system is stratified, with different groups, institutions and rituals constituting the system’s working structure. Elder (1992) and South & Crowder (1999) have emphasized the societal context vividly in terms of stratification. In industrial societies, a class system emerges and the stratification system is thereby defined by class, consisting of upper, middle, working, and lower classes. In peasant societies, there may emerge a caste system (a range of upper to lower); however, caste hierarchies are more often bound by local history and tradition and, so, are limited in their pervasive social effects. Often, the dominant groups in peasant societies—which sometimes form groups like the upper castes—are victors of wars in earlier histories, whereas the non-dominant groups are either defeated groups or groups which are culturally very different, stand apart and choose not to become assimilated in the dominant groups.

The latter kinds of groups, i.e., groups that are culturally different from the dominant groups and stand apart, exist today
in many societies. Examples of such groups are the *Amish* in the United States, who choose a peasant society life style within a larger industrial society; the *Santals*, and the *Lotha* in India, who choose to live somewhere between hunter-gather and horticultural societies within a larger agricultural society, which is changing to an industrial society; the *Gypsy* in Romania, who are closer to a nomadic pastoral society within a larger society that has recently changed from an agricultural society to a socialist industrial society and is now again undergoing a change into a capitalist industrial society; and the *Maori* of New Zealand, who are a minority group in New Zealand descended from a Polynesian stock.

It should be noted that within societies, *communities* may emerge, either due to the occupational groupings in the mainstream society or due to a separatist communal tradition of a people, that share a culture of their own which is very different from the mainstream society. Examples of community formation due to occupational grouping in the mainstream society are: the white middle classes of American, Romanian, and New Zealand societies; Hindu Bengali middle urban class in eastern India; Hindu Bengali rural peasants of India; and black middle and lower classes of America. Examples of separatist communities with a cultural tradition of their own are the Amish of the United States; the Lotha, and the Santhals of India; the Gypsy of Romania; and the Maori of New Zealand.

*Dimensions of Culture and Community*

The cultural/community groups discussed above vary in technological complexity in two dimensions: a societal dimension, and a communal dimension. The societal dimension is reflected by the national boundaries (India, Romania, New Zealand, and the United States). Within these national boundaries, cultural anthropologists identify India as basically a peasant (or agricultural) society with some industrialization in its cities and the presence of a class structure in its urban areas; Romania as a peasant society which was subjected to forced industrialization under a socialist doctrine, and which is now being converted to capitalist industrialization; New Zealand as a society which has been through capitalist industrialization; and the United States as
a society which has also been through capitalist industrialization (Cf. Belshaw, 1965; Polanyi, 1968; Kottak, 1979).

Within these four societies, a communal dimension also exists, which emerges from occupational specialization and residential clustering. Examples of such communal clustering are found in the urban middle and lower classes of India, Romania, New Zealand, and the United States; in the culturally stand-alone communities of the Lotha and the Santals of India, the Gypsy of Romania; the Maori of New Zealand, and the Amish of the United States.

Thus, two dimensions of technological complexity are identified: a societal dimension and a communal dimension. The societal dimension can be seen in the following order: a peasant society (India); socialist industrial society which is in transition to becoming a capitalist industrial society (Romania); a capitalist industrial society (New Zealand); and a very wealthy and very dominant capitalist industrial society (the United States). The communal dimension within each society is identified is seen in the following order: marginalized communities; struggling communities; and mainstream communities. Later in this paper we present the measurement for these two ordering devises.

Inequalities in the World-System

Related to the problem of world-wide differences in technological complexity is the problem of inequalities in the world-system. Wallerstein (1976; 1980; 1989) has documented that inequalities in the world-system began during the later part of the middle ages, and has since been cumulative. Recently, the United Nations Development Programme (1998) has introduced a measure, called the Human Development Index (HDI), which is a composite measure of where a nation (we are calling it a society) stands in a world hierarchy, which is seen in three dimensions: knowledge, health status, and purchasing power (see Table 1). Seen from this perspective, the higher the position of a society in a world hierarchy, the higher is its technological complexity, and the higher its HDI status. Conversely, the lower the position of a society in a world-wide hierarchy, the lower is its technological complexity, and the lower its HDI status. The HDI measure is a reflection of world-wide inequalities.
Several scholars have emphasized how within societies, the stratification system has a serious impact on human development (Aries, 1962; Lewin, 1946; Cow, 1946; Davis, 1944; Havinghurst, 1951; Hollinsworth, 1928; Mead 1950; Mead, 1952; Schlegel & Barry, 1991; Spiro, 1969; and Somerville, 1982). For example, some have focused the discussion on how construction of age/role groups allows for the capitalization of certain groups for certain types of labor and social structures. It would therefore seem that the biological and social roles of adolescence and other age groups (such as old age) would vary due to the technological complexity of the (1) societal dimension, and (2) the communal dimension.

The HDI measure, as pointed out earlier, is a measure of technological complexity and consequent inequality of societies. No such standardized measure exists about the communities within societies. Consequently, we have developed measures for the status of the communities.

Developmental Theory

The essential focus of Eriksonian theory is that psychosocial development occurs across the lifespan in universal stages. It assumes an essential human drive toward mastery, task-specific for each stage of life, which requires the resolution of a psychosocial “crisis” in order to be fulfilled (Greene, 1991; Muus, 1988). The outcome of each stage, therefore, is a sense of mastery of developmental milestone tasks that create the foundation and functionality of ego and identity. Each resolution, or mastery experience, supports ongoing development; or, failing that, a developmental impasse evolves, which will both resurface and will undermine the mastery potential at each other stage. The assumption is that, while social and cultural variation exist, the trajectory of development is universal.

The apparently holistic nature of Erikson’s work, with its attention to social, psychological and biological factors, can be scrutinized from other perspectives to assess what may have been missed. Originally, Erikson’s theory was decidedly expansive, in the context of his own psychoanalytic training and the dominant intrapsychic theories of the time. The theory integrated “crisis” as a good and necessary component of development, brought the social into the concept of psychological development, and conceived of a developmental trajectory across the lifespan. But
it was also limited by the socially constructed and constrained viewpoints of the times (for example, an intellectual culture dominated by upper class, male, white thinkers). The theory has been criticized for claiming universality, as it has too often been inconsistent with experiences of diversity and the local nature of culture and community, (e.g., see Devore & Schlesinger, 1987; Gilligan, 1982; Germain, 1991; Robbins, et al, 1998). It is in a related spirit of expansion—to dispute, revise, or add to some of the traditional views of developmental theory (in this case, Eriksonian theory)—that this study was generated.

Some Historical Debates

We were also inspired by certain earlier debates. For example, Malinowski claimed (1927; 1929) that small children among Trobriand Islanders, being members of a matrilineal society, do not display any signs of Oedipal conflict. The Oedipal conflict, he reasoned, is the product of a patrilineal society. Jones, Freud's biographer, had argued that children in these societies indeed show signs of the Oedipal conflict. However it manifested in the triangle between the mother, the male offspring, and the mother's brother (who represented male authority in that society) was the context in which Oedipal conflict could be found. Benedict (1934) later developed this into a theoretical argument: patterns of culture in a society shape childhood experiences. She also argued that adolescence is a culturally conditioned experience.

Our study focused the entire life span in twelve communities within the four societies: United States; New Zealand; Romania; and India. We developed an instrument (described below), toward this purpose. However, our focus in this study was on adolescence and old age as experienced in the twelve communities.

Guiding Hypotheses: Adolescence

Age or stage-based delineation of human behavior, such as adolescence and old age, appears to be a function of cultural variation, perhaps especially the technological complexity of a given society. Thus, in the case of adolescence, for example, it is expected that the greater the technological complexity of a society, the more prolonged the adolescent role. When two or more societies are clearly different and varied in technological complexity
(like an industrial society and an agricultural society), they will also show a variation between them in their social construction of the adolescent role. It is expected that adolescence will be more prolonged in industrial societies and shorter in agricultural societies. An hypothesis which may be formally stated from this discussion is as follows:

\[ \text{H}_1: \text{The greater the technological complexity to be managed as an adult, the more prolonged the adolescent role in that society. Adolescence is a variable between societies.} \]

When two or more social groups within a society are clearly different in their management of technological complexity as adults (as is true between the lower class and the middle class in industrial societies), there is likely to be a difference in construing the adolescent role. The greater the technological complexity to be managed by a group as an adult within a society, the more prolonged the adolescent role is likely to be for that group within that society. Adolescence is thereby a variable within societies. Often these within-group dimensions are reflected by communal groupings, each one of which can be rated as performing more or less technologically complex jobs for the larger society. Thus:

\[ \text{H}_2: \text{The greater the technological complexity to be managed by a group or community for the larger society, the more prolonged the adolescent role of its members. Adolescence is a variable within societies.} \]

Guiding Hypotheses: Old Age

Similarly, old age can also be seen as a function of the technological complexity of a society. The more technologically complex a society, the greater the repository of accumulated knowledge in that society. The greater the accumulated knowledge structure of a society, the more the application of it exists in prolonging life, as reflected throughout the average life expectancy at birth and at every subsequent age in that society.

Stated formally, this becomes a hypothesis as follows:

\[ \text{H}_3: \text{The greater the technological complexity of a society, the more extended the longevity of its members. Old age is a variable between societies.} \]

Similarly,
H₄: The greater the technological complexity to be managed by a group/community for the larger society, the more prolonged the old age role of its members. Old age is a variable within societies.

Design and Sampling Plan

A survey research design was used, relying on a convenience sample. An instrument (described below) was used to gather data via ten key informants in four societies: India (four informants); Romania (two informants); New Zealand (two informants); and USA (two informants).

Key Informants

Key informants from four selected countries (India; Romania; New Zealand; and the United States) were interviewed, using an interview instrument, to comment on how a given communal or socio-economic group within that country defines childhood, adolescence, and adulthood. These key informants were trained social scientists and were located in Cleveland (representing the U.S.), Calcutta (representing India), Bucharest (representing Romania), and Auckland (representing New Zealand). Each key informant was assessed to be thoroughly knowledgeable about the lifestyles and life chances of the groups in Table 1. All the key informants had graduate level education (holding M.A. degree or higher), and were selected because of their knowledge about the community about which they were commenting in response to our interview schedule. The possible answers were kept in a “yes” or “no” format as much as possible, due to the international nature of key informants and the interest in generating comparable data.

The responses given by the key informants were tabulated into a data set. This data set was used to test the hypotheses listed above. However, it should be noted that formal hypothesis testing with statistical inference was not possible here, since this study was based on a small, convenience sample of communities (N = 12). However, the data lent itself to some meaningful qualitative analysis that can significantly inform both deductive, “working” conclusions, and the development of future research based on suggested implications.
Table 1

Technological Complexity of The Four Societies and Related Factors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Societies</th>
<th>Technological Complexity</th>
<th>Average Life Expectancy</th>
<th>Female Life Expectancy</th>
<th>Male Life Expectancy</th>
<th>HDI 1995</th>
<th>Real GDP Per Capita (US $)</th>
<th>Adult Literacy Rate 1995 %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>76.4</td>
<td>79.7</td>
<td>70.0</td>
<td>0.943^2</td>
<td>26,977</td>
<td>99.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>High Medium</td>
<td>76.6</td>
<td>79.4</td>
<td>73.9</td>
<td>0.939^3</td>
<td>17,267</td>
<td>99.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>69.6</td>
<td>73.4</td>
<td>66.0</td>
<td>0.767^4</td>
<td>4,431</td>
<td>98.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>61.6</td>
<td>61.8</td>
<td>61.4</td>
<td>0.451^5</td>
<td>1,422</td>
<td>52.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


1 HDI refers to Human Development Index, used by the United Nations. It means an index which reflects equally about knowledge, health status, and purchasing power of citizens of a given country.

2 USA ranked 4th in the world in the HDI Index.

3 New Zealand ranked 9th in the world in the HDI Index.

4 Romania ranked 74th in the world in the HDI Index.

5 India ranked 139th in the world in the HDI Index.
Four Societies

Four societies were chosen for the convenience sample: India, Romania, New Zealand, and the United States. These societies were chosen because the authors had prior knowledge about and contacts in these societies and also spoke the local languages of these societies. Table 1 represents objective data on these societies, and ranks them in technological complexity.

Twelve Communities

Twelve communities were selected from the four societies. From India, four communities were selected: Hindu Bengali urban middle class; Hindu Bengali rural peasant; the Lotha; and the Santal. From Romania, two communities were selected: white middle class; and the Gypsy. From New Zealand, two communities were chosen: white middle class; and the Maori. Lastly, four communities were chosen from the United States: white middle class, black middle class, black lower class and the Amish.

India

For the most part, communities in India have formed as either caste groups or tribes (see India, Encyclopedia Britannica, 1998). The caste groups, taken together, make up the mainstream Hindu society, which form about 82 percent of the population of the country. These caste groups are further divided into regional ethnolingual groups called the Bengali, the Marathi, the Bihari, the Marwari and on. The caste groups taken together represent an agricultural society. In the industrial cities like Calcutta, Bombay, Delhi or Madras, a small part of these caste groups form urban upper, middle, working, or lower classes, and often the traditionally higher castes come to occupy the higher social classes. However, it is entirely possible for a person of lower caste origin to move up the class ladder in the cities and occupy a higher social class position. In addition, India has had a large number of tribes, who are ethnoracially and culturally different from the caste-and-class bound mainstream society. These tribes are known as the Santals, the Lothas, the Nagas, and so on. Their cultures often range from hunter-gather to horticultural to agricultural. Some of these tribes maintain cooperative relations with the mainstream caste-and-class peoples as they perform contractual day-labor for the latter.
Some others from these tribal groups maintain a hostile and a separatist orientation, and do not interact with the mainstream caste-and-class peoples.

Two of the communities included in this study come from the mainstream caste-and-class oriented Indian society: the Hindu Bengali urban middle class; and he Hindu Bengali rural peasant. Two other communities in this study were chosen from the tribal groups: the Santal, and the Lotha.

The Hindu Bengali urban middle class communities can be found in the eastern part of India, mostly in the state of West Bengal and concentrated in the city of Calcutta. This group speaks Bengali (a special branch of Indo-Iranian language tree), and is part of an urban stratification system similar to other urban industrial societies. In contrast, the Hindu Bengali rural peasant also speaks Bengali, is from the villages of West Bengal and adjacent places, is not a part of the urban class matrix, and is often identified by their caste position in traditional Hindu society. The Santal, in contrast, is a tribe with relatively friendly, cooperative relations with the Hindu caste-and-class society. For the most part, they are a horticultural people with some agricultural traits. On the other hand, the Lotha are a Naga people originating from northeastern India, and often are in conflict with traditional caste-and-class mainstream. Sometimes they are referred to as a "criminal tribe" by traditional Hindu society, since seemingly the Lothas do not respect the property rights of the traditional Hindu. They are often seen as a separatist tribe. Both the Santal and the Lotha have an oral tradition, and do not use a written tradition for their cultural continuity.

Romania

Romania, one of the Balkan states in Eastern Europe, is inhabited by Romanians (about 90 percent), Hungarians (about 7 percent), Gypsies (about 2 percent) and Germans (about 0.5 percent). With the exception of Gypsies, all the ethnolinguial groups are of European, white Caucasian origin. The Gypsies are dark Caucasians who supposedly emigrated from Northern India around the 15th Century. Between 1948 and 1989, Romania was a communist country. During that time it was transformed from a peasant society (agricultural economy) to a socialist industrial
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society. There is an urban middle class, who form the mainstream of mostly white Caucasi ans from Romania, Hungarian or German origin. In contrast, the Gypsy communities are not a part of the mainstream, and may be seen as marginal to the mainstream Romanian society (see Romania, Encyclopedia Britannica, 1998). Most Gypsies are nomads given to an oral rather than a written tradition.

New Zealand

New Zealand society consists mostly of European-origin, white Caucasi ans but also contains ethnolingually different Polynesian, Melanesian, and Micronesian peoples. Mainstream society is mostly white, middle class of European origin, although there are small minority middle class populations from the other three ethnic stocks. Among the non-European peoples, the Maori people have notably faced conflicts due to the pressures to assimilate into the mostly European society, and the demands to retain native Maori culture. The Maori are a Polynesian people in a mostly European society, and, for the most part, are given to an oral tradition. However, a modern literature of recent origin has developed among the Maori, and Maori writers have appeared who contribute to a written tradition.

USA

Named “the first new nation” by Lipset (1963), the United States began as a white agrarian democracy, and went through rapid industrialization in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Its white Caucasian immigrants were of European origin, and are the ancestors of the current white upper class, white middle class, white working class, and white lower class. Its black (or African-American) population is descended from the black slaves who were brought from Africa. Its Asian populations are descendants of Chinese, Japanese, Pacific Islander (and later Southeast Asian) populations who came to the country as immigrants. Its Hispanic populations are descendants of Spanish-speaking populations that have immigrated from a variety of countries (mostly Spain and Mexico, and later Puerto Rico and South and Central Americas). In addition, its Native American groups are descendants of various tribal groups who were in-
digenous to North America prior to the arrival of the Caucasian, black, Hispanic or Asian peoples. All five groups, for the most part, developed as endogamous groups.

The white population in the U.S. can be seen as divisible into four social classes: upper, middle, working, and lower. In addition, there is a rural white population, mostly in Appalachia, who are not a part of the urban class matrix, and who, when migrating into the cities, occupy positions mostly in the white lower or working classes (Beeghley 1988). The black population is divisible into a new upper/middle and middle class, a new working class, and a lower class. In addition, there is a rural black population in the southern part of the country, which has existed there for many generations. Similarly, the Hispanic and Native American populations are also divisible in three social classes: a new middle class, a new working class, and a lower class. The Asian groups are dispersed into a new middle class and a working class. There are also smaller communities, like the Amish (descended from white German Immigrants), which are not a part of the American class structure. They form agrarian communities which essentially stand apart from the mainstream American class structure (see Beeghley, 2000).

Ordering the Twelve Communities

A system for ordering the twelve communities was developed for the study. Such a system depended on being able to place the twelve communities in a societal matrix, delineating their level of technological complexity (as shown in Table 1), and the relative marginality of that community within society. Marginality was assessed by evaluating whether a community occupies a position in the mainstream of society, is struggling to enter the mainstream of society, or is relegated to a marginal status within a society. Table 2 presents this matrix.

When a community was seen to be in the mainstream of a given society, it was assigned a value of 2.0; when it was rated as struggling to enter the mainstream of a society, it was assigned a value of 1.5; and when it was thought of as a community which is marginal to mainstream society, it was given a value of 1.0. The score each community got was then multiplied by their corresponding society’s rank in Table 1 (also reproduced in
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Society</th>
<th>Societal Rank (From Table 1)</th>
<th>Communities in the Mainstream (All scored 2.0)</th>
<th>Communities Struggling to Enter the Mainstream (All scored 1.5)</th>
<th>Communities in the margins (All scored 1.0)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>White middle class</td>
<td>Black middle class</td>
<td>Amish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Black lower class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>White middle class</td>
<td>Maori</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>White middle class</td>
<td></td>
<td>Gypsy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Hindu Bengali urban Middle class</td>
<td>Hindu Bengali Rural Peasant</td>
<td>Santal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lotha</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Column 2 in Table 2). Table 3 represents the scores obtained by this procedure, which is seen as a measure of relative technological complexity of the twelve communities in relation to each other.

Assumptions

In accord with the hypotheses, members of the urban upper and middle classes in all societies were expected to manage more technological complexities as adults, and consequently were expected to have both prolonged adolescence and old age; whereas members of all other groups were expected to have a shortened adolescence and longevity.

It was assumed that categorizing population groups on the basis of social class (also called socio-economic status) is indeed possible in the urbanized and industrialized areas of the world. Education and occupation in an urban setting are often taken as indicators of class position (Farley, 1988; Beeghly, 1989 and 2000). In the discipline of sociology or political science such subdivisions are: upper class (or the Rich); middle class; working class; and lower class (or the Poor) (see Beeghley, 2000).

Instrument

The instrument was designed to access basic information about typical social expectations related to age groupings within a given society/community and was administered to each key informant. After gathering information to establish the informants' qualifications, the instrument asked them questions about: the life expectancy of each group; the age at which childhood ends in a group; the ages in which persons are defined to be in a child role, in an adolescent role, and in an adult role; the ages in which members of these groups are expected to marry, enter an occupational grouping, and become parents. Essentially, the key informants were asked to examine Erikson's epigenetic chart (as proposed in 1963, and shown in Figure 1) and respond to whether this chart was relevant or applicable to the life stages in the community about which he or she was giving information. Erikson's ninth stage of development (very old age) (Erikson, 1982; Erikson, 1997) was not used in this instrument, as it seemed that not all informants in the countries studied were familiar with this stage.
### Table 3
Relative Technological Complexities of Twelve Communities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community</th>
<th>$S_R$ = Societal Rank(^1) (from Tables 1 &amp; 2)</th>
<th>$C_R$ = Community Rank(^2) (from Table 2)</th>
<th>$S_R C_R$ = Technological Complexity of Communities(^3)</th>
<th>Ordinal Position within the Twelve Communities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>USA: White Middle Class</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USA: Black Middle Class</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USA: Amish</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USA: Black Lower Class</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Zealand: White Middle Class</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Zealand: Maori</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romania: White Middle Class</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romania: Gypsy</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India: Hindu Bengali Urban Middle Class</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India: Hindu Bengali Rural Peasant</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India: Santal</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India: Lotha</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^1\) $S_R$ = Societal rank. Reflects technological complexity between societies.

\(^2\) $C_R$ = Community rank. Reflects technological complexity within societies.

\(^3\) $S_R C_R$ = Technological complexity of all twelve communities in the sample studied here.
Figure 1 presents Erikson's epigenetic conceptualization, as summarized by Newman & Newman (1987).

Findings

This section reports on the data generated by the use of the instrument. The informants' essential answers are provided in the body of the tables; but their comments also appear as footnotes under the tables presented. Again, the informants in this study were asked whether the members of particular age groups in the community on which they were reporting seem to be mastering the developmental tasks Erikson designated for each stage. All stages are reported here, as all were included in the original study. However, since the primary focus of the study is adolescence and old age, these stages are given longer discussion.

Overall Life Expectancy

Key informants were asked: "For the above group, what is the life expectancy of individuals at birth for females and for males? Table 4 provides the information collected from this question. Data show a somewhat linear trend between life expectancy and stratification systems: the higher the position in the stratification system of a society, the higher the life expectancy. It is also apparent that the communities which perform more complex functions within an industrial society (the middle classes) have higher life expectancies than the communities which do not (the black lower class; the Amish; the Maori; the Gypsy; the Hindu Bengali rural peasant; and the two tribal communities of India). Females are shown to have a higher life expectancy in the communities which overall perform more complex functions, and lower in communities which do not. Life expectancy was shown to be generally higher in industrial societies (USA, New Zealand, and Romania) than in peasant societies (India).

Life Stages

Given our emphasis on adolescence and old age, we only provide a short summary of responses given to all other life stages.

Trends on Childhood to Adolescence

The task/developmental focus for an infant within the first two years of life is: social attachment; maturation of sensory and
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Range</th>
<th>Milestones</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very Old Age (75+)</td>
<td>Cope with changes of aging.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Develop psycho-history perspective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Travel uncharted terrain.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Later Adulthood (60 to 75)</td>
<td>Promote intellectual vigor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Redirect energy to new role</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Accept one's life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Develop point of view about death</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Adulthood (34 to 60)</td>
<td>Nurture marital relationship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Manage household.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rear children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Manage career</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Adulthood (22 to 34)</td>
<td>Marriage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Childrearing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Life Style</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Later Adolescence (18 to 22)</td>
<td>Autonomy from parents.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sex role identity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Internalized morality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Career choice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Adolescence (12 to 18)</td>
<td>Physical maturation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Formal Operations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Emotional Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Peer Group membership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Heterosexual Relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle School (6 to 12)</td>
<td>Friendship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Self-evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Concrete operations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Skill learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Team Play</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early School (4 to 6)</td>
<td>Sex role identification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Early moral development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Group play</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Development of self-esteem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toddlerhood (2 to 4)</td>
<td>Elaboration of locomotion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fantasy and play</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Language Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Self-Control</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

continued
motor functions; sensorimotor intelligence; object permanence; and emotional development. The data, with some exceptions, suggested that childhood from birth to two years is nearly uniform in these twelve communities.

The four developmental tasks to be accomplished by a toddler (between age two and age four) are: elaboration of locomotion; fantasy and play; language development; and self-control. The informants were asked whether the toddlers in their community also master these tasks when they are between two and four. Here
our data suggested that some local differences are manifest in the areas of language development and self-control. In at least one case, language development is claimed to be slower in bilingual toddlers. Further, development of self-control does not seem as important a community norm for children of this age-bracket in both the Maori and the Santal.

The four developmental tasks to be accomplished by a child between age four and age six are: sex role identification; early moral development; age group play; and development of self-esteem. Data from the informants reveal some interesting trends. According to the informant, Maori children lack self-esteem, and pride in their own identity. Lotha children, considered a “criminal tribe” by the larger Indian society, are seen as having problems with self-esteem. In fact, the informant about the Santals said that Santal children are brought up to be proud of their identity, and begin to show self-esteem at this age. But in contrast, “Lotha children often seem ashamed of their identity.” It should be noted parenthetically that our informant about the American black communities did not mention those children lacking in self-esteem or in ethnoracial identity at this stage.

*Early Adolescence (Age 12 to 18)*

The five developmental tasks that informants were asked whether the children in their community mastered between age twelve and age eighteen are: physical maturation; formal operations; emotional development; membership in peer groups; and heterosexual relationships. The data in Table 5 reflect that the developmental tasks to be mastered in this age period vary within, as well as between, societies. In two communities in the U.S. (black lower class and the Amish), at least, the trend is not similar to that of the middle class communities in that society. The same trend seems to be true in New Zealand and in India. In India, the rural peasant, the Lotha and the Santal in early adolescence stand out as having a different experience from those in the Hindu Bengali urban middle class.

*Late Adolescence (Age 18 to 22)*

The informants assessed the question of the four developmental tasks (autonomy from parents; sex role identity; inter-
Table 5

Are the five Development Tasks (physical maturation; formal operations; emotional development; membership in peer groups; and heterosexual relationships) mastered by Early Adolescence (between twelve to eighteen years)? How long would you say early adolescence lasts?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Society</th>
<th>Community</th>
<th>Answer [Tasks]</th>
<th>Answer [Duration]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>White middle class</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>8–10 Years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Black middle class</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>7–8 Years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Black lower class</td>
<td>Not Sure¹</td>
<td>2–3 Years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Amish</td>
<td>Yes²</td>
<td>2–3 Years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>White middle class</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>6–10 Years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Maori</td>
<td>No³</td>
<td>1–3 Years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>White middle class</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>6–9 Years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gypsy</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>1–3 Years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>Hindu Bengali Rural Peasant</td>
<td>Not Sure⁴</td>
<td>1–2 Years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hindu Bengali Urban middle class</td>
<td>Yes⁵</td>
<td>4–6 Years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lotha</td>
<td>Not Sure⁶</td>
<td>1–2 Years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Santals</td>
<td>Not Sure⁷</td>
<td>2–3 Years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ Childbearing begins to happen at this age. Autonomy from parents does not begin either.

² Emotional development happens and goes on beyond this age. Marriage and career decisions are made at this age. One problem faced by the community is the rebellion of boys of this age.

³ Physical maturation in Maori girls occurs earlier than age 12.

⁴ Adolescence is just about over for girls between 11 and 14, and for boys between 15–16.

⁵ Some “love affairs,” without much physical relationships. Physical relationships are not common.

⁶ Age group for early adolescence for this group should be between 12–15 or 12–16. Formal operations is perhaps not applicable.

⁷ Yes to all but memberships in peer groups. Initiation into the work force at this age. Also many mating games which may seem “obscene” by the standards of larger Hindu society.
nalized morality; and career choice) to be accomplished by a person between age eighteen and age twenty-two, in terms of each community. Table 6 reports to the answers to this question.

The data reflect that the developmental tasks to be mastered by late adolescence are not at all the same both between and within societies. In fact, the data here most strongly support the acceptance of the main hypotheses presented earlier. In all four societies, the urban middle class (who are participants in industrial settings) appear to require longer time in their preparation for adulthood than do rural peasants; it also appears that separatist agricultural communities (the Amish in the U.S.) or stand-alone tribal peoples (as in India) have a shorter adolescence. The Gypsies of Romania, a nomadic people, also have a shorter adolescence than the people of the Romanian middle class.

**Early Adulthood and Middle Adulthood (Age 22–34 and 35–60)**

The four developmental tasks of this stage (marriage; child-bearing; work; and choice of life style) are to be accomplished by a person between age twenty-two and thirty-four. The informants were asked whether persons in the informant’s community also master these tasks in this time frame.

It seemed that the developmental tasks to be mastered by early adulthood vary widely both between and within societies. The tasks identified by Erikson’s theory seem to apply, for the most part, to the urban middle class in all four societies. In India, young couples are often still a part of their family of origin, but social class remains an important determinant of developmental tasks to be mastered. It also seems that members of communities who perform the low skilled jobs in an urban society, agricultural jobs in a separatist community, or live a nomadic life style, have a different type of early adulthood than those communities/groups that perform relatively high skilled jobs.

Erikson’s theoretical list of developmental tasks to be accomplished by a person between age thirty-four and sixty is: nurturing the marital relationship; management of household; child rearing; and management of career. Informants responded to whether persons in their community also master these tasks in this time frame, if at all. Our data reflect that fulfillment of these developmental tasks also vary widely, both between and within
Table 6

Are the five Development Tasks (autonomy from parents; sex role identity; internalized morality; and career choice) mastered by Later Adolescence (between eighteen to twenty-two years)? How long would you say later adolescence lasts?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Society</th>
<th>Community</th>
<th>Answer [Tasks]</th>
<th>Answer [Duration]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>White middle class</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>3–4 Years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Black middle class</td>
<td>Not Sure¹</td>
<td>1–2 Years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Black lower class</td>
<td>Not Sure²</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Amish</td>
<td>No³</td>
<td>Near Zero</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>White middle class</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>3–4 Years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Maori</td>
<td>Not Sure⁴</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>White middle class</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>1–3 Years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gypsy</td>
<td>No⁵</td>
<td>Does not apply</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>Hindu Bengali Rural Peasant</td>
<td>No⁵</td>
<td>No such thing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hindu Bengali Urban middle class</td>
<td>Yes⁶</td>
<td>2–4 Years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lotha</td>
<td>Not Sure⁷</td>
<td>Not possible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Santals</td>
<td>Not Sure⁷</td>
<td>Is not an entity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ Both autonomy from parents and career choice are delayed beyond the age of 22.
² Career choice is a problem; childbearing at this stage is frequent; early death is more probable for males at this age; and there are regional differences (at least north/south) here also.
³ For the Amish, several of these happen earlier, like sex role identification and career choice, which are in place by age 17–18.
⁴ All but career choice are earlier in the Maori.
⁵ The Gypsy are adults by age 18–20. The rural people are adults by age 18–20.
⁶ Autonomy from parents is not culturally desirable. Childbearing may begin for many girls at this age; career choice for boys is delayed.
⁷ Career choice is not applicable here—they are adults by age 18; girls may have begun childbearing.
societies. Again, Erikson's prescriptions are appropriate for the middle class in all four societies, but the same prescriptions are either only partly appropriate or not appropriate at all in other communities.

Later Adulthood or Old Age (Age 60 to 75)

The informants responded to the question of the four developmental tasks (promoting intellectual vigor; redirecting energy toward new roles; accepting one's life; and developing a point of view about death) to be accomplished by a person between age 60 and seventy-five, in terms of their own communities. The data in Table 7 reflect that the development tasks to be mastered between age sixty and seventy-five also vary widely, both between and within societies. Here, only the American middle class conform to the Eriksonian paradigm, and all the other communities in the study do not. Even within the USA, the black lower class and the Amish experience this period differently than their middle class compatriots.

Very Old Age (Age 75 until death)

Erikson designates three developmental tasks (coping with physical changes of aging; developing a psychohistorical perspective; and traveling uncharted terrain) to be accomplished by a person between age seventy-five to death. Informants responded to this question for their communities. Table 8 clearly reveals that the Eriksonian paradigm only applies to the white middle class in USA, New Zealand, and Romania. Furthermore, Santal women are penalized for living this long and a "witch" role is attributed to them. This matter is discussed later in greater detail and is another form of local cultural meaning that is also related to age.

Later Adulthood (Old Age) and Very Old Age: An Observation

This stage received the least global range of response. In fact, this stage does not universally exist, since not all communities are accustomed to a norm of having community members alive at this point. Informants from India and the U.S. commented that the drastic differences in longevity may be due to differential availability of health care facilities and due to the kind of labor
Table 7

*Are the four Developmental Tasks (promoting intellectual vigor; redirecting energy toward new roles; accepting one's life, and developing a point of view about death) mastered by Later Adulthood (between sixty to seventy-five years)?*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Society</th>
<th>Community</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>White middle class</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Black middle class</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Black lower class</td>
<td>No¹</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Amish</td>
<td>No²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>White middle class</td>
<td>May be³</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Maori</td>
<td>Not Sure⁴</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>White middle class</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gypsy</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>Hindu Bengali rural peasant</td>
<td>No⁵</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hindu Bengali Urban Middle Class</td>
<td>No⁶</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lotha</td>
<td>No⁷</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Santals</td>
<td>Not Sure⁷</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ Some of the developmental tasks of very old age (75 and over in the Eriksonian paradigm) occur at this state (between 60 and 75) for the black lower class—due to early aging and death.
² They go into retirement-like behavior by age 55, giving management of the family and family farm to the sons.
³ Only the academics worry about "promoting intellectual vigor" at this age—others are not that concerned about it. However, "accepting one's life" and "developing a point of view about death" do happen at this age for the white middle class.
⁴ Most of these tasks occur in the Maori at an earlier age, due to the lower life expectancy.
⁵ Later adulthood for this group includes all the tasks of "very old age".
⁶ Only "point of view about death" develops at this age—for most people in this age bracket this is about the end of life. Intellectual vigor is rarely found, and there is this attitude of waiting for the cessation of life.
⁷ At this age, there is this attitude that death is inevitable and life is not permanent.
Table 8

Are the four Developmental Tasks (Coping with Physical Changes of Aging; Developing a Psychohistorical Perspective; and Traveling Uncharted Terrain) mastered by Very Old Age (between seventy-five until Death)?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Society</th>
<th>Community</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>White middle class</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Black middle class</td>
<td>Yes$^1$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Black lower class</td>
<td>Not Sure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Amish</td>
<td>Not Sure$^2$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>White middle class</td>
<td>May be</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Maori</td>
<td>Yes$^3$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>White middle class</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gypsy</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>Hindu Bengali rural peasant</td>
<td>Not Sure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hindu Bengali Urban Middle Class</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lotha</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Santals</td>
<td>No$^4$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$^1$ Often even middle class blacks do not live this long—age 66 is the expected life for most blacks regardless of class.
$^2$ A lot of this do not fit the Amish and they often do not live this long—their bodies do not hold up.
$^3$ Commitment to sharing history and knowledge happen earlier.
$^4$ Santal women, if they live this long, are likely to be accused of being witches practicing witchcraft, and may even be killed. In general, respect for the aged may well depend on whether they have property or knowhow. The aged among the Santals and other tribes (like the Lotha) do not seem to carry much respect.

members of a community perform. Manual labor performers die earlier than those who perform non-manual labor; and norms for access to quality health care (both for older community members as well as lifelong) vary significantly both between and within societies.

A verbal comment made by our key informants in India contradicts a popular stereo-type: that the aged are treated with respect in traditional societies (like India), and that they are ignored and relegated to obsolescence in modern industrial societies. In fact, one of the reviewers for this paper reminded us of this.
However, our key informant indicated that the aged in India seem to be respected only when they own property or have information that others want. The aged without property do not carry much respect. In fact, they are punished for living long, as they are in the Santal community, as pointed out above. They are also considered to be deviants among the Lotha community. On the other hand, respect for the aged seems to exist in the Hindu Bengali middle class.

Summary of Findings

Life expectancy (Table 4) seems to follow the direction proposed by the major hypotheses. The more complex the technological structure of a society, the higher the life expectancy. Also, the higher the placement of a community group in a social hierarchy within a society, the higher the life expectancy.

The tasks to be mastered by an infant, with some exceptions, are nearly universal. So are tasks to be mastered during toddlerhood, though some differences (language difference and self-control) begin to emerge. However, by early school age, children from communities ranking low in the social hierarchy seem to have a problem with self-esteem. The problem of Lotha children described here is comparable to the self-esteem problem of poor black children in the United States, first reported years ago by Clark & Clark (1958). Recent work supports the position that marginalization of a community may lead to low self-esteem in its children (Coopersmith, 1967; Greenberg, Solomon, Pyszczynski, Rosenblatt, Burling, Lyon, Simon, & Pinel, 1992; Greenblatt & Breckler, 1985; Harper & Hoopes, 1990; Moretti & Higgins, 1990; Pelham & Swann, 1989; Singh, Prasad, & Bhagalpur, 1973). It is in early school age that children begin to really face community members who are different (in social hierarchy) and who have more or less privilege than themselves; and this exposure begins to have impact on their self-image and self-esteem.

In the middle school age period, more differences emerge. In some cultures, performing self-evaluation between the ages of 6 and 12 does not seem to be that important. Further, in some cultures, children at the tail end of this age bracket join the world of work. In technologically more complex societies and
community groups, children of this age going to work would be a norm-violation, since there is likely to be a norm that labor from children of this age is highly inappropriate. But in less technological societies and communities, the labor contribution may not only be accepted but also required, both in terms of social norms and material survival.

The trends of early and late adolescence (Tables 5 and 6) more clearly manifest the within and between society differences. Clearly, the information gleaned via the key informants about many trends taken for granted in the original Eriksonian paradigm, begin, at this point, to show that the tenet of universality it prescribes does not hold up substantially. As seen in the schema of other developmental theories, developmental components largely coalesce in adolescence; so that, while the data of this study support the notion of inconsistencies in Eriksonian theory in the earlier stages of childhood to some extent, it becomes substantially evident in adolescence. In this way (and others), the informants' answers lend strong support toward the acceptance of Hypotheses One and Two.

Early and middle adulthood show that this stage of human life is more or less similar in all twelve communities. However, late adulthood and very old age (Tables 7 and 8) show more differences than similarities. Here, again, members of more technologically complex societies and communities are still living and have a set of life challenges which are absent for those of less complex societies and communities.

An interesting finding about old age is the attribution of witch status to older Santal women (Table 8). Santal women who live too long are likely to be accused of being witches. This form of collective attribution also occurred among the Navaho, and Clyde Kluckhohn (1944) documented that such attribution of witchcraft in Navaho society encouraged a redistribution function. That is, living longer than one's peers became a form of norm violation, and attribution of witch status became the punishment for this norm violation. In addition, it allowed the community to redistribute wealth accumulated by the aged person.
Return to the Guiding Hypotheses

The above findings and discussions lend support to the four hypotheses presented at the beginning of this paper. We have pointed out that this is not a study of formal hypotheses testing. Still, it indicates that both adolescence and aging are socially constructed and that such social construction of adolescence and aging vary from society to society and from community to community. It also indicates that universal determination of stages and overall development, using the Eriksonian model (as others), does not hold true. Figure 2 represents a theoretical summary of this study.

Our overall trends suggest that richer communities and richer nations have prolonged adolescence because it takes them longer to acquire relevant knowledge structures which are required to maintain their positions in society. They also live longer to enjoy their privileged positions in society. Underprivileged groups have lesser knowledge requirements, have lower life expectancies, and die sooner to escape life's miseries. In an increasingly global context of human existence, technology (and the knowledge and economic structures with which it is woven) is the currency that determines the quality and equality of life stages.

Contemporary Theoretical Issues & Implications

Studies of human development continue to suffer from two types of problems: (1) over-generalization, as most models of life-span development (whether Eriksonian or other) are developed based on either European or North American, white, middle class populations (see Cass, 1979; Chan, 1995; D’Augelli, 1994; Gonsiorek, 1995) and clearly do not apply to all kinds of human behavior; and (2) univariate construction, where it is assumed that a single independent variable, age, explains all the complexities of human behavior (see Dannefer, 1984; Lieberson, 1980; Elder & Liker, 1982; Farrell & Rosenberg, 1981; Gilligan, 1978; Gilligan, 1982, Gilligan, 1990; Sokoloff, 180; & Tavris, 1992). These two problems are augmented by a third issue, which is the linear conceptualization inherent to traditional developmental theory, which does not accommodate the non-linear and multifaceted
Figure 2
*Revised Stages of Human Development*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Erikson’s Proposed Development [Applies to technologically more complex communities]</th>
<th>Amendments Suggested [Applies to technologically less complex communities]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very Old Age (75+)</td>
<td>Cope with changes of aging</td>
<td>In some communities living this long means acquiring deviant status</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Develop psychohistory perspective</td>
<td>Living this long is infrequent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Travel uncharted terrain</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Later Adulthood (60 to 75)</td>
<td>Promote intellectual vigor</td>
<td>Intellectual vigor is not a part of the culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Redirect Energies to new role</td>
<td>Life is over by early 60’s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Accept one’s life</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Develop point of view about death</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Adulthood (34 to 60)</td>
<td>Nuture marital relationship</td>
<td>Sometimes, marriage is not culturally supported—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Manage household—Rear children</td>
<td>Often children are reared in extended families—the concept of career is often absent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Manage career</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Adulthood (22 to 34)</td>
<td>Marriage—Childbearing—Work—Lifestyle</td>
<td>Marriage is local culture-specific—Work often means manual labor—grandparenthood by age 32–34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Later Adolescence (18 to 22)</td>
<td>Autonomy from parents—Sex role identity—Internalized morality—Career choice</td>
<td>Not all cultures require autonomy from parents—late adolescence is absent—Early parenthood</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*continued*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Erikson's Proposed Development [Applies to technologically more complex communities]</th>
<th>Amendments Suggested [Applies to technologically less complex communities]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Early Adolescence</td>
<td>Physical maturation—Formal operations—Emotional development—Peer group membership—Heterosexual relationships</td>
<td>Physical maturation is assumed to be complete—Reduced adolescence—Some early parenthood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School (6 to 12)</td>
<td>Friendship—Self-evaluation—Concrete operations—Skill learning—Teams</td>
<td>Self-evaluation not observed here—Skill learning for lesser (and manual) jobs in adulthood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early School (4 to 6)</td>
<td>Sex role identification—Early moral development—Group play—Self-esteem developing</td>
<td>Moral development is locally bound—Self-esteem is poorly developed in many marginalized communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toddlerhood (2 to 4)</td>
<td>Elaboration of locomotion—Fantasy and play—Language development—Self control</td>
<td>Language development may be slower—Self-control may be less in marginalized communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infancy (Birth to 2)</td>
<td>Social attachment—Maturing sensory and motor facilities—Sensorimotor intelligence and primitive causality—Object permanence—Emotional growth</td>
<td>Object permanence is not always observable—Emotional development is not always observable</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
trajectory that development often takes. These issues become apparent when a diverse array of persons is studied.

This raises questions not just about the universality of the elements of developmental theory but also about whether the conceptual constructs of the theory allow for accurate understanding of observed behavior. This is not a new concern; it is a problem
commonly noted in studies of cultural diversity, when culturally local theory and instrumentation are applied in settings that vary too much from the constructed norms of traditional methods to be accurately perceived. All too often in these cases, the interpretation of the data has been along the lines of a deficiency model; that is, observed behavior is measured against standards that do not apply but which are used to construe that behavior as "deficient" by the model's criteria. This has been true in interpreting diversity of race, gender, class and ethnicity—an example is the now commonly disputed model of viewing female development as "less evolved" when seen in a male-oriented framework.

Figure 2 represents a proposed alternative to the Erikson paradigm, which incorporates the data from this study and proposes areas in which it expands on the confining nature of its universal prescriptions. Still, even the revised framework noted here (in Figure 2) lends itself to some of the original liabilities. As with all conceptual frameworks, there is the risk (or probability) of inquiry being confined by the theoretical paradigm, rather than enhanced. Having undertaken the study with the Eriksonian paradigm in mind, the variations that appeared in the data are still essentially framed within its conceptual confines—that is, the questions stemmed from an Eriksonian framework and, so, the data reflect those categories and definitions of development. This results in a revised framework still oriented to a Western conceptualization stressing certain developmental norms—of autonomy, an individualized work concept, and heterosexual coupling and child-rearing. The next step, suggested directly by these results, would be to generate a new body of questions to help field an even broader range of data. For example, questions could be generated that reach for open-ended data on what are the existing values and practices related to community, relationships, work, family, child-rearing, etc. (rather than trying to match the data to pre-existing frameworks). In an ever-increasing global environment for the human community, this is information that is important not only to the purposes of effective policy development and intervention but also to enhancing the value of life that we all share. The "sociocultural context of the self" suggested here, and the implications for understanding the interface of indi-
adolescence and old age, is rich in possibility for future inquiry.

**Implications for Social Work Education**

In general, this effort supports the contention (stated at the very beginning of this paper) that the epigenetic chart of Erikson suffers from a Euro-centric, social-class-biased, and a regionally biased paradigm construction. Further, three clear implications emerge from this study. We list them below.

**Implications for Human Behavior Sequence**

Developmental theories need to be discovered and taught which include the realities of human development in most if not all communities (rather than the privileged communities) in a given society. Specifically, adolescence and old age appear very differently across the social stratification systems of a given society.

Developmental theories need to be discovered and taught in the perspective of a world system, showing that childhood, adolescence, adulthood, and old age, as stages of human development, vary from society to society.

**Implications for Policy Sequence**

Non-marginalized, or mainstream communities, in general, have prolonged adolescence, and longer life-expectancy. In contrast, members of marginalized communities have shortened adolescence, and reduced life expectancy. In redistributive efforts of state policy (like state-supported health care, income protection, old age pension, etc.), this factor needs to be considered. When a single standard is set for all members of the population, members of marginalized groups are likely to receive less from redistributive efforts. For example, if the retirement age is set as 67, then members of marginalized groups who have a higher probability of dying at 63 or 64 are not likely to receive retirement or other similar benefits.

Fields like clinical social work, psychology, or psychiatry, have developed a learned tradition in which it is assumed that certain types of behavior are normal in adolescence or old age. These fields need to take into account that both adolescence and old age vary within and between societies. Consequently, what is
thought of as “expected and normal” at a certain age needs to be reconceptualized. What is “expected and normal” for mainstream communities may or may not be so in marginalized communities.

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Adolescence and Old Age


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A Time Series Analysis of the Effect of Welfare Benefits on Earnings

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Policy analysts Frances Fox Piven and Richard A. Cloward have put forth a bargaining power model of earnings. More specifically, they have argued that the higher workers' bargaining power, the higher their earnings and the higher the level of welfare benefits, the higher workers' bargaining power. Thus, based on Piven and Cloward's model, one would predict a positive relationship between welfare benefit levels and earnings. Using time series data I test Piven and Cloward's model and find support for it. The policy implications of my findings are discussed.

An ongoing concern of mainstream labor economists is the question what factors affect earnings. By mainstream labor economists I mean those who adhere to the neoclassical school of thought in economics. An ongoing concern of policy analysts, more generally, has been the effects of welfare. By welfare I mean both the recently abolished Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) program as well as its replacement the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program. As most readers are probably aware, both programs provided or provide cash benefits primarily to women with young children that they did or do not have to engage in market work to receive.

Perhaps surprisingly, there has been little empirical work in labor economics on the relationship between welfare benefit levels and earnings. Social welfare policy experts more familiar to social workers have long argued that there is a positive relationship between welfare benefit levels and earnings, but there has been little quantitative research in the field that test this proposition. This paper focuses on the results of such a test.
In 1971, Frances Fox Piven and Richard A. Cloward published their classic work *Regulating the Poor*. One of their central arguments was that welfare benefits provide people with an alternative to selling their labor forcing employers to pay workers earnings above the level of welfare to give them an incentive to work. Piven and Cloward have made this argument in other places (Piven and Cloward, 1985), and other social welfare policy experts have proposed more recent versions of it (Blau, 1999 and Abramovitz, 1996), yet there has been little quantitative research in the policy literature familiar to social workers that has attempted to test it.

A number of labor economists and other social scientists have focused on the effects of welfare (Hoffman and Duncan, 1995; Moffit, 1992; Lichter, et al., 1997; Fairlie and London, 1997; Lewis, 1999; Hoffman and Foster, 2000; and Blackburn, 2000) and the factors that affect earnings (Bound and Holzer, 2000; Mavromaras and Rudolph, 1997; Grogger and Eide, 1995; Bratsberg and Dek, 1998; Hirch and Stratton, 1997; Hamilton et al., 2000; Parent, 2000; Carrington and Troske, 1998; and Hellerstein et al., 1999), yet there has been little empirical research on the relationship between welfare benefits and earnings. An exception is a paper by Moffit, et al. (1998).

Moffit, et al. focused on the relative (to high-skilled workers) and absolute decline in the wages of low-skilled workers that occurred throughout much of the past 25 years or so. They attempted to determine whether this decline impacted on welfare benefits that is they modeled welfare benefits as the dependent variable with decline in low-skilled workers’ wages the independent one. They found a positive relationship between decline in low-skilled workers’ wages and welfare benefits and state that this may be due to two possible mechanisms.

One is that voters prefer to maintain a constant ratio of welfare benefits to the wages of low-skilled workers and pressures legislators to lower welfare benefits when this ratio increases (that is when wages decrease). Moffit, et al. argue that voters might prefer a constant ratio of welfare to low-skilled workers’ wages out of a sense that it would be unfair for the well being of low-skilled
workers to decline relative to that of welfare recipients. For example, suppose the average welfare stipend were one-half the average wage of low-skilled workers and this average wage declined. As Moffit, et al. see it, voters, motivated by the considerations discussed above, might pressure legislators to decrease welfare.

The other mechanism that could account for Moffit, et al.'s finding has more to do with the work disincentive that would result from a decline in the wages of low-skilled workers. If low-skilled workers' wages were to decline, raising the welfare to low-skilled wages ratio, workers might be more inclined to go on welfare. Voters concerned, about this disincentive effect, might pressure legislators to reduce welfare benefits.

The fact that Mofitt, et al. focused on the affect of the relative as well as absolute decline in low-skilled workers' wages means that they were focusing, in part, on the impact of an increase in wage inequality on welfare benefit levels. I focused, instead, on the impact of welfare benefits on average monthly earnings; that is I modeled welfare as the independent and the average monthly earnings as the dependent variable. Also, unlike Mofitt et al., I focused not on the preferences of voters but on how welfare benefit levels might affect the bargaining power of potential workers versus employers.

The Model

Piven and Cloward (1971 and 1985) propose a bargaining power model of earnings. That is they posit that workers' earnings depend on the relative bargaining power of workers versus employers and that this relative bargaining power depends on the alternate, other than earnings, sources of subsistence available to workers. If the only way workers are able to subsist is by selling their labor to some employer earnings are likely to be relatively low. If workers have the option of subsisting without having to sell their labor earnings are likely to be higher and the higher this non-work conditioned source of subsistence the higher earnings are likely to be. In the United States one source of subsistence that people did and do not have to sell their labor for was and is AFDC and TANF. Thus, if Piven and Cloward are correct one
would expect to find higher welfare benefit levels associated with higher earnings.

To test Piven and Cloward’s thesis I estimated a time series regression model of the natural logarithm of monthly earnings (measured in current dollars) on the natural logarithm of monthly welfare benefits (measured in current dollars). This allowed me to obtain an estimate of the effect of welfare benefits on earnings that gives the percentage change in earnings for each percentage point change in welfare benefits, controlling for the other independent variables in the model. I also took the natural logarithms of the control variables (discussed below). Proceeding this way allowed me to compare the effect of welfare on earnings to the effects of my control variables on earnings, enabling me to determine which of my independent variables had the biggest impact on earnings. Taking logarithms of variables to compare the relative effects of different independent variables is a standard approach in quantitative work, especially in economics (Wooldridge, 2000).

Using OLS regression I estimated the following model:

1. \[ \ln \text{earnings}_t = \alpha + \beta_1 \ln \text{welfare}_t + \beta_2 \ln \text{educ}_t + \beta_3 \ln \text{unemp}_t + \beta_4 \text{time}_t + \epsilon_t \]

where \( \ln \) stands for the natural logarithm, \( \alpha \) a constant, and \( t \) stands for a given year. Thus, \( \beta_1 \) is the effect of the \( \ln \) of welfare in year \( t \) on the \( \ln \) of earnings in the same year, and \( \beta_2, \beta_3, \) and \( \beta_4 \) are defined similarly. \( \epsilon_t \) stands for the error in a given year, that is the difference between the actual \( \ln \) of earnings value and predicted \( \ln \) of earnings value in a given year.

I included \( \ln \text{educ}_t \) in the equation because previous research has found a positive relationship between education and earnings (Grogger and Eide, 1995). A theoretical explanation for such a relationship comes from human capital theory (HCT). According to HCT (Becker, 1993), more education makes workers more productive and, since labor markets function so that there is a positive relationship between productivity and earnings, more productive workers make more than less productive ones. An alternative explanation contends that more education doesn’t cause workers to become more productive but, instead, signals to employers who the more productive workers are. The idea is that
more productive persons find it easier (or less costly) to acquire more schooling than less productive ones do. Thus, employers use rigorous educational standards for hiring to screen out less productive workers and pay those who meet these standards in accordance with their higher productivity (Hamermesh and Rees, 1993).

I included $\ln unemp_t$ because previous research has found a negative relationship between unemployment and earnings (Blanchflower and Oswald, 1994). Bowles and Schor provide a theoretical explanation for this relationship. They posit that the extent to which workers can pressure employers to raise pay, through strikes and other actions, depends on the cost to workers of losing their jobs. The cost of losing one's job (through being fired, laid off, etc.) depends, among other things, on the likelihood of finding another job (that is on the unemployment rate). The higher the unemployment rate the higher the cost of job loss, and the higher the cost of job loss the less employers can get away with paying workers.

Time was included to control for unobserved variables that change over time and affect earnings.

Data

I used data from the *Economic Report of the President* (Council of Economic Advisors, 1997), *A Statistical Portrait of the United States* (Littman, Mark S., 1998), and *The Green Book* (United States House of Representatives, 1998). The data was a time series covering 1960–1995. For each year I took the natural logarithms of the following variables:

1. average private sector weekly earnings (measured in current dollars)
2. average monthly AFDC benefit for families (measured in current dollars)
3. civilian unemployment rate
4. proportion of United States residents at least 25 years old that has completed four years of college

I estimated the impact of unobservable variables that change over time by including each year as values for a time variable. In other
Ideally, it would have been instructive to include data on Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) the reformed version of AFDC, but data limitations made this infeasible. However, since TANF is just another form of non-wage income, if Piven and Cloward’s model is valid TANF’s effect on the relative bargaining power of workers versus employers and, therefore, earnings should be similar to AFDC’s. Future research is needed to examine the extent of this similarity.

Results

Table I contains the results from my regression model.

Recall that taking natural logarithms of the variables in the model allows for estimates of the percentage change in average weekly earnings for each percentage point change in a given independent variable, controlling for the other independent variables in the model. Such an estimate is called the elasticity of the dependent variable with respect to the given independent variable (Nicholson, 1989).

As expected, the elasticity of average weekly earnings with respect to welfare is positive and statistically significant; for each percentage point increase in average monthly AFDC benefits earnings increase by .44 percent. The elasticity of earnings with

Table 1

Effect of $\text{Lnwelfare}_t$ on $\text{Lnearnings}_t$

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Slopes</th>
<th>$T$ Values</th>
<th>Significance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>-23.49</td>
<td>-3.40</td>
<td>.003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lnunemp$_t$</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>1.72</td>
<td>.100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lnwelfare$_t$</td>
<td>.44</td>
<td>3.82</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lneduc$_t$</td>
<td>.72</td>
<td>4.31</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>3.34</td>
<td>.003</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$F = 1026.68$, Significance .000
Adjusted R Squared = .85
D.W. = 1.2
Effect of Welfare Benefits

respect to the proportion of 25 and above year old four-year college graduates is .71 and with respect to time is .01. A one-percentage point change in the unemployment rate produces a .06 percent change in earnings, but this effect is statistically insignificant. It's clear that the elasticity of earnings with respect to education is larger than any other independent variable in the model.

The adjusted R squared for the model is .85 meaning that 85% of the variation in Inearnings_t is explained by the independent variables in the model. This adjusted R squared "nets out" the effect of time on Inearnings_t. In other words, .85 is the amount of variation in Inearnings_t explained by the other three variables in the model, controlling for the amount explained by time. This type of goodness-of-fit measure is the preferred one when an analyst models a dependent variable that is affected by a time trend, as is the case here. See Wooldridge (2000) for details on how to compute an adjusted R squared that removes the affect of a time trend as well as the justification of this approach. Note that an adjusted R squared of .85 is very high by social science standards.

The D.W. located beneath the table stands for the Durban-Watson d statistic, a test of the extent to which the errors in the regression model are correlated with one another. Referring back to equation #1, if we solve for \( \varepsilon_t \) we get:

\[
2. \quad \varepsilon_t = \ln \text{earnings}_t - \alpha - \beta_1 \ln \text{welfare}_t - \beta_2 \ln \text{educ}_t - \beta_3 \ln \text{unemp}_t - \beta_4 \text{time}
\]

the expression for the error at a given point in time. The D.W. statistic assesses the extent to which these errors are correlated (a condition called serial correlation). Serial correlation increases the likelihood that an analyst will assume that there is a relationship between the dependent variable and a given independent variable when this is not the case. A D.W. statistic of 1.2 is within the indeterminate range, meaning that we do not have enough evidence to reach a conclusion about the likelihood of serial correlation (Studenmund, 1997). The standard remedy for dealing with this situation is obtaining more observations, but, in the present case, lack of available data made this infeasible. Thus, this strategy will have to be used in future research.
Discussion

This paper has focused on the relationship between welfare and earnings. The inspiration is an argument first put forward in the policy literature familiar to social workers by Piven and Cloward (1971). Consistent with the theoretical prediction, I found that welfare benefits are positively related to earnings, as were education and time. The elasticity of earnings with respect to Ineduc, was the highest in the model, suggesting that the proportion of adults that have graduated from a four-year college has the largest effect on earnings. What are the policy implications of these findings?

For those, like many social workers, who believe government should play a role in curtailing poverty, it is instructive to consider the obvious fact that poverty (whether absolutely or relatively defined) is related to income. One of the major sources of income is earnings. Thus, if government can affect earnings, this is a means of affecting the poverty rate.

The data discussed in this paper suggest that government can increase earnings more by increasing the proportion of 25 and above year olds that graduate from four-year colleges than by increasing welfare benefits. Yet government can more directly affect the welfare benefit level than the proportion of four-year college graduates. To increase college graduation the government would have to implement an incentive scheme such as subsidizing the costs of a college education. Many would respond to this incentive but many would not because the subsidy would only address some of the costs of education. The cost of forgone wages would still deter many from attending.

In order to increase welfare benefits, all the federal government would have to do is send recipients more money. It is very unlikely that many, if any, recipients would decline this increase. Although the government could do more to increase earnings by increasing educational attainment than welfare benefits, it might be more prudent to try to accomplish this goal by the latter method since it has more control over welfare benefits than the proportion of people that finish college.

Another way government can increase earnings is, of course, by raising the minimum wage. According to many economists,
increases in the minimum wage increase unemployment among low-skilled workers (Brown, 1988). According to more recent work in economics, however, increases in the minimum wage do not necessarily increase unemployment (Card and Krueger, 1995). The fact that there is some evidence that higher minimum wages cause higher unemployment among low-skilled workers should give those concerned about the well being of the poor pause.

The strategy of increasing welfare benefits might run into its own problems though. The paper by Moffit, et al. discussed above as well as recent welfare reforms suggest that the electorate might not be interested in raising the level of welfare benefits and, perhaps, may be more interested in lowering them. If this paper’s findings are accurate, the electorate, by declining to raise benefits or by lowering them, would be forgoing an opportunity to increase the well being of workers. Since most members of the electorate are workers they would be forgoing an opportunity to increase their own well being.

References


Connecting Personal Biography and Social History: Women Casino Workers and the Global Economy

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Economic globalization has been described as the “most fundamental redesign of the planet’s political and economic arrangements since at least the industrial revolution” (Mander, 1996). This article explores its implications in the lives of a group of women casino workers. Based on a qualitative study in which data were collected from key informants, focus groups of community leaders and professionals, and in-depth interviews with women casino workers themselves, the study attempts, in the spirit of C.Wright Mills (1959) and social work’s tradition of person-in-environment, to connect “the patterns of [individual] lives and the course of world history.”

[Working in a casino], it’s the only way I could survive. I had to work for money for food, it’s not like I enjoyed it. I wouldn’t be cleaning rooms in my country. I was a teacher.

Maria Ortiz, housekeeper originally from El Salvador

What does a casino offer? It doesn’t offer much, does it? Because I don’t think being a dishwasher you’re going to end up being a supervisor or being one of the top. . . . They want you as a dishwasher. They’re not going to say, well, this person has been here for many years, let’s give [her] a chance doing this and doing that.

Ynez Rodriguez, former casino hostess from El Paso

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What part is the worst? It’s all the worst.

Hilda Gomez, casino maid for 18 years, also from El Salvador

This article describes the work lives of women like Maria, Ynez, and Hilda who are employed on the lowest rungs of Nevada’s gaming industry—as maids, janitors, change people, and hostesses. It explores the connection between their daily struggle for survival and self-realization and the economic and social forces associated with globalization. These are the women of the global labor market, women who are essential to Nevada’s booming tourist economy, but are by and large locked into low-paid, low-benefit jobs. Far from passive, they like others have “defied all odds to reinvent themselves and to open up new possibilities for their children” (Arriaza, 1997, p. 6).

These women are at the center of a study we began two years ago on women casino workers in the context of economic globalization. The study proposed three research questions:

1. What is the experience of women who work as maids, cooks, hostesses, change persons, waitresses, and dealers in casinos in northern Nevada?
2. What can their stories and the observations of helping service professionals and other community members who work with them tell us about the social and economic health of Nevada families and our community?
3. Do the women’s work experiences reflect factors associated with economic globalization?

Thus, in the spirit of sociologist C. Wright Mills (1959) and social work’s tradition of person-in-environment, we proposed to connect “the patterns of [individual] lives and the course of world history”—in this case, to understand women casino workers’ personal biographies within the context of the enormous economic, political, social, and technological changes occurring at the intersection of two millennia. Our objective was not to establish a causal relationship between globalization and the women’s lives, but rather to explore their multiple and complex interconnections, that is, to juxtapose realities and ideas in such a way as to stimulate others to consider the issues and formulate their own conclusions. As social work educators and activists, we also wished to narrow
the divide between academics and the working people of our community—and to challenge the invisibility and stigma that surrounds women’s casino work. In this, we sought to revive the legacy of Jane Addams, Florence Kelley, Edith Abbott, E. Franklin Frazier and others who—at another time of enormous economic change—devoted considerable effort to studying how working conditions affect the health of individuals, families, and communities, and used their findings in the fight for more just public policies.

Economic Globalization

Globalization, which Mander (1996) argues is the “most fundamental redesign of the planet’s political and economic arrangements since at least the industrial revolution” (p. 3), in its simplest terms is the unfettered flow of goods, technology, money, and people across international boundaries. To proponents, it is the key to a robust and resilient global economy, unparalleled prosperity, and world peace (Friedman, 1999; Micklethwait and Wooldridge, 2000). To facilitate market domination, globalization’s principal architects fight for a free global market, hail the elimination of regulatory controls, and oversee a vast machine of consumerism.

But, its critics argue, globalization has not brought the unprecedented prosperity it promised (Barnet and Cavanagh, 1994; Blau, 1999; Mander and Goldsmith, 1996). Poverty, environmental destruction, unemployment, and malnutrition have not only remained but grown. Long-term benefits increasingly accrue to a tiny minority of the population that feels little responsibility to the vast impoverished majority who labor for low wages and few benefits. Massive social aberrations—crime, alcoholism, violence—grow exponentially in societies cut loose from the former meanings of family and community. The old ways of community decision-making are lost and a body politic created in which corporate powers speak incomparably louder than transient workers. Community life suffers further as resources are infused into capital rather than community and social services. Globalized economies shred the life-giving exchanges among citizens as well. The buying and selling of local goods is replaced by purchases at Wal-Mart. Finally, McDonaldization—the
development of a monoculture that delivers the values, music, and consumer desires of the dominant powers—undermines diversity with its healthy exchange of ideas and products (Barnet and Cavanagh, 1994; Berry, 1996; Blau, 1999; Chomsky, 1999; Danaher, 1996; Danaher and Burbach, 2000; Hardt and Negri, 2000; Korten, 1995; Mander and Goldsmith, 1996; Shailor, 1998).

Urban scholar Saskia Sassen (1998) offers an especially complex analysis of the forces of economic globalization and one that is central to our own work. She faults most contemporary representations of the global economy as emphasizing only the "technical and abstract economic dynamics and [proceeding] as if these dynamics are inevitably gender neutral" (p. 82). In contrast, she focuses on the role of women workers within the global economy. Central to Sassen's analysis is the concept that global cities facilitate the transnational flow not only of capital but also of labor. She contends that the structure and processes of the global economy require both well-trained, well-paid professional and technical workers and an unlimited supply of low-wage service workers—that is, the janitors, housekeepers, and waitresses who make up a large percentage of those cities' work force and are disproportionately women, immigrants and people of color. She identifies the transnational flow of labor, along with the internationalization of capital and the "unbundling" of the nation-state, as fundamental aspects of the global economy, and describes global cities as strategic sites for understanding women's role within the global economy. In her words, they are "strategic instantiations of gendering . . . that make women visible and lead to greater presence and participation" (p. 82).

The Context: Nevada and the Gaming Industry

Economic globalization is most often associated with portable high-tech industries like electronics and clothing manufacture, and studied in locations like the US-Mexico border and in off-shore production sites like Saipan (Bonacich and Appelbaum, 2000; Bonacich, Cheng, Chinchilla, Hamilton and Ong, 1994; Chang, 2000; Cravey, 1998; Faison, 1999; Fernandez-Kelly, 1982; Tiano, 1994; Ward, 1990). But globalization has a strong domestic
impact as well. It clearly drives the capital-rich tourist/entertainment industry in global destinations like Los Angeles whose images of sun and fun are marketed throughout the world and whose workforce is international in every sense (Geron, 1997).

Nevada’s economic profile makes it a powerful research site for studying the impact of globalization. At first glance, Nevada and anything global appear an unlikely pairing. Nevada, after all, is famed for its monolithic industry—gaming, its unique policies relative to prostitution, and its incredible isolation. Millions of acres of sagebrush separate Nevadans from each other and the world. But as we studied the literature of globalization and compared it to what we knew of Nevada, we began to regard the state as, if not a global center, then a model for what economic globalization might look like in smaller U.S. cities.

Four characteristics of globalization stand out in Nevada as in other globalized sites:

1. The growth and dominance of megacorporations that direct enormous profit away from the communities that produced it and toward corporate empires;
2. A cheap and unlimited supply of maintenance workers, increasingly immigrants, women and people of color;
3. The decline of democratic political culture; and
4. The growth of social ills and a commensurate inability to address them.

First, control by megacorporations is central to the global economy, and in Nevada economic giants dominate the life of the state. Locally-owned casinos still exist, but for the last decade the big money has been in the hands of transnational corporations like Park Place Entertainment, MGM Mirage, Harrah’s, and the Mandalay Resort Group (Young, 2000; Vogel, 1997; Eadington and Cornelius, 1997). There are 300 registered casinos in Nevada, but nearly 80% of statewide gambling profits are earned by the 20 largest casinos on the Las Vegas strip (Henry, 1999). Megacasinos bring in incredible amounts of cash for their corporate owners. Says one writer, “A casino hotel can net more money each week than a plain hotel of similar size might net in a year or even two. Hilton’s four Nevada casinos bring in more than twice the
revenues of its 264 franchised hotels combined” (Vogel, 1997, p. 15). Business is booming for the gaming corporations. The total win (collected by Nevada casinos the amount casinos keep after paying all winners) in 2000 exceeded $10 billion statewide. Stocks of the top three gaming corporations went up an average of 28% from June 1999 to June 2000.

Second, Nevada like other parts of the global economy is characterized by low-wage, no-benefits jobs (in 2000, 85.6% of the state’s jobs could be found in the service industry) and a transient work force that includes many women, minorities, and immigrants. The booming casino economy attracts 4,000–6,000 workers to the state each month. This influx makes Nevada the fastest growing state in the union, and the one with the lowest percentage of native-born citizens (Christensen, 1995). The internationalization of the workforce is readily apparent—the Culinary Union estimates 50–80% of the workers in most Nevada casinos are Latino, many of them immigrants.

Third, Nevada’s political life is massively impacted by the contradiction between corporate wealth on the one hand and an unempowered transient population on the other. The gaming industry represented by its lobbying arm, the Nevada Resort Association, dominates the state legislature. “Whatever gaming wants, gaming gets,” observers say, noting that gaming has a “virtual lock on any tax decision” (Henry, 1999, p. 13). The gaming industry spends enormous sums in lobbying efforts to keep taxation rates low and regulations minimal. Nevada casinos are taxed at the lowest rate in the nation (6.25% compared to 9.25% in New Jersey, 19.5% in Michigan, and 25% in Connecticut). This income, combined with casino-generated sales tax revenue, provides 76% of the state’s income (Henry, 1999). In contrast to the massive political presence of gaming interests, the transient workforce votes at the lowest rate in the nation.

Fourth, Nevada suffers from a wide spectrum of social and health ills that characterize other globalized economies (Mander and Goldsmith, 1996; Chang, 2000). For example, divorce rates are high and child abuse ranks second in the nation as do other rates of violence (Sammon, 1999). In substance abuse indicators, Nevada ranks first nationally for all ages in per capita alcohol consumption and fourth in alcohol related deaths. Nevada’s legislature is
little inclined to spend state dollars addressing social ills, another parallel with globalized economies. The state ranks 43rd in state funds spent per resident on substance-abuse treatment and prevention and 49th in spending for child care (Christensen, 1995).

There are some crucial differences, however, between Nevada and other globalized work-sites. Las Vegas is the most highly unionized city in the nation, and the 50,000 member Culinary Workers Local 226 is a powerhouse. The history of organized labor in Las Vegas has been a colorful one, and in the early days, mob, entrepreneurial, and casino employee interests often intertwined. (For a long time, the Teamsters Pension Fund was the only place casino operators could go for money; Jimmy Hoffa made loans when banks refused to.) Those days are long gone, but undoubtedly are part of the reason for organized labor’s anomalous strength in Las Vegas.

Culinary, like unions around the country, was shaken in the eighties by internal weaknesses, on the one hand, and the fierce assault on workers’ right to organize and bargain collectively on the other. Determined to build a fighting and highly conscious local, leaders strengthened the Culinary Workers Health Fund, a benefit everyone was willing to fight for, and began organizing the increasingly immigrant work force—door-to-door. “One More Day” was the rallying cry of the six-year Frontier strike, a critical testing ground for the union. Rank and file workers, grown into experienced leaders, came away from the Frontier strike with a) the conviction that they could hold on “’til victory,” and b) the skills to make it happen. Today, Culinary’s strength is credited for driving up casino workers’ wages in Las Vegas to a level that allows many of its members to enjoy a middle-class lifestyle, including home ownership and the ability to send their children to college (Christensen, 1995; Miller, 2000; Marsten, 1995).

But while 48% of casino workers in the Las Vegas hotel-casino industry are organized, only 1.5% are organized in Reno. Culinary is working hard to change the Reno situation, and there are some early victories. Nevertheless, Reno’s workforce currently looks very much like the unorganized, disempowered workforces characteristic of most global work sites. The sharp contrast in labor’s Nevada presence provides analysts with a good ground on which to make assessments of union contributions to workers’ wages
and benefits. Jeff Waddoups (1998), professor of economics at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, compared casino wages in Las Vegas with those in Reno. Using the state wage survey conducted annually by the Nevada Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation (NDETR), Waddoups concluded that among highly unionized job categories (for example, maids, baggage porters, and kitchen helpers) Las Vegas workers made 40% more than their counterparts in Reno.

The Study

Saskia Sassen (1998) in her analysis of women workers within the global economy recommends the application of a broad range of critical perspectives to gain understanding of the complexity of women’s lived experience. She says of her own work: “[It] is a mere beginning—an analytical stage on which we need to place the details contributed by ethnographic research, cultural critiques, sociological surveys, and legal scholarship on men and women in their many specific conditions and subjectivities” (p. 83).

With this in mind, we designed a phenomenological study (Collaizzi, 1978) that, on the one hand, would produce richly detailed descriptions of the lives of women casino workers (i.e., their “specific conditions and subjectivities”) and, on the other, would locate the women’s lives within an analysis of economic globalization. In this respect, the study’s purpose was both descriptive and analytical. It was also exploratory as women’s casino work to our knowledge has not been previously studied, let alone analyzed in terms of its relationship to a larger economic context.

We gathered information in three phases. In the first phase, we interviewed 45 key informants with expertise, experience and/or information relevant to the study. They included current and former casino workers, social service providers, labor organizers, economists, community leaders, and personnel associated with a university-based gaming research institute. These preliminary discussions guided the development of the next two phases of data collection.

In the second phase we conducted focus groups of human service workers, educators, health care workers, and members of
the Latino community who had professional and/or community contact with women casino workers and their families. Focus group members were selected using a snowball sampling technique. We conducted five focus groups with a total of 28 members during this phase of data collection. Information gained from focus groups informed development of interview questions used in the final phase of data collection. Focus group members were also helpful in identifying potential participants for individual interviews.

In the final phase of data collection, still in progress, we conducted 2–4 hour semi-structured interviews with women currently employed in casinos. In interviews of non-English speaking workers, we used a bi-lingual interpreter. Referrals and a snowball sampling technique were used to recruit research participants. Interview questions were open-ended and focused on the women's work history, the nature of their work, and its effect on family and community. (See Table 1 for demographic information about interviewees.) The findings reported in this article are based on interviews with 20 women currently working in casinos. Final sample size will be determined by saturation of data, that is, interviews will be discontinued when no new themes emerge in the women's narratives (Strauss and Corbin, 1990).

Focus groups and individual interviews were audiotaped in their entirety and transcribed for analysis. Using methods based on grounded theory (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Strauss and Corbin, 1990), transcripts from each were coded and their primary themes identified. These themes were then compared across both focus groups and individual interviews in order to identify universal and ideographic content. Identification and refinement of the final list of themes was achieved through a process of constant comparative analysis (Strauss and Corbin, 1990). They were then analyzed and interpreted in relationship to the three central research questions guiding the study.

The study's limitations include the possibility of a biased sample and the non-generalizability of its findings. The sample was both self-selected and relatively small, and focus groups members may have had contact with particular sub-populations of workers.
Table 1

Sample Demographics (N = 20)

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<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Range: 31–66</th>
<th>Mean: 47</th>
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<td>Caucasians: 7</td>
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<td>Chinese: 1</td>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single: 3</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>NA: 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Current Income</td>
<td>Range: $5,000–9,900 to $25,000–29,900</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean: $20,000–24,999</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years Working in Casinos</td>
<td>Range: 1.5–31</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean: 15.2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Findings—The Women’s Narratives

Women in the casino industry work as housekeepers, janitors, laborers, change persons, buspersons, cooks, hostesses, waitresses, dealers, room clerks, pit bosses, supervisors, secretaries, and once in a great while as middle managers. In this article, we focus on women in the low-end casino jobs: housekeepers, change persons, janitors, and restaurant hostesses. These are the women who make the beds, clean the bathrooms, vacuum, pick up the trash, provide change, and in general make the gaming industry
run. The jobs are low- or no-tip positions and pay little more than minimum wage in Reno’s mostly non-unionized casinos. Nearly all of the women who occupy these positions are immigrants, and in Reno they are mainly Latinas.

**Becoming a Maid**

Women who came to work in Reno from El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico, and border areas like El Paso brought with them grief, despair, hope, and incredible force of will. Maria Ortiz chose Nevada as most did because she knew someone who lived there.

I knew some people [in Reno from a] town [near my home] so I came here. When I came, the [couple] I start living with live in a very small apartment, so I have to sleep on the floor. (Tears) I don’t want to remember. I didn’t speak much English and I tried to go back. And the next year some of my colleagues were killed. Monsignor Romero got killed so I knew I couldn’t go back.

When Maria applied to work in a casino, the only job she could get was cleaning rooms. This is the normal pattern, as a social worker who works with casino families explained:

*If you’re Latino, you can apply for maid, you can apply for dishwasher, those are the main jobs that you find. You can find [them] quickly. And if you speak some English, you can [be] . . . a change person, but that’s not frequent.*

For nearly all the women applying to be a casino maid was not a difficult decision; it was a matter of survival. Because of this most women were two-sided in assessing casino work, and though critical of conditions they encountered, were well aware that many families’ livelihood depended on it. “I think casinos—well, they provide,” is how one Latino focus group member summed it up. Continuing, he said:

*Because the first thing we do when we move up here, [we find] a place that provides. And [casinos] do that on a quick basis . . . and no education required. It’s just physical labor. . . . It’s not as hard as the things that we’re used to.*

Many had worked at harder jobs, like those in the fields. Another focus group member, a social worker originally from El Salvador, seconded that assessment:
Compared to that back-breaking work, casino work is good. Like workers picking vegetables—sometimes they lose fingers and hands because of the machines. Compared to that kind of work, casino work is heaven. When these families come here, it is a big change for them. They actually have a home, they can live with their families, their kids can go to school—they’re normal.

Even though casino jobs might be easier, cleaner and less dangerous than farm work, none of the workers we interviewed described their current work as "heaven." At best, they singled out certain aspects of their jobs as enjoyable (for example, working with other women). Still for many immigrant workers, casino work did represent a welcome opportunity. But in most cases workers considered it only the first step toward gaining economic security—it met immediate needs, but wasn’t generally viewed as a long-term solution.

Work Conditions

Casino jobs, the women said, though easy to come by, were mostly hard, physical labor. If they were maids, they pushed heavy carts piled with laundry and were assigned 15 rooms to clean in an 8-hour shift. If they worked on the casino floor as change women, they wore heavy money belts and contended with the overwhelming noise and smoke. A family resource center director, who himself had worked in several casinos, noted:

*It's grueling . . . and I've noticed that everything is regimented. Let's say, a dishwasher. It's relentless work for eight hours with two 15 minute breaks and a half hour lunch. And the general management style is punitive. Boy, imagine lugging dishes around all day or bussing tables all day. But in addition you've got the lack of psychological support.*

Most women found casino work traumatic; as one said, "The managers think they own you." Corroborating the workers' perspective, a social work family therapist commented:

*Women casino workers I work with are depressed, they hate the job. Only one enjoyed the job and [that was because of the] good health insurance. But it's rare. It's an oppressive environment the way they are treated by the employers and also belittled by consumers. Shift work's effect on family life is devastating.*
Women often talked about the race and gender discrimination they encountered, carefully distinguishing its nature and whether it came from customers, employees, or management:

Yes, racial remarks are really there. You're not treated with a lot of respect. . . . Agua! Or Hurry up! They're not polite. [In our countries] we are taught to treat other people with a lot of respect. It makes it really hard for people working for the casinos. You're nothing, you're . . . a bus person. You're just here.

The most universal complaint, however, was with wages. Wages in Reno's non-unionized casinos are low and back-of-the-house workers begin at minimum wage. "It's absolutely amazing," a social worker observed, "families of five or six who live on $700 a month." Although health care benefits are available and are cited as a great boon by women in higher categories of employment, many of these families can't afford them.

Listening to the women describe their work and its impact on families and community, we could not help but think of the term alienation. Their vivid and often heart-rending accounts of daily work life echoed classic Marxist descriptions of the alienation of workers and with it a sense of powerlessness, meaninglessness, social isolation, and self-estrangement.

Contributing to the women's sense of alienation was their feeling of invisibility and the lack of appreciation for a job well done. In addition, little respect was paid to the women themselves, either as workers or as persons. A hostess said:

Well, it's like you would do something nice or you're always on the ball, working hard, not even a thank you. I guess money for me is not a lot, but a thank you is a lot, because I know they're seeing my work. . . . I know I'm being appreciated.

Alienation in the workplace was exacerbated by the fact that the women felt insecure in their jobs and feared being fired for some minor infraction. Casino work is bounded by dozens of regulations and violation of any of them can lead to punishment or termination. This hyper-regulated work environment characterizes other globalized work sites, like off-shore production (Ward, 1990; Lim, 1980; Tiano, 1994; Faison, 1999). A sense of alienation also resulted from the fact that in Reno these women
found themselves in dead-end positions that offer little to their professional or personal development. Nor are they especially rewarding in terms of services offered or products produced. As one casino worker described it,

>You're basically [working] in an industry that is taking money from people to make money for the owners. It has no redeeming qualities.

Health and Mental Health Issues

Women casino workers are chronically exhausted, particularly if they have families. Both the women and focus group members commented repeatedly that mothers with families "stay exhausted all the time." As one worker described it:

>After they get out, they clean the house, they make the dinner for the husband and the kids, they take care of the kids, and after that they go into the laundry, they iron the clothes, and you can find this woman is still taking care of the house around 11 pm. I don't know what time they get to sleep. It's very amazing. These people are so strong. I feel very sorry for them, because . . . god!

There were also strained backs and sore feet from lifting wet laundry; knee problems from bending over beds to change them and over toilets and bathtubs to clean them; and skin, sinus, and lung problems from using caustic cleaning agents. Frequently, these work-related health problems went unreported. One woman explained, "Why risk losing your job?"

Casino work took its toll in terms of the psychological health of the women workers as well. Depression and despair were most often mentioned by focus group members. A director of a family resource center and a former casino worker himself told us:

>Working [in a casino] is an eye-opening experience because—sure I was a college kid—but there was a distinct separation between someone who was upward bound or moving forward and someone who was stagnating. And you could see—whether it's depression or just sadness—every time the work day would be over, I would say, "Thank god I don't have to do this the remainder of my life."

Drug, alcohol, and gambling addictions are a part of the casino environment, and workers as well as customers fall prey to them. A former cocktail waitress commented:
Women Casino Workers

If you’re working graveyard, trying to stay awake—you’re taking some kind of speed. People who work swing-shift... they get drink tokes. So they party until two o’clock in the morning and then go home to the kids.

Different populations of workers experienced these problems in different ways. Young workers—waitresses, hostesses, dealers—were more likely to participate in after-work socializing which included drinking, using drugs, and gambling. In the housekeeping department, however, it was a different story. None of our focus group informants identified immigrant housekeepers as having drug and alcohol problems. As one noted: “Those moms in housekeeping—they’re tired [when they get off work]. They go home to their children.” On the other hand, men in low-paying jobs were described as vulnerable:

The men [say] that after getting off work they want to relax so they hang around their buddies and drink and that’s how they get hooked... Some were gambling their entire paychecks. They were afraid to go home because they had a wife and children... But I’ve only noticed [this] among the men. The women, they either don’t have that issue or they haven’t said so, but I don’t think it’s a problem.

Strategies for Survival

Finally, although life was hard, we would be remiss if we did not communicate the strength of will of the women, their laughter, their strong attachment to family and friends, and their many strategies for survival. Global giants’ power is great, but as Foucault writes, it is not hegemonic: “In the relations of power, there is necessarily the power of resistance, for if there were no possibility of resistance—of violent resistance, of escape, of ruse, of strategies that reverse the situation—there would be no relations of power” (quoted in Foote and Frank, 1999, p. 73). One worker commented in a similar vein on powerful institutions: “They touch you here, they touch you there, they touch you everywhere.” We were interested in how women workers resisted that touch and what their strategies for survival were.

First, the women were extraordinarily hard workers and in this way guaranteed their own and others’ continued employment. “They know the Latina women, they work hard,” a former change person said, explaining why employers hired them.
Women helped each other out and repeatedly spoke with warmth and concern about their fellow workers:

_I was with a group of women who really helped each other and it was really hard work and there was no way anybody would have been able to do it [alone]._

They also carefully assessed when and how they could resist. While many women were fearful and kept their heads down, most felt keeping quiet was not always a good strategy. They criticized workers who "don't realize that there are things they need to be aware of and they have a lot of rights." As one young worker explained,

_I got along with everybody and with the supervisors. I never felt intimidated by the supervisors. I never let them know I was afraid of them. Most of them like to know that they're in charge, and I never let any of them know that. Yes, they were my supervisors, but they were not going to make me feel less._

We were surprised to find that everyone we spoke with thought favorably of unions. Reno is a strongly anti-union town, but these immigrant workers were aware of the considerably higher wages Las Vegas workers were earning and looked forward to working in union shops themselves. In this way they are representative of a new, more militant U.S. labor force built of women, minorities, and immigrants (Figueroa, 1998; Gordon, 2000; Tiano, 1994; Sassen, 1998; Hondagneu-Sotelo, 1994). As one former casino worker commented:

_I wasn't working in [a union casino], but I've heard people talk. They say it's better . . . they say the union pays better so I think it's a good idea._

Outside of work immigrant women struggled to find solutions to problems congruent with their deeply held values. Women spoke with pride of how the immigrant community maintained its cohesiveness:

_Hispanics [may] live ten or twelve in the same house, but they have a house. They have a refrigerator. They have a stove. They cook. They buy their food together. They have a barbecue. They have fun—listen to music. They live like a family even if they're not family._
Discussion: Economic globalization and casino women’s experience

Returning to the study’s third question—do these women’s work narratives provide an example of women’s work within a global economy?—perhaps the best way to address this question is to examine the effects of an industry in which profits have become the sole measure of corporate success and workers are viewed as simply a means to that end. This was evident in the stories of both focus group members and the women workers. It helps explain workers’ feeling of invisibility to management and their pervasive sense of being “stuck.” Several veterans said apologetically that they never intended to stay in casino work, “it just happened.” It accounts, too, for the alienation workers experience and the deep-seated depression and despair so often associated with their sense of having no future. It may also explain the rudeness and indifference so many customers show to workers. Why respect workers when it is obvious that management does not?

The casinos’ philosophy, “profits over people,” to use Noam Chomsky’s (1999) apt phrase, is heightened by the growing multinational character of the gaming industry. Reno, formerly known for its locally-owned casinos, whose owners grew rich but also knew their employees, is now dominated by multinational corporations, familiar in name, but faceless in ownership. Instead of investing in the community, absentee owners distribute Nevada casino profits throughout the corporate empire. When they do sponsor community events they are usually designed for profit and public relations rather than community development. This lack of community leadership breeds cynicism, hopelessness, and individualism on the part of citizens who ask themselves, “why invest in a community in which political and corporate powers are only looking out for their own interests?”

Further, northern Nevada casinos’ strong anti-union philosophy and their insistence on paying the lowest possible wages jeopardizes both families and local social service programs. Working people, including the job seekers who flow into the state in large numbers, have little or no margin of safety, and in crisis must depend on an overburdened social service system. It is
noteworthy that Reno with low unemployment has a very high utilization of social services (Nassir, 1994).

Sassen's (1998) contention that globalization enables women to have "presence if not power" raises an important question: are there work-related opportunities for women casino workers? Casinos, as our informants noted, do provide jobs. They also provide workers with a social life and contact with other women. Many women identified working with other women as the best part of their job. This camaraderie sometimes extended into their private lives and included cooperative living and childcare arrangements. In addition, casino work by providing women with paychecks contributed to their sense of agency, of being in charge of their own lives, and sometimes gave them the means to escape violent domestic relationships.

Nowhere is women’s potential power more apparent than in unions. Immigrant workers are the fastest growing segment of the U.S. working class (Figueroa, 1998). They are building, in labor’s language, a new union movement, led not by workers in heavy industry but by low wage service workers—poxually minority, immigrant, and female. The experience of the Culinary Union in Las Vegas and Los Angeles, the impressive victories of the Service Employees International Union in organizing California home health care workers, and the effective advocacy of immigrant worker centers all speak to the critical role of these workers in rebuilding the labor movement (Gordon, 1998; Figueroa, 1998; Geron, 1997). Although workers in Reno are on the whole unorganized, union activity is increasing and women are playing a central role in it. The president of Culinary Local 86, for example, is an immigrant, a grandmother, and an organizer of surpassing ability.

**Conclusion**

As feminists, activists, and social work educators, we hope this study investigating large economic processes through the lived experiences of working people sheds light on how women casino workers and their families and communities are affected by both local and global forces. We also hope that it can help strengthen the practice of the profession. We want it to serve
as an example of the value of linking "personal troubles with social issues" (Mills, 1959). We also feel that social workers, who combine front-line experience with social and economic analysis and commitment to change, are in an excellent position to influence public policy. We encourage the profession to join in the public and scholarly debates on globalization and to confront the inequities it has created.

Finally, we want to say that we're greatly inspired by the stories told to us by the women who participated in our study and gained a new appreciation—and indeed, fresh hope—of their and our own potential to bring about positive social change. Through their creative strategies of survival, their courageous resistance to oppressive conditions, their increasing investment in unions, they affirm Noam Chomsky's (1996) belief that human political activity can make the world we live in vastly more humane. In his words, "... If [we] act like there is no possibility of change for the better, [we] guarantee that there will be no change for the better" (p. 16).

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The National Domestic Workers Union and the War on Poverty

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This article explores values, strategies, and tensions found within the War on Poverty and examines a War on Poverty-supported initiative, the National Domestic Workers Union (NDWU). The article makes the argument that the NDWU is illustrative of the War on Poverty in that each held structurally based descriptions of poverty and individually based prescriptions. The article explores the relationship of domestic service to the institutions of racism, classism, and sexism and how the NDWU strategies of training, service, and advocacy-like those of the War on Poverty-sought to address the needs of individual domestic workers while circumventing larger and more complicated issues.

Along with establishing government programs to reduce poverty, hunger, and disease, the War on Poverty lowered barriers to political participation and supported education and training for African Americans. Underpinning much of the War on Poverty was the notion that grass roots social action needed to be cultivated so that a new generation of reformers could move from the neighborhoods into a larger public sphere (Henry, 1978; Katz, 1986; Katz, 1989; Moynihan, 1967).

Although the U.S. government’s involvement in social services expanded helping poor Americans, analysis of the War on Poverty suggested a program riddled with contradictions. The primary inconsistency involved the difference between the analysis of poverty and program development. Specifically, the War on Poverty held a structurally-based description of poverty with service-based prescriptions. In this regard, David Austin (1973) questioned, “the issue is why a service strategy with a structural
diagnosis” (see discussion in Katz, 1989, p. 91). The few strategies that were structurally based focused on lack of opportunity, not on inequality. Toward developing a new generations of reformers, the War on Poverty supported community action but not its most powerful tool, conflict (Katz, 1989; Marris, Martin, & Rein, 1967).

This article explores the values, strategies, and tensions inherent within the War on Poverty by examining a specific War on Poverty supported initiative, the National Domestic Workers Union (NDWU) housed in Atlanta, as well as highlighting the work of the NDWU and its founding director, Dorothy Bolden. The information was derived from an examination of the archived original papers held by the Pullen Library Southern Labor Archives. Beyond two brief interviews with Bolden in Lerner’s (1992) *Black Women in White America* and Seifer’s (1976) *Nobody Speaks For Me*, Bolden has received little scholarly attention. Yet domestic service in the United States continues to hold significant implications for most low-skilled women of color and is implicated in the institutions of racism, classism, and sexism. To place the NDWU in context, the article begins with an overview of domestic work. This overview ends in the late 1970s and thus does not explore immigrants’ expansion into the field of domestic work.

**Race, Class, and Gender and the Domestic Worker as “Other”**

Between 1890–1960, in the south, the majority of employed African American women were domestic workers (Katzman, 1978). Dubois described this work pattern as “a despised race to a despised calling” (in Rollins, 1985). Practices established under slavery continued to affect the association between race and domestic work. Specifically, black women ran the households for whites under slavery, and this norm continued after abolition for those whites who could afford it. Indeed, as Katzman (1978) suggested, in the south, domestic service was integral to the maintenance of its racial caste structure.

Slavery also provided the context for what has been considered by Hill Collins (2000) a key controlling image of African American domestic workers, the “mammy.” As represented by the character in Margaret Mitchell’s *Gone With the Wind*, this persona holds repercussions for domestic workers today. The
Mammy, who was faithful and obedient and loved her white children more then her own, continues to be the yardstick by which domestic workers are often measured.

Domestic service does not provide a gateway toward a better life. Rather, it reinforces racial stereotypes, which helps to maintain a social, racial, and economic underclass. In this regard a theory of poverty could be invoked, suggesting that poverty exists, in part, so that the poor are forced to service the non-poor (Gans, 1991).

Domestic work has always been women’s work and women’s secondary gender position within society and the household are associated with its low status (Dill, 1994; Katzman, 1978; Rollins, 1985). However, through an exploration of the 19th century’s Cult of Domesticity, Van Raaporst (1988) suggested that domestic work was actually less than women’s work. Supporting women as demure, the 19th century medical field warned against women’s engagement in physical and household labor. This caution was heeded. Van Raaporst argued that this warning marked the point in time at which domestic workers once again—as during slavery—lost their identity as women. Thus, the nature of household work relegated domestic workers to a gender status of less than women (Van Raaporst, 1988). Further supporting this view is Rollins’ (1985) claim that domestic workers became surrogates for, or extensions of, the employer’s least feminine self.

An exploration into the existentialist construct of the “Other” provides an interesting framework for exploring the implications of race, class, and gender with domestic work, and helps to interpret the role that domestic workers held in many households. The concept of Other focuses on the idea that individuals are viewed from two perspectives, that of their own self and how they appear to the Other (Hagel, 1807; Sartre, 1992). deBeauvoir extended the concept of the Other to explore reciprocity. Specifically, she explained, “to me, I am self, you are other; but to you, you are self, and I am other” (de Beauvoir, 1952, p.). However, according to de-Beauvoir this reciprocity does not exist among men and women. Both men and women view men as the subject and women as the object or in the subordinate role of the Other.

There are several interesting ways in which Othering is featured in domestic service. First, consider that often a domestic
worker's race, class, and gender in themselves supports Othering. However, even if gender, race, or class is shared, within her work environment, a domestic worker is never subject, and becomes Other to the women and families that employ her. Second, either through an initiated conversation by an employer or through observation, domestic workers often gain access to intimate knowledge about very private aspects of their employers' lives (Dill, 1994; Kousha, 1995; Kousha, 1999; Rollins, 1985). To protect her status an employer might consider it in her best interest to view the domestic worker as one who might provide comfort, but not as an individual who has thoughts and feelings and is able to make judgements, that is as Other.

The Othering of domestic workers is also evidenced in Rollins' (1985) characterization of the relationship between domestic workers and their employers, as maternalism. Rollins explained that maternalism, not unlike Othering, has the dual function of protecting and nurturing as well as degrading and insulting. "The female employer with her motherliness, protectiveness, and generosity is expressing in a distinctly feminine way her lack of respect for the domestic as an autonomous, adult employee" (p. 186) and as such ensures the domestic worker's role as Other.

Rollins' (1985) discussions with women employers about their evaluation of domestic employees provides further evidence of maternalism. Employers indicated that they held high value for domestic workers personal attributes and their personal relationship. In contrast, domestic workers reported feeling at the whim of employers who may want to chit-chat or share their burdens (Dill, 1994; Rollins, 1985). Thus, as Kousha (1999) explained, in addition to cooking, cleaning, and childcare, domestic workers were often forced to respond to the emotional needs of their employer.

In exploring relationships between employers and employees, employers' views of employees ranged from invisible to "like family," a term often used by employers. In this regard, employers indicated that they sought intimate relationships with their employees. However, in households where the employee was viewed "like family," little mutuality was actually found. Instead, relationships tended to be steeped within the power
dynamics that characterized maternalism and women as Other (Dill, 1994; Rollins, 1985).

Domestic Work as Contract Work and Unionization

Domestic work also raises a variety of labor issues and important implications stem from the exclusion of domestic work from wage-an-hour legislation. Foremost, domestic work has always existed outside of the purview of wage, hour, and safety regulations. When state legislators began to limit the workday for women, domestic work was disregarded (Van Raaporst, 1988). In order to pacify the racist sentiment of southern Democrats, the Social Security Act excluded employment sectors dominated by African Americans such as domestic work (Williams, 1986). Moreover, there are no standards for domestic work. Uniformity does not exist in terms of demands, expectations, and remuneration. Thus, firings and reprimands can be capricious and arbitrary, and there is no process for mediation (Van Raaporst, 1988).

Isolation is perhaps the most difficult aspect of domestic work for the workers themselves as well as for addressing the labor-related issues. Domestic workers must bargain individually, without the sense of the collective. Additionally, domestic workers lack institutional support for addressing sexual and other harassment (Rollins, 1985). Finally, because domestic workers tended to work in areas outside of their geographic community, their isolation is further exacerbated. In interviews, domestic workers often talked about long and lonely bus rides taking them away from their family and community (Bolden, 1965–1979; Rollins, 1985).

Unionization and Domestic Service

Women led the organizing of the U.S. garment industry and played critical roles in the development of union activity in numerous sectors. Yet except for perhaps in public education, women historically have been excluded from union leadership, and women-dominated employment sectors largely have been left out of unionization drives (Foner & Lewis, 1989). Despite these obstacles, there were attempts to unionize domestic workers.
In 1916 Jane Street founded and became secretary to IWW Local No. 113, a Denver Domestic Worker's Industrial Union. Working to undermine the employment agencies, known as employment sharks, which served as paid intermediaries for employment placement, she developed her own employment agency. Within a year she attracted enough domestic workers that a supply-and-demand strategy enabled Local No 113 to drive up wages. As a way of circumventing the practice of employees living with families, Street organized communal housing. Toward improving domestic workers' treatment, her employment service asked employers to do such things as speak gently to employees. If employers did not meet demands, Street advised them that they would be blacklisted. Inspired by Street's success, six other locals were started across the country, however, none of these efforts solidified (Van Raaporst, 1988).

Organizing was further thwarted by the development of a collective response from the business community. For example, in Atlanta during the 1950s, the white community ended domestic workers' attempts to unionize by getting landlords to raise the rents of striking domestic workers. Moreover, the city passed an ordinance that required all union members to pay a 25 dollar license fee (Van Raaporst, 1988).

It is important to note that not all resistance was collective. Indeed the literature is full of numerous examples of individual acts of resistance in which women sought to address their own status and the status of the field (see for example Dill, 1994; Katzman, 1978; Rollins, 1985).

Domestic Workers' Views About Their Work

In interviews with domestic workers, most expressed ambivalence about their work (Katzman, 1978, Rollins, 1985). On the positive side the women interviewed tended to relate their feelings to the household in which they were employed. Other advantages included flexible hours, not being subjected to the humiliations associated with a segregated work environment, and when no one was home being able to act as their own boss. Negative experiences were also closely tied to the household in
which the women worked. Drawbacks included difficult work, light housekeeping becoming heavy work, removal of breaks, increase in expectations on the part of the employer, as well as low pay and long commutes (Dill, 1988; Katzman, 1978; Rollins, 1985).

Dorothy Bolden and the National Domestics Workers Union

Born in 1824, Dorothy Bolden, was the granddaughter of a slave and a third-generation domestic worker, who grew-up in the Vine City neighborhood of Atlanta. She started domestic work at nine and quit 41 years later to devote herself full-time to the NDWU. In her mid-twenties she was arrested for talking back to her employer who fired her and whom she described as the meanest person she knew. On her way home from work, Bolden was picked up by the police. The officers told her that she was sick in the head for talking back and sent her to a mental institution where she stayed for five nights. Bolden credits her uncle who knew a judge for her release (Bolden, 1965–1979).

Bolden was married twice and bore ten children; three of whom died in infancy. When she was not working, she said she was in school checking on her children, working with the PTA, and counseling other parents. Her first organized activist experience actually revolved around her children’s schooling. When the Atlanta superintendent sought to move all of the classes in her children's all African American school to a condemned building, Bolden vowed that she would never let that happen. She organized parents and ministers not only to protest against the use of the condemned school, but also to fight for a new building. She and her group kept up the pressure, and six years later a new building was opened. “I really gave our superintendent a hard way to go. I think he was dumbfounded to see that low-income people like us were really concerned with quality education” (Bolden, 1965–1979, 1624/31). According to Bolden, she did not know how she assumed a leadership role, just that people would call her when anything happened in the neighborhood (Seifer, 1976).

The civil rights movement unified Bolden’s interest in social justice and domestic workers. Active in the Student Non-Violent
Coordinating Committee (SNCC), she served as the liaison between the planning committee and domestic workers. Specifically, she provided outreach and education to domestic workers about the strategies and tactics of the civil rights movement. She also conducted voter registration drives with domestic workers. Bolden described the civil rights struggle as something that had really gotten "into my blood and has not gotten out" (Seifer, 1976, p. 157). Although Reverend Martin Luther King Jr. died before she began organizing domestic workers, she indicated that "all of the inspiration came from him" (Seifer, 1976, p. 157).

Bolden first thought about full-time organizing in the 1960s but was concerned about losing her income. However, financial constraints became less controlling when the advent of school integration brought larger issues to Bolden. Bolden explained: "I knew that the maids weren’t making anything for anyone to talk about sending their children across town. We couldn’t afford the twenty-cents round trip for the bus." Moreover, "We couldn’t integrate the schools out there barefooted. Cause they weren’t making no money. I didn’t want to integrate my child into a society like that [white society]. Have no shoes or decent clothes to put on" (Bolden, 1965–1979, 1624/31).

In 1968 founding director Dorothy Bolden, with the help of a young civil rights attorney, Maynard Jackson, called the first meeting of the National Domestic Workers Union. A handful of church leaders, activists, and domestic workers started the NDWU, and later that year the NDWU incorporated for the purpose of elevating the status of domestic workers. Membership was a dollar and a current voter registration card. By the end of 1969 there were dozens of members in good standing.

That domestic workers were not represented in the public sphere was of paramount concern to Bolden. She explained, "societies’ unwavering negative attitudes toward domestic work [are] reinforced by change agent forces [who are] unresponsive to the needs of individuals in domestic service occupation" (Bolden, 1965–1979, taped interview). In fact Bolden first approached the National Urban League with the suggestion that they organize domestic workers, and while the urban league supported the idea they were not willing to take on the project (Bolden, 1965–1979).
There were about 30,000 domestic workers in Atlanta; 2,000 joined the NDWU. According to Bolden, the word "union" in the organization's title proved disconcerting to many domestic workers who, since their families depended on their income, were fearful of strikes and other traditional union tactics (Bolden, 1965–1979).

Bolden also recognized that many African Americans believed that women should walk away from domestic work, an argument articulated by activist Maria Miller Stewart in 1832 (Guy-Sheftall, 1995). Yet she also knew that in many cases that was financially impossible. Having entered the field herself for economic necessity, Bolden argued that thousands of African American women were "hopelessly dependent upon the lowest economic system [domestic work] in order to obtain the bare essentials for human need" (Bolden, 1965–1979, 1625/53). For Bolden, household work had become a necessary evil in need of improvement and not something from which one could walk away.

Therefore, Bolden stated that she never saw the NDWU engaging in strikes nor as operating from a traditional union structure (Bolden, 1965–1979). Indeed the focus of the NDWU was on training, social service, and to a lesser extent, wages and advocacy. As she explained, "I didn’t organize just on money. I organized to update the field, to make it more professional" (Bolden, 1965–1979, 1625/54).

Professionalization of Housework

Training

Bolden believed that the best way to elevate wages was through professionalization. With this goal in mind, she sought and received federal Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) money through the local Community Action Agency to initiate a homemakers' skills training program, which was funded with between 20,000–30,000 dollars annually from 1969 and 1978. Bolden described the program as oriented toward the training of inner city housekeepers. The homemakers' skills training program reflected two important beliefs held by Bolden. First, low-income women had to learn skills to help them in their private roles as
mother and homemakers. In this regard, Bolden argued that “the lack of home management knowledge and skills is a major factor in intensifying and perpetuating poverty” (Bolden, 1975). Second, the perception of domestic service needed to be elevated in society as a whole so that domestic workers could take pride in their profession and their work (Bolden, 1965–1979).

The exact nature of the homemakers’ skills training program depended somewhat upon the year and OEO funding, however, the program’s core remained constant. In general, a twelve-week training course was offered regularly to women working as domestics. Enrollment tended to range between 10–20 participants. The training curriculum reflected Bolden’s interest in supporting the professional and private lives of women and included homemaking, child development and child care, budgeting, nutrition, human relations, and health and safety (Bolden, 1965–1979). The course work also included math and reading skills. Additional aspects of the curriculum were geared exclusively toward the women’s private lives, such as goal setting and family planning. Over time the training was divided into two tracks: one for women who worked in private households and the second for women who worked in institutions. The trainers were described, as case managers by Bolden and from the archives appear to be paraprofessionals, many of whom were graduates of the course. For the skills sections of the course, Bolden drew on area social services such as the literacy council (Bolden, 1965–1979).

Later Bolden developed a program for non-working women living in public housing that provided training in home management, nutrition, housekeeping, sewing, budgeting, and parenting skills. In addition the program sought to create community cohesiveness, including a tenants’ association with block captains. The primary goal of the tenants’ association was to develop a welcoming committee that would disseminate information gained from the homemakers’ skills training course. The committee also organized clean-up projects and activities for children (Bolden, 1965–1979).

In addition, the NDWU developed an informational booklet concerning social security, minimum wage, and unemployment benefits. The booklet encouraged domestic workers to ask for
overtime payments and not to exceed the negotiated workday without pay. One section outlined tasks that household workers should not perform such as standing on ladders or scrubbing floors on one’s hands or knees. Employees were further reminded that they should be treated with respect, and if not, they needed to alter their work situation. The final section of the booklet was entitled *roles for maids* and suggested to women that they needed to be dependable, to keep a neat appearance, and to exercise careful use of language (Bolden, 1965–1979).

**Maids Honor Day**

Bolden believed that official recognition of the efforts of domestic workers could be used to help counter “a master/slave relationship between employee and employer” (Bolden, 1965–1979, 1628/97). Specifically, employers needed to remember that employees were not only humans, but also individuals with unique issues and demands. And employees needed to be reminded that their work had meaning (Bolden, 1965–1979).

The cornerstone of Bolden’s public recognition strategy was the “Maids Honor Day” celebration which began in 1970. Maids Honor Day was essentially a banquet with all of the trimmings including speakers and awards. Employers and employees attended the dinner together. One of the speakers, Sony Walker, a regional director for the OEO, expressed a sentiment that captures one of Bolden’s key motivations in organizing the NDWU when he said, “the dignity of work is as much a part of the four freedoms as the right to work (Bolden, 1965–1979, 1627/76).

A second feature of Maids Honor Day was an award given to the “domestic worker of the year.” Employers who sent letters describing the unselfish work of their household employees nominated workers. One letter discussed how a domestic worker made nursing home visits to the mother of her employer, and another employer sent a financial contribution with his nomination, to, as he said, “sweeten the pot.” Hundreds of these letters remain in the archived files. The certificate given to the employee discussed her service, energy, and dedication, as well as indicating that by example she had brought “respect and admiration to domestic employment” (Bolden, 1965–1979 1628/97).
Service

The NDWU also provide homemakers’ skills trainees with social services, such as information and referral activities, limited case management services, and mentoring. The mentoring program involved pairing women having difficulty with highly competent graduates of the homemakers’ skills training course. Mentors worked with individuals on such activities as budgeting, nutrition, and parenting skills. Mentors often said that they prevented women from making large financial mistakes such as taking out high interest loans. Mentors also acted as a go-between for the families and other social service workers (Bolden, 1965–1979).

The homemakers’ skills training sessions also informed women about support services available to them such as legal aid, counseling, and additional tutoring. In addition, numerous activities were directed toward enhancing the participants’ self-image, self-awareness, and abilities to set goals. Finally, field trips included visits to such places as the comprehensive health center clinic where women were able to procure birth control (Bolden, 1965–1979).

Advocacy

As director of the NDWU, Bolden became the spokesperson for 30,000 domestic workers in Atlanta. In this regard she advocated for services that would improve the quality of life for poor African American working women and sought to represent the reality of issues facing her constituency. As she explained, “I was out there for a cause and a reason. The reason was women and the cause was there wasn’t anything to live on” (Bolden, 1956–1979, 1624/31).

Bolden belonged to numerous local, state, and national organizations, and spoke at conferences and events across the country. Moreover, she maintained close relationships with such prominent Georgians such as Governor Herman Talmudge, Senator Sam Nunn, and Lillian Carter mother of President Jimmy Carter. The closeness of these relationships is evidenced in the warm banter and mutual respect shown in their correspondence. Many of Bolden’s letters are requests for support. Specifically, she asked support for such items as a particular piece of legislation, public
policy, or funding for her own program. She also worked on an employment project with the Black Congressional Caucus (Bolden, 1965–1979).

In the 1970s Bolden was appointed by Health Education and Welfare Secretary Elliot Richardson to the Committee on the Status of Women’s Rights and Responsibilities. As a member of that committee she consistently raised issues facing poor women. Moreover, she reminded committee members that they needed to be thinking about women such as domestic workers who were surviving on as little as six dollars per day. Bolden also used this committee to champion her major issue—the inclusion of domestic work in legislation that affects hourly minimum wages, health and childcare, and social security. Bolden also testified before Congress on these issues and advocated for national mobilization to work on full-employment legislation, raises in the minimum wage, and limits in those fields that are outside the review of regulations (Bolden, 1965–1979).

Because of her association with Jimmy Carter and friendship with Lillian Carter, Bolden was asked to address the 1976 Democratic Party Platform Committee (Bolden, 1965–1979, 1625/44). In her statement she argued that “the poor essentially live in concentration camps—locked in and cannot get out” (Bolden, 1965–1979, 1625/44). She further called the neighborhoods in which the poor live “death zones” because of the absence of working adults to meet children after school. She argued that domestic workers were not able to address issues in their own neighborhoods since they spend so few waking hours in these areas. Further, she made the point that domestic workers earn such low incomes, they cannot provide their children with opportunities to leave the “slum areas” in which they live. Bolden cited examples of some children not attending school because of inadequate clothing or because their mothers needed their help on the job. Finally she advocated again for the inclusion of household workers in legislation that affected wages and benefits (Bolden, 1965–1979).

Locally, Bolden campaigned for the development of MARTA, Atlanta’s public transportation system, and advocated for MARTA to truly serve the transportation needs of the poor. She also took a major interest in the movement toward neighborhood development, citizen-run banks, and community development
corporations. Moreover, she urged that the assets and strengths of the poor needed to be incorporated into community development projects: "There are 30,000 maids that are able to give counseling and early education. They do it where they work—surely they can give this knowledge and experience to slum dwellers" (Bolden, 1965–1979, 1624/33). In an interview with Seifer (1976), Bolden described her advocacy efforts:

I made a lot of changes. I met a lot of people. I made the Congress listen. I finally got a minimum wage through [the House of Representatives]. Bill 49 is in the Senate—an act to establish a minimum wage for domestic employees. (p. 169)

Discussion
The Southern Labor Archives File includes numerous testimonies by women who talked about the importance of the NDWU in their own personal development and in their lives. These women clearly indicated that the service aspects of Bolden's strategy made a difference to them. Several women said that they now knew that they no longer had to scrub floors on their hands and knees. Others described asking and receiving more time off and starting social security accounts.

As an advocate Bolden sought to drive up the wage scale by discouraging domestic workers from accepting less than fifteen dollars a day. Domestic workers were supported by NDWU printed materials, which they were encouraged to share with employers, indicating that fifteen dollars a day was the going rate for domestic work. These materials also encouraged employers to participate in social security and discussed the efficacy of domestic work.

As a spokesperson for domestic workers Bolden raised awareness about the issues that domestic workers experienced and the strengths that they held. Bolden's audiences ranged from government officials, members of congress, and employers to the workers themselves.

Bolden's orientation and accomplishments shows that she sought a service-based prescription to address her clearly structural based analysis of the problem. Moreover, Bolden's advocacy was steeped in raising awareness rather than in effecting larger
structural change and developing a citizens' movement. Not only did Bolden receive funding from War on Poverty programs, but also it can be suggested that she emulated it. Like the War on Poverty, Bolden primarily used a service strategy to effect a structural diagnosis of poverty. Additionally, her service strategy reflected a strategic decision articulated by Adam Yarmolinsky, a War on Poverty framer, which was not to concentrate on finding people jobs but on preparing people for jobs. Thus for Bolden, supporting domestic workers in their jobs through education was more important than finding them alternatives to domestic work. This strategy stands in contrast to more militant organizers such as Miller Stewart who believed that African Americans should not degrade themselves by participating in this profession.

Through her advocacy work, Bolden, like the War on Poverty leaders, raised awareness about structural issues of poverty as well as sought change from inside government sanctioned institutions. In this regard, Bolden's advocacy was largely centered on speech making and participation in government rather than citizen appointed committees. Similar to other War on Poverty programs that supported community action, Bolden steered clear of confrontation. While Bolden's advocacy work did support domestic workers in numerous ways, her orientation that domestic workers needed their jobs stymied her willingness to accept the more radical orientation of domestic work held by Miller Stewart and Dubois, for example. Moreover, in choosing a service strategy Bolden knew that she could effect some change in some people's lives, an outcome that was not guaranteed through an advocacy strategy alone.

Consequently, the goal and mission of the NDWU was to reduce individual hardships and although Bolden participated in relevant advocacy, she did not move beyond speech making to organizing, nor did she address the more complicated issue of the efficacy of domestic work in general.

Thus, the decision to focus on a service-based strategy within the NDWU to address economic justice did result in an implementation strategy that could only provide, at best, a mixed outcome. Consider that domestic work remains outside the purview of wage-an-hour legislation; not all domestic workers receive a minimum wage, few receive a living wage.
It is interesting to note that the same mixed result is evidenced in Bolden’s advocacy of the Atlanta MARTA system. With others Bolden was able to advocate for the MARTA system to link with poor neighborhoods, however, without such tactics as broad based citizen involvement advocates lacked the power to get the system to link with the wealthy suburbs, which house numerous jobs. Thus, there remains a large disconnect in the Atlanta area between people who need jobs and access to work; a phenomena that has been described as perpetuating poverty (Brookings Institution, 2000). Perhaps the most efficacious way to address large social problems is to include both an individually based component and a component that seeks to confront structural inequalities through the use of a wide range of strategies and tactics.

Finally, Bolden herself is an example of the orientation held by the War on Poverty toward the development of community leaders. Many War on Poverty framers felt strongly that community leaders, whose skills may not be well developed, should be given opportunities to participate in and lead their communities (Farmer, 1986). From archival work that allowed Bolden’s original unedited documents to be viewed, it can be noted that she had issues with grammar, spelling, and the like. But Bolden also had a flair in her writing that made her arguments compelling. From domestic worker to participation in national policy, her experience truly spoke to one of goals of the War on Poverty—supporting the development of community leaders.

References


In recent years, policy makers, service providers, and researchers have given increased attention to families and their relatives with mental illness (RMI's). As advocacy and self-help groups rattled the cages of mental health service providers and policy makers, the field of mental health has been impacted by new neuroscientific research and, perhaps to a lesser degree, social science research. These forces combined with political, ideological, economic, and other dynamics produced the dejure mental health policy of the deinstitutionalization of psychiatric patients in the United States. Tessler and Gamache suggested that "the current policy may also be referred to as noninstitutionalization, since many clients have never had a long-term hospitalization" (p. 5).

In this context social science researchers have focused more attention on the reciprocal influences of families vis-à-vis their relatives with mental illness. Typically this research has concentrated on families of organized groups such as the Alliance for the Mentally Ill. Tessler and Gamache's study groups, however, were consumers and their family members served by the public mental health system in Ohio. Many of the consumers and families were in poverty. Also, in contrast to most previous research, African Americans were significantly represented in the two study groups (nearly half in one study and over one fifth in the second study).

This book reports on two longitudinal studies conducted by the authors employing survey research methods. The first "studied family members whose relatives were the intended beneficiaries of a major initiative by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJ Foundation) to improve the mental health system" (p. 13). The main goal of this study "was to examine family experiences with mental illness with respect to family burden, residence, and continuity of care" (p. 13). Supported and sponsored by the Ohio Department of Mental Health (ODMH), the second study's main goal "was to examine family experiences with mental illness with
respect to family member evaluations of mental health professionals, services, and systems” (p. 13).

In the first study data were collected during family interviews across three points in time. In the third wave of family interviews, 305 family members were interviewed for a third time. Within these families, 175 consumers participated. These 175 clients had been interviewed earlier by a separately funded research team. During these previous interviews, family members were identified by the clients who met the criteria for inclusion in the study.

... length of index stay in a 24 hour mental health setting of less than 120 days; age between 18 and 64; a primary diagnosis of mental illness other than substance abuse; had to meet Ohio standards of disability, including diagnosis, hospitalization, and functional status; could not be a forensic client; and had to be English speaking and legally competent (pp. 22–23).

After describing the research landscape, six chapters answered various research questions such as: what basic needs did family members provide, and what troublesome behaviors did family members try to control? The families’ most perceived need of the RMI was in the area of managing money. The researchers surprisingly found that family members perceived only mild to moderate levels of burden in the sphere of providing basic needs as well as only mild to moderate levels of resentment regarding their helping as opposed to the anticipated “colossal burden” that everyday citizens believe exists for family members of the mentally ill.

One of the most intriguing and important discussions is in Chapter 7 in which positive feelings of family members toward their RMI are examined. These attitudes have previously been a neglected area of inquiry in the field of mental health.

The second study (identified as the ODMH family study), a three-wave panel survey of family members, was tied to another study initiated in 1989 by the ODMH. Among the current issues in mental health, the ODMH family study examined family involvement in the system of care, evaluating services under managed care, and insurance parity. Unfortunately, the originally anticipated systematic evaluation of managed care could not be conducted since the Ohio legislature did not authorize...
the implementation of OhioCare, providing for the mandatory enrollment of Medicaid beneficiaries in a managed care system.

The findings revealed that the average family member involvement with the RMI was close to the deepest involvement listed on the measurement scale used. Also, between 1995 and 1997, the families reported statistically significant decreases in satisfaction with the services.

As mentioned previously, the consumer sample did not include persons in trouble with the law nor those who were primarily substance abusers. By excluding consumers who were more likely to present contentious and highly troublesome behavior to their families, "family burden" requires further research.

One minor error appeared in the reasoning of the sick role. The authors' explanation of the sick role attribution (as measured by family members' agreement with six statements such as "my relative didn't try hard enough to get better") was reversed and should have indicated "disagreement" rather than "agreement" with the six statements would "signify acceptance of the sick role..." (p. 91).

In this book, Tessler and Gamache make a solid contribution to knowledge about the impact of mental illness on families. The thirteen chapters are organized and presented to be read selectively or collectively. The volume is literally packed with material to inform and guide service providers and other mental health stakeholders. It should be required reading in programs that prepare practitioners for the mental health professions.

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Cohler and Galatzer-Levy have written a scholarly book with a rich breadth of social and psychoanalytic literature used to examine the life course of gay men and lesbian women's lives. The book analyzes and critiques various theoretical models in this complex and developing field of study. They trace historical, political, and socio-cultural influences on life course development.
They cite social and psychoanalytic literature in ways that help readers grasp the depths of theoretical thinking, as well as limitations in methodology. Citations are richly woven into the text and are extensive—over eighty pages of references. The central focus of this book is that clinical psychoanalytic processes represent an important area of study of the meaning of sexual orientation across the development of the life course.

The book begins with a description of the study of biological hypotheses about the origins of same gender sexual orientation. It moves onto a discussion of the course of development from early childhood through older ages, and then moves into other gay and lesbian related topic areas, such as relationships with families, adjustment of offspring, mental health, and stressors. It works toward conclusion merging into a detailed discussion of the contributions psychoanalysis has and can make.

A wide range of biological hypotheses as a basis for the determination of sexual orientation is summarized and critiqued in this book. The work covers contributions from experimental animal research, gender nonconformity in early childhood, resistance to change of sexual orientation by traditional therapies, and a lack of non-biological explanations which may better account for the development of sexual orientation. The authors question much of this literature on philosophical grounds (reductionist thinking in that sexual orientation is not an orientation at all but a matter of choice, and these choices are fluid and mutable) and on methodological grounds (inadequate sampling plagued with difficulties in identifying reliable and valid groups differentiated by sexual orientation). The arguments on the biological bases for determination of sexual orientation are cogently summarized: there is little evidence of genetic transmission, prenatal hormonal influences, or structural changes in the central nervous system. They posit that biological predispositions remain unsupportable and that there is little evidence of biological factors as relevant in understanding sexual orientation.

The book examines life course developmental explanations of sexual orientation, and stage-oriented developmental processes. These models are open to social and cultural dynamics which shape life experiences. These models are criticized methodologically for being prejudiced by historical and cultural dynamics,
especially questioning the meaning in people's self-descriptive "narrative stories." Remembered pasts, experienced present, and expected futures become part of a culturally defined self-presentation of a "good story." Memories of attraction from early childhood are suspect. Life course developmental models based on stages are similarly dismissed—gay men and lesbian women are well versed in the available biological and psychological literature and their narrative stories reflect this "good story" rather than insight into their true experiences. Ironically, when innume-
rous stories are presented as case studies of practicing analysts, methodology is not critically examined with the same dismissal.

Why the certitude of the dismissal of biological and social science models explaining development of sexual orientation and even sexual drive in favor of a psychoanalytic model? The book is replete with examples of how the history of psychoanalysis has contributed to scientific distortions and oppression of gay men and lesbian women, and has and continues to be used by some psychoanalysts to mask bigotry and prejudice in the name of (pseudo) science. The authors note the widely held presumption of deviancy and pathology in psychoanalytic theory. This remains so long after given up by social sciences and nearly all mental health practitioners. They decry how slow the core of psycho-
analysis is to change. Prejudices are used to encase normative difference as pathology. The science which refutes this is faulted on various methodological grounds—weak samples, weak mea-
sures, priori assumptions. However, it is amazing to note in this book that most adherents to the model rely exhaustively on case study methodology. Elaborate and arcane explanations of the ori-
gins of desire and orientation are almost solely explained based on descriptive case study. Depending upon which prism the reader views this work, the reader may be grateful for the depth of explanation provided, or may wonder why the authors give such credence and attention to models based on such methodology when they are extensively critical of other methodologies.

What makes Cohler and Galatzer-Levy's book especially inter-
teresting is that it inspires deeper understandings of complex issues. The prism in which one views this work evokes polemics. It would not be easy for even the psychoanalytically informed reader to come away from this text without a richer understanding
based on the comprehensive and far-reaching depth of the literature cited and analysis provided. What do you see? Is it the certainty of scientific support for the proposed psychodynamic paradigm, or the ambiguity from the plurality of multiple understandings from other critiqued models? This book will stimulate the reader to analyze further—perhaps even to advance insightful dialogue. The state of knowledge demands methodological enhancement and tentativeness in judgments before any models are enshrined as scientific paragons, especially a model which the authors describe as replete with a history of fostering a climate of prejudice and harm to clients, promotes intolerance, and erroneously focuses on pathology. When building social supports are known to improve lives, it becomes difficult to countenance a model with such a troubled history, despite good intentions.

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Daly’s *The Gender Division of Welfare* is a comparative analysis of the welfare state outside the tradition of typology-building advanced by Wilensky, Titmuss, and Esping-Andersen which differentiates itself from this line of comparative scholarship empirically and theoretically. To avoid the difficulties inherent in constructing welfare state regimes with a limited number of cases where many nation-states must be “dragged” into particular categories Daly opts to examine two cases in-depth.

Using the lens of gender division and stratification, Daly traces the development of the British and German welfare state with particular emphasis on family policies which she suggests have been largely relegated to the sideline in comparative research. Critical of “mainstream analysts’” tendency to employ macro-explanations which support either convergence or divergence among regimes, Daly suggests that the feminist perspective is rarely content with this broad-brush approach or heavy reliance on quantitative indicators. Yet Daly identifies shortcomings within the growing body of feminist scholarship, noting that
while the feminist perspective has highlighted the subordinate position of women with respect to welfare state regimes, this work has failed to provide a larger theoretical explanation for the gender-based differences. Daly's ambitious objective is to counter both of these failures using a case study methodology within a theoretical model.

Chapters 1 and 2 review and critique conventional approaches to welfare state analysis (which Daly classifies as functionalism, neo-marxism, and "social-interpretation") before moving on to feminist scholarship specifically. There are various alternative approaches to classifying welfare state literature. One is a historical-evolutionary method which views the literature as evolving within distinct periods, with each generation punctuated by competition between a functionalist and socio-political perspective. The first generation features the development of grand theory which explain the emergence of the welfare state (for example the functionalist perspectives of industrialization and the socio-political theory of marxism). These grand theories are predicated on inductive logic and develop explanations for the rise of the welfare state by applying theoretical constructs to the experiences of a few nation states. The second generation empirically elaborates the theories developed in the first generation (from the functionalist side, convergence and the emergence of the distinct regime perspective from the socio-political realm) with a third and emerging generation devoted to refining and extending the discoveries from the second generation (for example globalization as an extension of the functionalist perspective and the within the socio-political line such as refinement of the distinct regime perspective and the feminist view). This type of conceptualization places the feminist contribution into the mainstream of theoretical analysis of the welfare state.

The second half of Chapter 2 develops a framework for analyzing the influence of gender on the development of the welfare state. Chapter 3 begins with a historical account of the British and German welfare state, in which Daly highlights the divergence (and less frequently commonalities) between the two systems in terms of ideology. Operationalizing the framework presented in chapter 2, Daly examines the characteristics of support for families with children during the 1980s. Contrasting the British and
German model across six variables related to social provision—the type of program, related policy objectives, targeted beneficiaries by socio-economic status and gender, level of support and availability of publically funded child care—Daly identifies some differences in the configuration of the two systems which are more a matter of degree than of kind. When examining ten specific risks (illness, accident, unemployment, old age, maternity, survivorship, divorce, lone parenthood, and provisions for the care of children and others) there is less divergence. Both countries place the first six social contingencies squarely within the protection of social insurance; with divorce and lone parenting within the purview of social assistance and the final two categories not afforded coverage or classified as a categorical payment.

Daly suggests that this finding is evidence of a "gender fault-line" in which traditional female social risks (divorce and lone parenthood) are treated similarly in both systems. When replacement rate data are added to the analysis, there are visible differences between the two approaches, with German rates consistently higher than those of the UK for the first six social contingencies. However, with the exception of replacement rates for maternity, there is a significant decline in replacement rates afforded by the UK and Germany for the identified female social risks. Thus with the use of quantitative data, similarities between the two otherwise dissimilar welfare states appear with respect to treatment of social contingencies disproportionately affecting women.

Chapter 4 examines the cash-transfer system that perpetuates the social policy models elucidated in chapter 3. Chapter 5 turns to the issue of income inequality and the relationship between the state model and family composition. The focus of chapter 6 is the measure of poverty, a common proxy in gender-based analyses, with the latter part of the chapter devoted to an examination of the respective role of state and family in mitigating the effect and occurrence of poverty. Chapter 7 turns more specifically to the influence of marriage and family on women's labor-market activities. The final chapter of this work attempts to bring together the various findings of the preceding chapters, concluding with the author's call for a reconceptualization of welfare state efforts
placing greater significance on the family and the relative positions of the respective members.

This book will be of interest to welfare state scholars seeking recent and well-informed observations from the feminist perspective, however the empirical data (from the mid 1980s) relied upon to support the analysis leaves an open question as to whether the differences found endure. On the negative side, the style of writing is unduly complex and suitable only to a dedicated scholar with steadfast determination to comprehending the complexities of this work.

Rebecca A. Van Voorhis
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Are you afraid of getting old? Of having to rely on your children (read this "daughter or daughter-in-law") for care? Of living out your final days in a nursing home? Or are you a grandmother unexpectedly left with the responsibility of raising your grandchild? Maybe, you are a Latina woman who has come to this country to work as a live-in nanny for others' children while your children are left behind in the care of others? These are some of the issues addressed in the chapters of this broad-ranging, extremely interesting, instructive book, edited by Madonna Harrington Meyer, which deals with the topic of care work, who provides it (overwhelmingly women), how it is provided and at what cost, personally, professionally and emotionally.

This volume collects papers presented at an international conference on care work held at the University of Illinois in 1997. Though the contributors come from a variety of disciplines (sociology, women’s studies, social policy, economics, political science and history), they agree about the gendered nature of care work, its relative invisibility and devaluation, the lack of adequate social supports for care work and the heavy toll care giving takes, most especially on women, the poor, minorities and immigrants. In addition, the authors concur that care work,
rather than being biologically determined as "women’s work," is a socially constructed phenomenon, with norms governing how the work should be done, where it is done and by whom, norms which vary in concert with changes in cultural values. Take, for instance, the description of women’s care giving responsibilities in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries discussed by Emily Abel in her paper on care giving from an historical perspective. The expectation was that women caregivers not only would assist with feeding and other activities of daily living, but would also render what we would describe as skilled medical care. According to Abel, women “dispensed herbal remedies, dressed wounds, bound broken bones, sewed severed fingers, cleaned bedsores, and removed bullets” (p. 10). However, as medicine emerged as a profession in the nineteenth century, women’s medical care giving was called into question and their healing knowledge labeled as “superstition” (p. 13).

Americans, particularly middle and upper class men, are fond of assuming that today, in the year 2001, women have come close to achieving equality with men. The four sections of this book, and the papers contained within them provide ample evidence to call this assumption into question. For instance, the chapter written by Sonya Michels demonstrates that when issues of race, class and marital status are crosscut by gender, it is a particular segment of the population, poor, single, predominantly women of color, who have been “targeted by public policy” (p. 37), and who must seek paid employment regardless of the care needs of those at home. Or, take the case made by Pierrette Hondagneu-Sotelo that the real casualties of the new global economy may be the transnational mothers and the children they are forced to leave behind, often for years at a time, in the care of others. These immigrant women who have come to the United States seeking employment as live-in nannies/housekeepers, find themselves cut off from their families and communities, while many are paid below minimum wage. Assata Zerai’s research with African-American grandmothers raising their cocaine-exposed grandchildren substantiates many legal and practical barriers that make difficult their efforts to provide good care for these young family members. Stacey Oliker’s paper, “Examining Care at Welfare’s End” documents what many right wing conservatives do not want to acknowledge: while
some states report high rates of employment for those women leaving the AFDC rolls, a majority of these jobs are short-term or high turn-over jobs and “most of those employed do not leave poverty” (p. 169). The chapters of Care Work provide many more examples of the negative impacts on specific groups resulting from most societies' continued insistence on placing “the burden of dependency squarely on the shoulders of families—and most notably the women within those families” (p. 1).

The breadth of issues addressed in edited volumes is both their strength and their weakness and this collection is no exception. With eighteen chapters and twenty-one contributors, Meyer has touched on many aspects and issues of care work in an attempt to explore the question of how best to locate the burden of dependency. Should families continue to bear the brunt, or are there more optimal market-based or entitlement funded alternatives?

The theme running through the collection is that the costs of “unacknowledged and uncompensated care work are enormous, particularly for women, the poor, and persons of color”(p. 3) and that we must find ways to underwrite the costs of care work through publicly-funded, universally entitled programs. However, because the chapters deal with such a range of issues and topics, it is sometimes hard to hang onto the “tie that binds.” In addition, some of the chapters feel like a tease: they cover some topics, but only hint at others. For example, Francesca Cancian in “Paid Emotional Care,” describes something called “The Clinical Practice Model of Nursing” (p. 146) used as a way to institutionalize and legitimate the provision of emotional care to patients. How extensively is it being used? Is the use of this tool, in fact, helping to transform the provision of nursing care? Cancian piqued my interest but leaves my questions unanswered.

While this book would benefit from some reorganization (I would put the two historical chapters in its own section and elaborate a little more on these), it nonetheless provides a thorough, informative and well-documented analysis of the critical problems resulting from the relative de-valuation of any work women do and, in particular, the de-valuation of care work in a world where what is valued is product and profit. In bringing this collection together, Madonna Harrington Meyer has created
a whole which is greater than the sum of its parts: one comes away not only with an intellectual understanding, but also with a visceral sense of the impact of these stubbornly entrenched aspects of our current form of stratification on the lives of real people.

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The recent interest in social work community practice calls for innovative service delivery arrangements. Youth services, in particular, are receiving considerable attention due to several high profile incidents of youth violence. Throughout the United States, social workers, policy makers, law enforcement officers, human service professionals, teachers, and parents alike are wondering what's gone wrong with our teenagers, and what can be done about it.

One consequence of the assumption that "something's wrong" is the trend toward tougher punishment for youth crimes —most notably trying juvenile in adult courts and imposing longer detention and jail terms. Such responses, however, can further alienate youth from society, and preclude the opportunity for rehabilitation. Trust, a fundamental requisite for developing relationships in any successful youth program, cannot be built with barricades and concrete walls.

In *New Arenas for Community Social Work Practice with Urban Youth*, Melvin Delgado contends that social services with teenagers need to be reconceptualized. An important first step, he believes, is to stop demonizing youths and to explore how we can maximize their potential for normal growth and development. Thus, Delgado argues for a less stigmatized community development approach that emphasizes a strengths perspective. Presenting case studies from the arts, humanities, and sports, the author provides insights into successful intervention strategies,
filling a neglected area in the literature of community social work practice.

The book is divided into three parts: Background and Context, Reflections from the Fields, and Implications for Social Work Practice. The chapters in Part I provide the conceptual foundation for the rest of the book, with the author re-visiting the theme of social work practice in the community. Delgado reminds us of the importance of the community context where social work practice, in this case, youth services, occur. "Effective social work practice is only possible and relevant when the practitioner designing the intervention is firmly grounded in the reality of the life of those he/she wishes to change" (p. 4). The fact that the majority of social workers do not live where their service users reside underscores the significance of this position. Understanding the context, of course, would help practitioners become better aware of their own biases towards life in inner cities.

Part II details different types of programming in the arts, humanities, and sports fields that can be implemented for youth development in urban cities. Eight case studies, covering materials on the context setting, project information, and lessons learned, are presented. Of particular importance are the "best practice" organizational characteristics the author has identified as essential for quality programming. This is useful to anyone planning to initiate program in these new arenas. In part III, the case studies are followed by a discussion of a community social work framework, integrating the new practice arena with a generally available social work practice model of assessment, engagement, interventions, and evaluation.

While Delgado calls for developing program from the youth's perspective, his book ironically fails to do so. Although the author provides rich and detailed analysis by interviewing service providers, reviewing brochures, and observing program operation, voices from the youth themselves, which could provide a strong and powerful testimony, are notably absent.

Another limitation of this book is that very little empirical evidence is provided to demonstrate the linkage between program intervention and outcomes. It is understandable that a new arena of practice has not been fully evaluated. However, without
evidence, his ideas remain suggestive, rather than conclusive. Nevertheless, this is a useful primer for social workers interested in reconnecting our presence to the "real world" of neighborhood and community, a world where social work practitioners worked in the past, and should be engaged in the future.

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Book Notes


The continued trend towards the privatization of welfare services in Britain assumes that individuals receiving social benefits act in a self-interested rational manner, carefully weighing the costs and benefits of their actions. This view is heavily influenced by rational choice theory. However, while popular, it fails to consider how the wider social context affects decision making. Taylor-Gooby and the other contributors to this book challenge this view by assessing how individuals respond to changes in the perceived risks and uncertainties they face when interacting with the social welfare system.

The concept of risk is used in this book to refer to economic vulnerability. Factors contributing to risk include aging, family disruption, labor market changes induced by technological innovation and welfare retrenchment. Although the overall level of risk has deceased as affluence has increased, people today are more aware of risk than before. The declining role of traditional mechanisms that protect individuals from risk exacerbates the perception of risk among people in the middle class. The social context in which people function is, therefore, critical in defining their perception of risk and in influencing the way they use the social services.

In addition to the issue of risk, the role of trust in human relations is also relevant to the role of rational choice theory in explaining welfare behavior. Trust in professional experts and those in authority is being undermined as more people acquire knowledge through formal educational and access to information. As trust in experts and those with authority declines, the providers of social services can no longer assume that their role will be unquestioned. Rational choice does not incorporate this changing situation and the growing complexity of human relationships.

These issues are examined in this interesting book which is divided into two parts. Part I begins with a critique of rational choice theory showing the limitations of the theory in explaining
welfare behavior and in understanding the role of motivating
factors such as altruism and moral commitment in social welfare.
It reveals the simplistic nature of rational choice and exposes its
weaknesses. The second part of the book contains case studies
which substantiate the arguments in Part I. These studies show
that individual responses to risk do not comply with the rational
choice model and that its account of how people use the welfare
system to cope with risk does not adequately explain their actions.

The important book challenges the underlying assumptions
of rational choice theory. The continued trend towards privati-
ization will not solve the problems of risk and trust which are so
central to social life today. In addition, it will further weaken the
citizenship obligations on which social welfare has historically
been based.

Charles C. Harrington and Susan K. Boardman, Paths to Success:
Beating the Odds in American Society. Cambridge, MA: Harvard

Social scientists have studies social stratification in the United
States for decades and a huge literature on the subject is now
available. Much of this research has examined overall mobility
trends and the impediments to moving up the occupational lad-
der. However, much of it has been optimistic in tone, suggesting
that American society affords many opportunities for people to
achieve success.

Criticizing this research for its limited focus, Harrington and
Boardman approach the issue of mobility from a different per-
spective. They pay attention to those individuals who come from
very disadvantages backgrounds but who, nevertheless, have
been successful in their careers. Described as 'pathmakers' by
the authors, they include people from poor families who did not
complete high school but who were rated by an expert panel as
having achieved high levels of occupational success. Life history
interviews were undertaken with 60 pathmakers and a control
group of 40 respondents who came from educated and higher
income families. The interviews studied schooling, employment
history, family and community factors, health and the psycholog-
ical characteristics of the respondents. Racial and gender factors
were also considered.
The authors conclude that psychological factors play a very important role in overcoming disadvantage. The pathmakers had a strong achievement orientation and an internal locus of control. However, sociological factors such as social support networks and significant role models were also important. The study found that religious activity was a relevant factor in accounting for success as was the influence of school teachers and the support of family members.

This interesting study is exploratory in nature but it sheds important light on why some people from disadvantaged families and communities succeed while others do not. By examining the way the pathmakers, as positive outliers, faced their challenges, the authors have provided valuable information about the role of psychological and sociological factors in social mobility in American society.


Fifteen years after the latest War on Drugs, the United States is still reeling with ambivalence about who the good guys and the bad guys are. In the wake of the nation’s massive drug policy, concern is still placed on both identifying victims (law abiding citizens) and on the evil perpetrators of drug use and crime (dealers, drugs themselves and criminals). The division between victim and perpetrator is professed to be a clean one easily seen by the public at large and by law enforcement. But what happens when these two roles blend? This is the makings of a moral calamity which is the basis of Jacobs’ well-written and thought-provoking book.

Through in-depth interviews with 29 drug robbers in St. Louis, Missouri, who are themselves drug dealers, Jacobs takes us into a world that is little seen by civilians—a world in which victims are not protected by due process but are held to the norms of their criminal environments. By sequencing the process of drug robbery into the four conceptual areas: motivation, target selection, enactment, and managing retaliation, Jacobs reveals the intricacies of each step during which there is constant assessment of benefits (large sums of money) and risks (injury or death) by the drug robber. Despite the sometimes meticulous planning of these
robberies, drug robbers are often caught in situations where they must make quick decisions which ultimately might jeopardize the robbery and result in violence against themselves or others.

This book provides a window into a culture within a culture that few consider important enough to even mention. A major strength of this book is that it combines two theoretical approaches, namely, rational choice theory and phenomenological interactionism. Jacobs relies heavily on quotes to illustrate in finer detail the decision-making processes and the emotions of his subjects as they plan, stage, and eventually execute a drug robbery.

It would have been useful if Jacobs had spent a little more time considering the policy implications of his work. Clearly, drug dealing and drug robbery are intractable problems which have no easy solutions. However, Jacobs provides very little insight into what approaches should be tried to ameliorate the conditions under which these individuals live. In the last paragraph of Jacobs' book, reference is made to legalizing drugs as a possible strategy to "...wiping out their black-market value." (p. 145), but he admits that this is unlikely to occur in the near future given the entrenched drug culture that has emerged. It would have been important for Jacobs to consider other policy options, perhaps less extreme than legalization, that might provide some leverage with this problem. For example, harm reduction strategies that provide broader based interventions to reduce the harm from drug use may be one step in this direction. Despite this limitation, Jacobs has done an excellent job of reminding us that criminal behavior is a very relative term.


With the recent announcement of President George W. Bush’s faith based initiative in social policy, interest in the role of religious organizations in meeting social needs has intensified. Of course, religious organizations have long been involved in providing services to people in need. In additional to the efforts of local churches, synagogues and temples, large scale operations managed by the major denominations are now well
established. Catholic Charities, the Jewish Federations and the Salvation Army are just a few of these bodies. Unfortunately, their work has not been adequately researched. Although information about their mission, programs and expenses are available, much more research into their role in social welfare is needed.

Rebecca Allahyari’s book makes an important contribution to understanding how faith based organizations function. Her book is concerned with the role of volunteers in two sectarian agencies catering to homeless people in Sacramento, California. One of these, Loaves and Fishes, is a Catholic organization which makes extensive use of volunteers in its daily feeding program. The other, the Salvation Army, also uses volunteers but most of its services are provided by staff who are former clients and by court ordered volunteers challenged by substance and related problems. Allahyari spent a good deal of time in both organizations as a volunteer herself gathering important ethnographic information on the activities of these organizations. More importantly, her analysis of their different approaches to the problem of homelessness provides helpful insights into the potential of faith based organizations to address social needs. Her account of the way the volunteers defined their role and formulated a moral image of themselves makes for fascinating reading.

Allahyari found that the two organizations differ substantively in the way they approach the problem of homelessness. Loaves and Fishes promoted a ‘personalist hospitality’ approach that gave expression to ideals of compassion and altruism within a loosely structured framework of service provision. On the other hand, the Salvation Army’s program was much more structured and focused on rehabilitation through discipline, moral regeneration and work. Of course, these two approaches do not only characterize religious charity, but are a microcosm of dominant philosophies in social welfare in general.

Allahyari’s account is wide ranging and while it focuses on the moral experience of being a volunteer, it also touches on issues of gender, race and community within the context of social service provision. A short final chapter relates the study to the wider issues attending the faith based approach. These include the question of the separation of religion and state, the politics of faith based provision and questions of funding. The book contains
much that will be of relevance as the debate about the proper role of the religious community in social welfare evolves.


Although much social policy scholarship was previously concerned with providing descriptive accounts of the way the social services function, more attention has been focused in recent years on the wider political, social and economic context in which social policies evolve. The role of ideology in social policy is one contextual factor which has been extensively debated but which still evokes simplistic interpretations.

In this interesting and readable account, Zundel shows how normative themes in social policy discourse today are rooted in a complex history of beliefs about social welfare. The author suggests that the notion of dependency, which is widely used in contemporary welfare debates is, in fact, central to the American founding. At the time, it was used to connote feudal patronage and reliance on the benevolence of the nobility. The colonial ethos not only rejected the feudal legacy but resulted in purposeful attempts to end it. One such attempt was the granting of small holding to settlers together with credit, supplies and equipment so that they could establish themselves as independent citizens. The state’s role was not one of *laissez-faire* but of actively promoting self-sufficiency. Zundel terms this approach the ‘Civic Republican Tradition’ because it gave expression to the belief that a republican democracy would thrive if comprised of independent and self-sufficient property owners. This tradition, which continues to exert a powerful influence today, may be distinguished from other traditions in social policy thinking.

Examining the history of social welfare through from this perspective, the author shows how many social policy initiatives over the years have been influenced by the legacy of civic republicanism. The New Deal’s emphasis on home ownership, which is deeply embedded and extensively subsidized by taxpayers today, is heavily influenced by this tradition as is the current emphasis on workfare. However, perhaps the most important example of the legacy of civic republicanism is the idea of matched savings
accounts which have become so popular in recent years. Policy proposals to create IDAs and, indeed, many other tax supported savings programs, are firmly rooted in this tradition. In addition to tracing the influence of civic republicanism, Zundel makes a strong case for its continued incorporation in social policy. In the final chapter of the book, the author explicates a set of proposals for enhancing and consolidating stakeholding through savings, and of using savings as a means of meeting social needs.

Zundel’s book is a good example of how sophisticated the study of social policy has become. The author’s ability to situate current social welfare debates within an historical perspective, and to link these debates to wider political and ideological themes, is impressive. Although the book would have benefited by comparing civic republicanism to other dominant approaches in social welfare today, it is an important contribution to the literature. It should be widely read.
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