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could not be encompassed comfortably by one practice orientation, and that it would be useful to think of different approaches that addressed each of the three empirically distinct groupings represented by the students. I began to stake out these three approaches conceptually, delineating a set of practice variables to be used to analyze variations among them. This was, perhaps, a risky departure from the prevailing case-work mode, but, in time, clinical practice also broke from its solitary theoretical mold and began to include behavior modification, cognitive therapy, ecological practice, and other frameworks.

Social action presented a special challenge. Professional fields are typically conservative and eschew any taint of militancy—and that was especially true in the wake of the conformity-drenched decade of the 1950s, when any connection with radicalism was viewed with supreme suspicion. I needed to create an intellectual framework that would legitimate social action as an academic activity as well as an area of practice on par with other forms, something that did not exist in professional schools at that time.

I thought of the three approaches, or models, as ideal-types. They did not exist to a large extent in pristine, full-blown form in the real world, but were useful mental tools to help describe and analyze reality. Over time I have come to deemphasize or soften the notion of "models," which gives greater importance and internal validity to the approaches than seems warranted, and to accent the overlap and intermixture among approaches. The next section of this discussion will sketch out the original approaches as ideal-type constructs, and will also make a cross-comparison of them against a set of twelve practice variables. The last section, which is more practical and the place where the

analysis leads, will consider combined and variant patterns that serve to integrate the different modalities.

CORE MODES OF COMMUNITY INTERVENTION

THREE MODES OF INTERVENTION

Planning has been defined as the act of deciding what to do about some community affair while, meanwhile, life is bringing it around to a firm conclusion. And a typical committee assigned to deal with the task is, of course, merely a form of human organization that takes hours to produce minutes. These quips express a widespread popular view of social intervention as it is commonly carried out. Here, we will try to conceive of disciplined human reckoning that plays tricks on the natural course of life and actually begets intended effects, in furtherance of community well-being.

Differing and contrasting formulations of community intervention currently exist, which has been a source of perplexity and discomfort for the struggling practitioner and teacher. Taylor and Roberts (1985) describe the fluid nature of theory development, stating that in this field, "eclecticism, pragmatism and practice wisdom of professionals foster a turbulence and diversity that makes categorization and model-building especially difficult tasks" (pp. 24–25). In the founding issue of the *Journal of Community Practice*, editor Marie Weil states: that in order to "reclaim and strengthen community practice, theoretical approaches, guiding values and practice strategies need to be articulated so that they are both clear and carefully connected . . . a grounding . . . in reality and theory should be part of that movement forward" (Weil, 1994, pp. xxvii). A special issue of *The Journal on Conceptual*

Models of Practice was issued in 1996 (vol. 3, no. 3/4).

Three important approaches to purposive community change can be discerned in contemporary American communities, both urban and rural, and internationally. We will refer to them as approaches or Modes A, B, and C, and they can be given the appellations respectively of *locality development*, *social planning/policy*, and *social action*. Within each mode there are several variations and distinct emphases, but in this initial discussion we will select out and treat one prominent form within the mode for purposes of analysis. The three basic Modes of action do not necessarily exhaust all possibilities, but they offer a serviceable framework for a broad inquiry. These strategies are general in nature and are applicable across professional fields and academic disciplines. However, the author's grounding in social work and sociology will give a particular slant or tinge to the discussion.

In the presentation, community intervention is the general term used to cover the various forms of community level practice. "Community organizing" ordinarily implies social action and sometimes includes neighborhood work involving self-help strategies. But it excludes social planning/policy development approaches. Community organization has traditionally been the inclusive nomenclature, but it often becomes confused with more narrowly focused radical community organizing. Community work is frequently used to convey a locality development outlook. On the other hand, social planning usually fails to embrace grassroots organizing efforts. Recognizing that there is no standard terminology, community intervention seems to be a convenient and useful overarching term to employ, although "community practice" has similar attributes and will be used occasionally as an alternative.

Administration (or management) another form of social practice that takes place in the community within organizational settings. It involves developing or organizations and keeping them running through obtaining funding and other resources, arranging staffing, establishing and carrying out procedures, maintaining records, and similar activities. Organizations constitute the vehicle through which social goals are pursued and relevant tasks are carried out. Thus, they provide machinery for steering the endeavors of three modes of community intervention in addition to direct-service agencies and a wide spectrum of other programs in the community. Administration practice has crucial bearing on the performance of organizations, but it exists in a different dimension than community intervention and will be treated independently and apart from this analysis.

Mode A, Locality Development. This approach presupposes that community change should be pursued through broad participation by a wide spectrum of people at the local community level in determining goals and taking civic action. Its prototype will be found in the literature of a segment of the field commonly termed community development. As stated by an early U.N. publication: "Community Development can be tentatively defined as a process designed to create conditions for economic and social progress for the whole community with its active participation and the fullest possible reliance on the community's initiative" (United Nations, 1955).

Locality development is a community building endeavor with a strong emphasis on what Selznick (1992) terms the "micro commonwealth." He describes this words such as mutuality, identity, participation, plurality, and autonomy. Local

development fosters community building by promoting process goals: community competency (the ability to solve problems on a self-help basis) and social integration (harmonious interrelationships among different racial, ethnic, and social-class groups—indeed, among all people). Leadership is drawn from within, and direction and control are in the hands of local people (Dionne, 1998; Mattessich and Monsey, 1997; Minkler, 1997). It is a type of activity that has been initiated and sponsored by religious and service groups such as The Catholic Church and The American Friends Service Committee, and it reflects highly idealistic values. The style is humanistic and strongly people-oriented, with the aim of “helping people to help themselves.” The process of educating participants and nurturing their personal development has high priority. “Enabling” techniques that are nondirective in character and foster self-direction are emphasized.

Many of the precepts of the feminist perspective on organizing overlap with the locality development approach, including stress on wide participation as well as concern for democratic procedure and educational goals—including consciousness-raising (Hyde, 1989; Naples, 1998; Halseth, 1993). The approach is also used, some would say misappropriated, by political and business leaders who espouse local initiative and privatization, relying on enterprise zones and like programs that essentially intend to scale back social programs for the poor that are carried out under governmental auspices.

Some examples of locality development as conceived here include neighborhood work programs conducted by settlement houses and other community-based agencies; federal government programs such as Agricultural Extension and The National Service Corps; and village-level work in

some overseas community development programs, including the Peace Corps and the Agency for International Development (AID). To these can be added community work in the fields of adult education and public health education, as well as self-help and informal helping network activities conducted through neighborhood councils, block clubs, consumer cooperatives, and civic associations (Burns and Taylor, 1998).

Thinkers who contributed intellectual roots for locality development include John Dewey, Mary Follett, Kurt Lewin, and Eduard Lindeman. Among professional writings that express and elaborate this mode are Blakely (1979); Chavis et al. (1993); Cnaan (1991); Henderson and Thomas (1987); Lappin (1985); Mayer (1984); Ross (1955).

The terms “community development” and “locality development” have been used to identify the approach. The locality development nomenclature was employed in the original version of this analysis to convey this perspective on intervention in a precise way. Community development is a more polymorphic term, which sometimes connotes institutional and policy means to strengthen communities from above (Mier, 1993), or suggests industrial expansion through economic development (Bingham and Mier, 1993). Sometimes it has a national or international frame rather than an explicitly local one (Goetz and Clarke, 1993). Locality development will be the terminology of choice here, and when “community development” is used it will connote a Mode A strategy.

While locality development espouses highly respected ideals, it has been criticized for its performance record. Khinduka, in the prior edition of this book, characterizes it as a “soft strategy” for achieving change. He indicates that its preoccupation with process can lead to endless

meetings that are frustrating for participants and conducive to a slow pace of progress. Khinduka further argues that concern with modifying attitudes and values may divert attention from important structural issues that need more direct engagement. Also, many projects draw their participation largely from racial and ethnic minorities and the poor, when it is the attitudes of the affluent and well-placed that need rearranging.

Embracing consensus as a basic modus operandi precludes arbitrary actions from occurring, but it puts those who stand to lose from needed reforms in a position to veto effective action. The heavy emphasis on the local community may be inappropriate at a time when the locality has lost much of its hold over people and patterns of life are influenced significantly by powerful national and regional forces. Khinduka admires locality development for playing a gentleman's game in the often sordid arena of community affairs, but he worries about whether it can win.

Mode B, Social Planning/Policy. This emphasizes a technical process of problem solving regarding substantive social problems, such as delinquency, housing, and mental health (Kettner, Monroney, and Marlin, 1999; Burch, 1996). This particular orientation to planning is data-driven and conceives of carefully calibrated change being rooted in social science thinking and empirical objectivity (unlike other existing forms of planning that are more political and emergent). The style is technocratic, and rationality is a dominant ideal. Community participation is not a core ingredient and may vary from much to little, depending on the problem and circumstances. The approach presupposes that change in a complex modern environment requires expert planners who, through the exercise of technical competencies—

including the ability to gather and analyze quantitative data and to maneuver large bureaucratic organizations—are needed to improve social conditions. There is heavy reliance on needs assessment, decision analysis, Markov chains, evaluation research, delphi techniques, computer graphics, and a plethora of sophisticated statistical tools.

The design of formal plans and policy frameworks is of central importance, as is their implementation in effective and cost-efficient ways. By and large, the concern here is with task goals: conceptualizing, selecting, establishing, arranging, and delivering goods and services to people who need them. In addition, fostering coordination among agencies, avoiding duplication, and filling gaps in services are important concerns in achieving service ends (Austin, 1997; Mandell, 1999).

Within the field of social work, educational programs in planning and policy typify the social planning/policy approach. It also finds expression in university departments of public administration, public health, urban affairs, city planning, and policy studies. It is practiced in numerous federal bureaus and departments, in United Ways and community welfare councils, and in city departments and voluntary agencies geared to planning for mental health, health, aging, housing, and child welfare. The National Association of Planning Councils has been formed to strengthen these local community planning efforts.

Intellectual roots for the approach can be found in the thinking of scholars such as Comte, Lasswell, Keynes, Herbert Simon, and Jesse Steiner. Some professional writings that reflect this mode include Gil (1976); Gilbert and Specht (1977); Kahn (1969); Lauffer (1981); Moroney (1991); Morris and Binstock (1966); and Tropman (1984).

While this approach emphasizes rationality in an explicit and formal way, and leans on it to lend legitimation for recommended actions (often by way of voluminous and impressive reports), the other approaches (Modes A and C) also need to be firmly embedded in rationality. Developing a means to successfully achieve broad civic participation or carrying out a protest demonstration to place pressure on public officials each require a high level of strategic calculation, linking chosen means logically to intended ends. The rationality may not be as overt and public, but it is equally related to effective and professionally sound intervention.

Planning and policy are grouped together in this discussion because both involve assembling and analyzing data to prescribe means for solving social problems. They overlap in some measure, but they also probably have distinct features. Frequently, in scholarly and practice writings, the two are treated as though they are mutually exclusive. Policy is often associated with higher social levels—with national and state, governmental structures, and the act of selecting goals and framing legislative or administrative standards rather than actually establishing programs and services.

No clear basis exists for this compartmentalization of policy functions. There is policy development at the local level as well as at higher echelons (Flynn, 1985). It is conducted under private auspices as well as under governmental sponsorship (Pierce, 1984). And it has implementation and monitoring functions in addition to the goal-setting aspect (Pressman and Wildavsky, 1984). Gilbert and Specht (1974) conceive of a "policy planner" and define policy as "a course or plan of action," thereby essentially blending the two.

In this discussion we are addressing policy as professional practice rather than as a

method for conducting an analysis to understand social welfare programs (Tropman, 1984; Jansson, 1984). Ironically, many planning and policy scholars write as though the other area does not exist, although upon examination these authors cover a great deal of similar ground. A divergence or different emphasis (areas of less overlap) lies in policy practice's concern with megagoals or quasi-philosophical frameworks that guide legislative enactment and program development, while planning is interested to a greater degree in the details of program construction and service delivery.

In this discussion, "planning" will serve as a shorthand and convenient designation for the planning/policy approach.

The data-driven form of planning and policy practice has a certain currency and appeal, with its coherent intellectual structure and ostensible ease of implementation. Urban planning schools and policy studies programs place a great deal of emphasis on providing students with ever more complex and elegant statistical procedures and computer modeling methods. This may be because these are readily available, can be manipulated easily in a technical sense, and have an aura of mastery and completeness that is missing in more political forms of planning.

Webber and Rittel (1973) state that the data-driven approach is flawed because it is based on the assumption that problems are easily definable, well-bounded, and responsive to professional intervention. Instead, they say, contemporary problems are "wicked" in nature—unique, intractable, intermeshed with others, and situated in a constantly changing and turbulent social environment.

Two important factors place constraints on the prototypical rationalistic mode. The first is the intensification of constituency politics, a contemporary development that

makes planning highly contentious and interactive. Interest groups of various kinds feel they should have a say and have acquired a voice, and they place themselves vigorously into the pluralistic process through which decisions are made. Many planners and policy professionals believe that interests of various kinds rightfully should go into the defining of goals and setting the community agenda, because these are socially constructed phenomena and involve value choices that extend far beyond the purview of the expert or bureaucrat.

Another factor confounding prototypical rationalistic intervention is the impact of fiscal constraint. There is public aversion to taxation and to governmental spending for social programs. Concrete economic conditions involving industrial decline and recessionary trends also place objective limits on social program options. These public attitudes and economic strictures have shifted planning from an optimizing stance to what Herbert Simon refers to as "satisficing." The dual effects of contentious community politics and a public leaning toward a "get by" level of social programming place into question the utility of elaborate, data-driven planning modalities.

Mode C, Social Action. This approach presupposes the existence of an aggrieved or disadvantaged segment of the population that needs to be organized in order to make demands on the larger community for increased resources or equal treatment (Bobo, Kendall, and Max, 1996). The particular approach we are describing has a militant orientation to advocacy with respect to goals and tactics (although not all advocacy is militant). It aims at making fundamental changes in the community, including the redistribution of power and resources and gaining access to decision

making for marginal groups. Social action intervention seeks to change legislative mandates of political entities such as a city council, or the policies and practices of institutions such as a welfare department or housing authority. Practitioners in the social action arena generally aim to empower and benefit the poor, the disenfranchised, the oppressed. The style is highly adversarial, and social justice is a dominant ideal (Karp, 1998).

Classically, stemming from the high point of social action in the 1960s, confrontational tactics have been emphasized, including use of demonstrations, picketing, strikes, marches, boycotts, teach-ins, civil disobedience, and other disruptive or attention-gaining moves. Disadvantaged and aggrieved groups frequently do not have at hand the funds, connections, and expertise available to others, and consequently they rely heavily on the resources of "people power," which has the potential to pressure and disrupt. Training institutes sponsored by the Midwest Academy and Industrial Areas Foundation have been established to equip low-power constituencies with the skills to impact higher circles of power.

The social action approach has been used widely by AIDS activists, feminist organizing groups, gay and lesbian organizations, consumer and environmental protection organizations, civil rights and black power groups, and La Raza and victim rights groups. It has been embraced by Industrial Areas Foundation and ACORN (Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now) projects, labor unions, including the United Farm workers, and radical political action movements.

Thinkers providing an intellectual foundation for this approach include Marx, Fourier, Bakunin, and Habermas and it was advanced in part by advocacy activities of Jane Addams and her Progressive Era allies.

Alinsky's *Reveille for Radicals* (1946) and *Rules for Radicals* (1972) have typified the orientation of the social action mode. Newer writings also reflect this orientation (Boyte and Riessman, 1986; Burghardt, 1987; Cloward and Piven, 1977; Delgado, 1986; Fisher, 1994; Freire, 1974; Kahn, 1992).

In recent years, social action movements have expanded their strategy bent beyond the confrontational style, and "new wave" organizing now employs a wider range of adversarial tactics. Political and electoral maneuvers that are more fine tuned and diversified are being used in considerable measure. This is because the groups have become more sophisticated over time, there is less public tolerance for disruptive methods, and power elites have become skillful in counteracting confrontations. Organizing has become less stridently ideological, and middle-class groups (and right-wing factions) have been drawn into campaigning on their own behalf or in joint actions.

However, there is a great deal of fragmentation among groups engaged in social action. Advocacy has taken on a particularistic caste, with each aggrieved constituency advancing its own special goals and interests in a "politics of identity" (Byrd, 1999; Gitlin, 1996). Even among people of color, African-Americans, Hispanics, Asian-Americans, and Native Americans go their own ways, independently and often competitively. Thus, coalition building has become a central concern in social action, since groups are typically not strong enough to achieve significant results on their own. But these coalitions are fluid, shifting, and irregular; new configurations have to be formed for different issues on a continuing basis—thus draining off energy that might be focused on external targets.

Fragmentation is especially handicapping because of the growing concentration of political and economic power locally,

nationally, and even globally (see the discussion by Fisher on Political Economy). Relatively weak local entities that are disunited find themselves contending with powerful extracommunity entities that are functionally consolidated.

Human service professionals have not been prominent in the social action area, but there has been continuing participation on a small-scale basis over the years. Major national organizations such as ACORN and the United Farm Workers Union have been headed by social workers. There are relevant professional groups, such as the Union of Radical Human Service Workers in Boston and the Bertha Capen Reynolds Society nationally, and there is also a specialized periodical, the *Journal of Progressive Human Services*.

Modest salaries and the absence of professional prerequisites are a deterrent to long-term involvement. But new graduates with an interest in basic social change are in a position to take this on as a communal responsibility for a limited time at the beginning of their career. The Nader organization's publication *Good Works* (Anzalone, 1985) and the "Community Jobs" newsletter list a multitude of positions and career opportunities. The richness of the experience, the chance to join hands with aspiring members of oppressed and dispossessed groups, and a sense of accomplishment in advancing a valued and meritorious cause can compensate for temporary material loss. Some professionals have and will continue to make this a lifetime commitment.

A PERSPECTIVE ON DISTINCT PRACTICE APPROACHES

Taking an overview, this three-pronged orientation, as a broad cognitive mapping

device for community intervention, has a certain intuitive logic. Historically, several schools of social work have developed specialized programs for training according to the three modes. Thus, a community development program that was situated at the University of Missouri epitomized Mode A; the doctoral program in planning at Brandeis University, Mode B; and a social action program based at Syracuse University, Mode C.

Morris and Binstock (1966), based on an empirical examination of community organizations, suggested a similar threefold division. Friedmann (1987) attaches different language to these same approaches—social learning, policy analysis and social mobilization, as does Lyon (1987)—self-help, technical assistance and conflict. The formulation has also provided an effective conceptual framework for a historical volume on community intervention (Betten and Austin, 1990).

Empirical studies of the formulation lend general support. Cnaan and Rothman (1986) found that a sample of community workers in Israel distinguish between these approaches in their perception of their work and in their practice activities. Several studies in progress have replicated the inquiry with apparently similar results in Sweden, Egypt, Japan, Chile, India, and several other countries. (In the original study, social action appeared to be a more complex phenomenon than the other interventions.) In a series of case studies in Canada, Wharf (1979) observed that local development and social planning were distinctly discernable, but that social action, while evident, again was more diverse. (We will discuss this disparity in the next section, "The Interweaving of Intervention Approaches.") Practitioners in Wharf's project found the framework particularly useful as an assessment tool, as did those in another Canadian study (Johnson, 1974).

The studies also suggest the existence of variations and mixed configurations, which is the subject of the next section. However, here, for analytical purposes, we view the three approaches as relatively "pure" expressions. The merit in this is suggested by Morris and Binstock (1966) when they refer to their own classification system:

The categories are somewhat arbitrary, for it is sometimes difficult to say that a particular experience fits one category but not another. For these reasons it is particularly important to achieve as narrow a focus as possible in analyzing [intervention]: Otherwise a systematic treatment is virtually impossible (p. 15).

Examining ideal-types, while recognizing they are to some degree artificial, has the particular benefit of allowing us to perceive practice variables and intervention components within the modes in explicit and crystallized form. This generates a wide range of distinct practice options, across intervention orientations, that can be employed selectively and in combination. (This will be expanded upon subsequently.)

PRACTICE VARIABLES AND COMMUNITY INTERVENTION APPROACHES

In order to proceed with the analysis, we will specify a set of practice variables that help describe and compare each of the approaches when seen in ideal-type form. Each of the orientations makes assumptions about the nature of the community situation, goal categories of action, concepts of the general welfare, appropriate tactics, and so on. A set of twelve such variables will be treated in the passages that follow. The variables are based on the writer's long-term experience and review of the analyses of practice by others. They are assumed to be salient but by no means exhaustive. A

Locality Development. Intended beneficiaries are likely to be viewed as average citizens who possess considerable strengths that are not fully developed and who need the services of a practitioner to help them release and focus these inherent capabilities. The Biddles (1965) express this viewpoint as follows:

1. Each person is valuable, and capable of growth toward greater social sensitivity and responsibility.
 - a. Each person has underdeveloped abilities in initiative, originality, and leadership. These qualities can be cultivated and strengthened (p. 60).

Social Planning. The beneficiary group is more likely to be thought of as consumers of services, those who will receive and utilize those programs and services that are the fruits of the social planning process—mental health treatment, public housing, health education, recreation, welfare benefits, and so forth. Weyers (1992) makes this clear in highlighting the provision of social services as a key objective of social planning. "According to this point of view the efficiency of the community's social functioning will depend on the quantity and quality of professional services rendered to the community, as well as the way in which the community's concrete needs are provided for" (p. 132).

In policy settings beneficiaries may be conceived as both consumers and constituents.

Social Action. The intended beneficiaries are seen as aggrieved victims of "the system": of slum landlords, the medical establishment, government bureaucracies, racist institutions, patriarchal entities, and corporate polluters. Those on behalf of whom action is initiated are often characterized in "underdog" terms.

11. Conception of the Role of Intended Beneficiaries

Locality Development. Beneficiaries are viewed as active participants in an interactional process with one another and with the practitioner. Considerable stress is placed on group discussion in the community as the medium through which learning and growth take place. Beneficiaries engage in an intensive group process of exploring their felt needs, determining desired goals, and taking appropriate action.

Social Planning. Beneficiaries are clients, consumers, or recipients of services. They are active in using services, not in the determination of policy or goals.

Opportunities for members and consumers to determine policy are severely limited because they are not usually organized for this purpose. . . the opportunity to control policy is short-lived because the coalition will fall apart, lacking sufficient incentive to bind together the otherwise diverse constituent elements (Morris and Binstock, 1966, pp. 109-110).

Decisions, then, are made through the planner, often in collaboration with some community group—a board or commission, usually composed of business and professional elites, who are presumed to represent either the community-at-large or the best interests of those being served.

The data-driven policy specialist is likely to be looking over his or her back through this process, realizing that constituency interests and pressures could have an impact on policy enactment.

Social Action. The benefiting group is likely to be thought of as an employer of the practitioner or constituents. In unions the membership ideally runs the organization. The Industrial Areas Foundation will

usually not enter a target area until the people there have gained a controlling and independent voice in the funding of the organization. The concept of the organizer as an employee and servant of the people is stressed. Kahn (1982) holds that the "staff director of the organization, if there is one, should be directly accountable to the board and should be held accountable by the board" (p. 70). Those not in key decision-making roles may participate more sporadically in mass action and pressure group activities, such as marches or boycotts.

12. Uses of Empowerment

Empowerment is a highly valued concept in contemporary thinking and parlance (Colby, 1997). However, in some ways it seems to be a buzzword that has to do more with creating a warm feeling than conveying a precise meaning. In the context of our discussion, each intervention approach values empowerment, but uses it in a different, sometimes contradictory, fashion.

Locality Development. Empowerment signifies the gaining of community competence—the skills to make decisions that people can agree on and enact together. It also implies the development of a sense of personal mastery within residents, as individual growth in people is considered a component of community building and a goal of practice.

Social Planning. With its reliance on facts and rationality, this approach tends to associate empowerment with information. Empowerment occurs when residents and consumers are asked to inform planners about their needs and preferences, so that they can be incorporated into plan design. Such information may be obtained through community surveys, including focus group

techniques and public hearings, or through analysis of data from agency service records. Through this arrangement, consumers are afforded the right and means to have their views enter into the process by which decisions affecting them are made. Consumers are also empowered when information is provided to them about the various services that are available and particularities about these services, so they become equipped to make the best decisions about what programs and services to use. Information plays an important part in the other approaches also, but is given special emphasis in data-driven planning intervention.

Social Action. Empowerment means to acquire objective, material power—for residents to be an equal party in decision-making bodies such as agency boards or municipal commissions, or to have the political clout to directly affect decisions made by these bodies. Electoral campaigns are mounted to win seats on legislative units by representatives from the group, who will thereby have the authority to vote and engage in tangible trade-offs on the group's behalf. There is also attention to participants' personal sense of empowerment, because those individuals with a feeling of potency are more likely to lend themselves actively to the cause, and to contribute to the number count necessary for "people power" tactics of social action.

There is still another way that empowerment is viewed, emanating primarily from the conservative camp. Empowerment is equated with the elimination of governmental regulations and involvements, so that citizens presumably gain the freedom to conduct their lives without restraint. The popular slogan, "get the government off our backs," characterizes this way of looking at empowerment. It is reflected in the work of

neoconservative planners and action groups on the radical right. Getting the government off the backs of some people at the same time removes protections and assistance given to other, disadvantaged, people and simultaneously disempowers them.

USES OF A MULTIMODAL APPROACH

This analysis puts us in a better position now to describe what an ideal-type intervention mode would look like. For an ideal-type mode to be in operation it has to include, in well-developed form, a large proportion of the variables attached to that mode in Table 1.1 (within its column), and to exclude all or nearly all of the components peculiar to any other mode. This is a tough and rare standard to reach in the emergent, disorderly arena of community affairs. Modal *tendencies* are a more realistic prospect.

Still, there are advantages to viewing intervention from the kind of multimodal perspective that has been presented. In the first place, it is important for practitioners who are grounded in a particular organizational situation to be aware of their moorings. This framework provides a means for assessing the strategic leanings in the practice context: What are the basic assumptions and preferred methods of action in the particular setting? In this way, the practitioner is more likely to perform appropriately, consistent with the expectations of supervisors, colleagues, participants, and other relevant actors.

Going beyond conformance to what exists, the practitioner may be in a position to create a form of action to deal with specific problems. Some rough rule-of-thumb guidelines can be posited. When populations are homogeneous or there is a willingness to exchange among various

community subparts and interests, it would be useful to employ locality development. When problems are evident and agreed upon in the community and lend themselves to programmed solutions through the application of factual information, social planning/policy approaches would be a viable way to proceed. Finally, when subgroups are hostile and interests are not reconcilable through usual discussion and negotiation methods, it may be functional to engage in social action.

By assessing when one or another form of intervention is or is not appropriate, the practitioner takes an analytical, problem-solving stand and does not become the rigidified captive of a particular ideological or methodological approach to practice. Consequently, practitioners should be attuned to the differential utility of each approach, particularly to the tactics used in each, and should acquire the knowledge and skill that permit them to utilize these in disciplined and flexible fashion. We will be expanding on that theme in the next section.

This discussion has focused on a comparison of practice variables by following Table 1.1 horizontally across the community intervention approaches. For a feel of how each intervention mode would be implemented using its own set of variables interactively in combination, the table should be examined vertically, down the columns. This highlights the particularity and coalescence of each of the approaches, but it also encapsulates them synthetically. The next section demonstrates why that is so.

Before proceeding with the expanded treatment, it is useful to take a moment to clarify the domain of discourse and to indicate what is excluded. Any analysis carves its area of inquiry out of the infinite possibilities in the empirical world. The domain in this instance is the community

TABLE 1.1
Three Community Intervention Approaches According to Selected Practice Variables

	Mode A (Locality Development)	Mode B (Social Planning/Policy)	Mode C (Social Action)
1. Goal categories of community action	Community capacity and integration; self-help (process goals)	Problem solving with regard to substantive community problems (task goals)	Shifting of power relationships and resources; basic institutional change (task or process goals)
2. Assumptions concerning community structure and problem conditions	Community eclipsed, anomie; lack of relationships and democratic problem-solving capacities; static traditional community	Substantive social problems, mental and physical health, housing, recreation, etc.	Aggrieved populations, social injustice, deprivation, inequality
3. Basic change strategy	Involving a broad cross section of people in determining and solving their own problems	Gathering data about problems and making decisions on the most logical course of action	Crystallizing issues and mobilizing people to take action against enemy targets
4. Characteristic change tactics and techniques	Consensus; communication among community groups and interests; group discussion	Consensus or conflict	Conflict confrontation, direct action, negotiation
5. Salient practitioner roles	Enabler-catalyst, coordinator; teacher of problem-solving skills and ethical values	Fact gatherer and analyst, program implementer, expediter	Activist-advocate; agitator, broker, negotiator, partisan
6. Medium of change	Guiding small, task-oriented groups	Guiding formal organizations and treating data	Guiding mass organizations and political processes
7. Orientation toward power structure(s)	Members of power structure as collaborators in a common venture	Power structure as employers and sponsors	Power structure as external target of action; oppressors to be coerced or overturned
8. Boundary definition of the beneficiary system	Total geographic community	Total community or community segment	Community segment
9. Assumptions regarding interests of community subparts	Common interests or reconcilable differences	Interests reconcilable or in conflict	Conflicting interests which are not easily reconcilable, scarce resources
10. Conception of beneficiaries	Citizens	Consumers	Victims
11. Conception of beneficiary role.	Participants in an interactional problem-solving process	Consumers or recipients	Employers, constituents, members

TABLE 1.1 (continued)
Three Community Intervention Approaches According to Selected Practice Variables

	Mode A (Locality Development)	Mode B (Social Planning/Policy)	Mode C (Social Action)
12. Use of empowerment	Building the capacity of a community to make collaborative and informed decisions; promoting feeling of personal mastery by residents	Finding out from consumers about their needs for service; informing consumers of their service choices	Achieving objective power for beneficiary system—the right and means to impact community decisions; promoting a feeling of mastery by participants

and, in particular, purposeful community change. This analysis is concerned with how such change is brought about by people at the community level, rather than through societal currents or federal policies. In other words, the community is examined as both the vehicle and the target of change.

Further, the analysis is concerned with the domain of strategy, the broad intervention initiatives employed to create change. These entail general strategic options available to anyone, but the discussion emphasizes actions taken by professional change agents—who may be identified with any professional field or discipline. However, because of the author's background, the discussion is tinged by social work and sociological language and perspectives.

There are other interesting and important areas of community intervention that do not fall within this domain, at least in terms of substantive coverage. Some of these include work with special populations (cultural or ethnic groups, and women), coalition building, interorganizational coordination, metropolitanization, and so forth. Nor does the analysis attempt to provide a ubiquitous theoretical framework for all of macro practice. Any of these areas, and others, are worthy of sustained theoretical development in their own right, and cumu-

latively will provide a rich, expanding intellectual and conceptual base to inform community intervention.

The approach taken is at the level of middle-range theory. It does not try to develop a grand theory formulation that is highly abstract and comprehensively encompassing. In keeping with a middle-range perspective, there is use of grounded theory, which involves the observing of real-world empirical patterns, identifying them, naming them, and constructing indicative cognitive categories to reflect them. Other approaches to theoretical development could have started more deductively, with concepts such as power structure or exchange theory, and built complex constructs concerning community intervention from these.

Obviously, it would not be realistic to expect middle-range theory to carry the burden of embracing all the dimensions of community intervention, and if it tried to accomplish that it would certainly become unwieldy and incoherent. Conversely, hovering at the middle range, this construct does not provide the level of detail desired by some: how community developers should work with task groups, how planners should use data, how social actionists should organize demonstrations or form coalitions. These questions require exercise

FIGURE 1.1
Intervention Modes as Ideal-Types

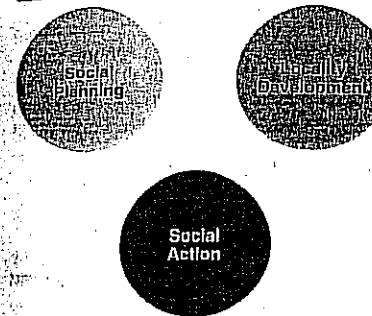
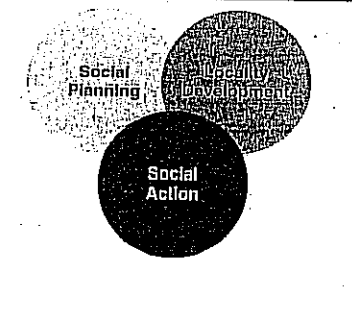


FIGURE 1.2
Intervention Modes Shown Overlapping



ing the art of application of the strategic initiatives, or developing specialized additional constructs."

THE INTERWEAVING OF INTERVENTION APPROACHES

This analysis has attempted to delineate rather distinct and coherent categories of community intervention practice. Alfred North Whitehead offered a rationale for this: "The aim of science is to seek the simplest explanations of complex facts." But while supporting the effort to harness complicated processes, he also alerted us to the underside. We may come to actually believe the original facts are simple because our quest was to arrive at a simplified construction. The French social critic Raymond Aron once spoke of this as *delire logique*—logical delirium. Therefore, Whitehead went on to admonish: "Seek simplicity and distrust it." Following that dictum, we will now reexamine the previous discussion, bringing to it the eye of the skeptic.

Up until now we have treated each community intervention approach as though it were a rather self-contained ideal-type. That conceptualization is depicted visually in Figure 1.1. Actually, intervention approaches overlap and are used in mixed form in practice (Rothman, 1999). Figure 1.2 reflects broadly the movement toward overlapping.

Practice in any mode may require tactics that are salient in another approach. For example, neighborhood social actionists interested in aiding the homeless may find it necessary to draw up a social plan in order to obtain funding for desired service projects from DHHS (Modes C and B). Or social planners may decide that the most effective way of establishing a viable low-income housing project is to engage potential residents in deciding on the geographic layout and common facilities, and to organize a tenant action council to fight drug pushers (Modes B, A, and C).

A more true-to-life depiction of the character of overlapping is in Figure 1.3. Here we see that the ideal-type modes have a limited scope of frequency and that mix-

sense, the American counterpart to the Marxist and historical schools of thought in Europe which tried to apply the evolutionary process to social thinking. This intellectual base made possible, as it also expressed, the political reform movement from Theodore Roosevelt to Franklin Roosevelt.¹⁹

Liberalism. According to Lerner the credo of liberalism "has been progress, its mood optimistic, its view of human nature rationalist and plastic; it has used human rights rather than property rights as its ends but has concentrated on social action as its means."²⁰ Despite its problems, he states, "liberalism has nevertheless emerged as a central expression of the American democratic faith."²¹ Liberal ideas have been important in building support among the privileged for the voice of the underclasses to be heard in the councils of government and for them to reap the benefits bestowed by government.

Community Organization Institutions

As we have stated, community organization activities during the period between the Civil War and World War I can be divided into two categories: the first are those which were carried on by individuals or institutions related to present-day social welfare activities. The charity organization societies, settlement houses, and urban leagues are important examples.

A second category of activities are those that were conducted by those with no direct connection to contemporary community organization programs but which have become areas of interest for community practitioners. Examples include the organi-

¹⁹Lerner, op. cit., pp. 722-723.

²⁰Ibid., p. 729.

²¹Ibid., p. 730.

zation of political, racial, and other action groups.

The Charity Organization Society: A number of factors noted above contributed to the emergence of charity organization societies in England in 1869 and, by 1873, in the United States.²² These societies initially came into existence to coordinate the work of the private agencies which provided for the needs of the poor. Soon, however, these societies began to offer direct relief and other services, as well as to coordinate the work of other agencies.²³ Murphy summarized their program as follows:

They established social service indexes or exchanges listing individuals or "cases" known to cooperating agencies. They evolved the "case conference," in which workers from different agencies interested in the same "case" or the same family—workers from the settlement house, the relief-giving agencies, the child-house, the relief-giving agencies, the visiting nurse protect children from cruelty, the visiting nurse association, and others—would meet to plan a constructive course of action in behalf of the "case." In some instances, too, the charity organization societies made broad studies of social and economic problems and recommended specific remedial measures.²⁴

These social forces contributed to this development in several ways. The movement of large populations into the cities, as well as the waves of immigration which met the manpower needs of growing industries, led to many social problems associated with poverty, inadequate housing,

²²Charles Loch Mowat, *The Charity Organization Society, 1869-1913* (London: Methuen and Co., 1961), pp. 16-21 and 94.

²³The direct services which had significance for the emergence of social casework will not be pursued in this paper. Only the community organization antecedents will be noted.

²⁴Campbell G. Murphy, *Community Organization Practice* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1954), p. 35.

illness, and exploitation. Both humanitarian impulses and fear of what these people might do in desperation produced agencies directed to ameliorating conditions. In a sense, this was an effort to counter the more radical ideologies.

Separate efforts also were made by groups associated with different neighborhoods and ethnic and religious groups, and those with different problems. Difficulties which arose repeatedly were: (1) The same people were approached over and over again to provide resources for such agencies, and they began to look for ways to make charitable solicitations more efficient and less demanding on the few. (2) Duplication of aid was apparent, and those who offered it sought ways to avoid this and prevent the pauperization of the recipients which they believed was the inevitable result of indiscriminate relief. (3) Paid functionaries arose who sought to rationalize these activities, drawing their inspiration from the same wellsprings that fed a developing pragmatic philosophy. (4) The resources of some charitable societies were insufficient for the maintenance of required services, prompting an incessant search for new sources of funds.

During this period, leaders of charity organization societies harbored serious reservations about the wisdom of public activity on behalf of the poor. In general, they doubted government's ability to administer aid so that it would be rehabilitative. Darwinian ideology and a hedonistic theory of motivation strongly influenced their views on the matter. The Social Darwinians regarded relief as interference with the operation of natural law, and the hedonists held that the only assurance of hard work among the poorer classes was the fear of hunger and exposure. This was tempered somewhat by humanitarian impulses. The charity organization societies

distinguished between the "worthy" and the "unworthy" poor and chose to aid the former who, for reasons beyond their control, were unable to support themselves and who, through the moral example of the societies' "friendly visitors," could be rescued from pauperization. The rest were relegated to the not-too-tender mercies of the public poor law authorities, never to be supported at a level equal to the lowest wages in the community so that they would constantly be goaded toward self-support.

The functions of the charity organization societies were cooperative planning among charitable institutions for the amelioration or elimination of various social problems and the creation of new social agencies and the reform of old ones. Charity organization leaders were actively engaged in securing reforms in tenement housing codes, developing antituberculosis associations, obtaining legislation in support of juvenile court and probation work, establishing agencies and programs for the care of dependent children, cooperating with the police in programs for dealing with beggars and vagrants, and supporting legislation requiring absent fathers to support their children.²⁵

Some of the most significant contributions of the charity organization societies to community organization were the development of community welfare planning organizations and of social survey techniques. One of the earliest and most important examples was that of the Pittsburgh organization. Writing in 1922, Frank Watson discussed the significance of the Pittsburgh survey:

²⁵For details on these activities see Frank D. Watson, *The Charity Organization Movement in the United States* (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1922), pp. 288-323.

Few of the offspring of the charity organization movement have had more far-reaching consequences or given greater promise of the future than the Pittsburgh Survey, the pioneer social survey in this country. Interpretation of hours, wages, housing, court procedure and all the rest, in terms of standards of living and the recognition that the basis for judging of social conditions is the measure of life they allow to those affected by them, constitute the very essence of the developments that have since taken place in social work.²⁶

Out of the Pittsburgh survey came a council of social agencies which took upon itself the responsibility for acting upon the recommendations of the survey and conducting additional studies and reforms.

*The Social Settlements.*²⁷ Settlements emerged fifteen years after charity organization societies. Samuel Barnett opened Toynbee Hall, one of the first settlements, in the slums of East London in 1884. Stanton

²⁶*Ibid.*, pp. 305-306.

²⁷This section rests heavily on the analysis of Allen F. Davis in his *Spearsheads for Reform: The Social Settlements and the Progressive Movement 1890-1914* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967). Although Toynbee Hall is commonly referred to as the first social settlement, it was opened, although only half-completed, on Christmas Eve of 1884 by two Oxford University students (see Davis, p. 3). A. F. Young and E. T. Ashton, in their *British Social Work in the Nineteenth Century* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1956) claimed that Oxford House was opened in October 1884, while Toynbee Hall was not opened until January 1885 (p. 230). Thus Toynbee Hall was one of the first settlements to open its doors. Although Oxford House was technically the first, Samuel Barnett, who fathered the settlement house movement in Great Britain, was associated with Toynbee Hall. This may account for the fact that a number of scholars erroneously regard Toynbee Hall as the first settlement house. See: Frank J. Bruno, *Trends in Social Work* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1948), p. 114; Arthur Hillman, "Settlements and Community Centers," in Harry L. Lurie (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Social Work* (New York: National Association of Social Workers, 1965), p. 690. The authors thank David Gilbert for bringing this to our attention.

Coit, who visited Toynbee Hall in 1886, established the University Settlement on the Lower East Side of New York later that year. Although charity organization societies and social settlements were prompted by the same social conditions, their analyses of the problems created by industrialization and immigration were quite dissimilar, leading them to different objectives and programs. Barnett, an Anglican clergyman influenced by the Christian Socialists, and John Ruskin sought to bridge the gap between the social classes and restore human values to a society dominated by materialism. Coit, strongly affected by Felix Adler and the Society of Ethical Culture, believed that nothing short of a moral and intellectual renaissance in city life was required. This could best be approached, he believed, by bringing together people of all descriptions into joint efforts, breaking down the barriers of interest, age, social class, political and religious affiliations.²⁸ Rather than looking to individual character as the root cause of social problems, settlement house leaders typically saw environmental factors as responsible for the conditions they deplored.

Thus, while the charity organization societies seemed more ideologically related to the Darwinian ideology, the settlement appeared to draw more heavily upon the liberal, or even the radical, ideologies of the day. The types of individuals who became involved in these two movements also were different. Charity organization leaders were persons closer to the upper classes in society and epitomized noblesse oblige. They favored either reforming the poor or modifying the most adverse of their social circumstances. Although exceptions on both sides can be cited, the settlement house

²⁸Stanton A. Coit, *Neighborhood Guilds: An Instrument of Social Reform*, 2d ed. (London: Swan, Sonnenschein and Co., 1892), pp. 7-16, 46-51.

workers were a different breed. Typically well educated and drawn from the middle classes, they were frequently critics of the social order who identified with and shared the lives of the poor in some measure. Their writings usually lack the condescension so often found in those of the charity organization workers.

Perhaps the most striking quality of the settlement program was its pragmatism. Unlike the charity organization societies, settlements had no predetermined scheme for solving the problems of society. In fact, they had no coherent analysis of the problems they confronted. Instead, with a general concern about the impact of such phenomena as industrialization, urbanization, and immigration upon society, they searched for answers that would be both feasible and effective.

Services were a major theme in their activities. They organized kindergartens and clubs for children, recreational programs, evening schools for adults, public baths, and art exhibitions.²⁹

Social reform was, perhaps, the most basic and self-conscious thrust of the settlements. Services were often initiated as experiments which, if successful, could serve as models for other institutions. Indeed, many of the programs demonstrated by the settlements were taken over by other agencies.

The settlements' reform efforts went much beyond the organization of new or improved services. They included legislative campaigns at the local, state, and national levels. In the field of education,

²⁹Contemporary group work also traces its origins to these settlement activities. On the other hand, the major thrust of group work is toward personal and interpersonal problems, and community organization, toward social conditions in a wider context. There is some indication, however, that group work may again be emphasizing its earlier social commitments.

they worked for the development of vocational education and guidance in the public schools, as well as for the addition of school nurses, hot lunch programs, and education for the retarded and handicapped. They urged the creation of small neighborhood playgrounds, housing code improvements, reduction of congestion through city planning, and the transformation of public schools into neighborhood social centers. Although settlement workers could not agree on the value of immigration restrictions, they organized such groups as the Immigrant Protective League to ease the immigrant's adjustment to the new world. Settlement workers fought for laws to protect employed women and abolish child labor, and they helped organize the National Child Labor Committee and the National Women's Trade Union League. They were often involved in municipal reform activities, both at the ward and the city-wide levels, and many contributed to the platform and organizational work of the Progressive party in 1912.³⁰

One theme ran through both the service and reform efforts of the settlements—participation and democracy. Many of their service activities were designed to permit dialogue between working people and settlement residents. The residents involved themselves in the life of the community so that they might know what services were needed. They worked to reduce the barriers that separated them from their neighbors, and the neighbors from one another. They invited labor leaders and radicals of their day to use their facilities.

³⁰A study indicates that, after his defeat in 1912, Roosevelt terminated his relationship with social workers and returned to a more traditional Republicanism. See W. I. Trattner, "Theodore Roosevelt, Social Workers, and the Election of 1912: A Note," *Mid-America* 50, No. 1 (1968), pp. 64-69.

Finally, in everything they undertook, settlements tried to help their neighbors develop their potentialities to the fullest. There was great emphasis on education of all kinds. One of the major reasons for opposing child labor was its negative effects upon the development of children. Municipal reform was viewed, in part, as a process of helping communities gain the capacity to deal with their problems more effectively.

The settlement idea spread rapidly. In 1891 there were six settlements in the United States; by 1910 the number had jumped to over four hundred. Most of them were located in the large industrial cities of the East and Midwest; there were very few in the South or West.

The Organization of Ethnic Minorities and Women. A variety of forms of organization among black Americans was tested during this period as black people coped with their shifting status in American life. One of the earliest of these forms was developed by a group of prominent black people in 1865 and led by Frederick Douglass and George T. Downing who were "charged" with the duty to look after the best interests of the recently emancipated.³¹ Almost twenty-five years later, in 1883, a very different kind of step was taken by the Louisville Convention of Colored Men which "concentrated on large issues of political, as distinct from partisan, rights, education, civil rights and economic problems."³² Five years later, the Colored Farmers Alliance and Cooperative Union came into existence. In 1890, the Afro-American League organized in another direction, emphasizing legal redress rather

³¹Fisher and Quarles, op. cit., pp. 259-260.

³²Ibid., p. 308.

than politics.³³ In 1890, blacks from twenty-one states and the District of Columbia organized the Afro-American League of the United States. Issues which concerned this group included school funds, and legal and voting rights. In 1896, the National Association of Colored Women was formed.

Crosscurrents, similar to those which affect the organizations of black people today, were operative between the Civil War and World War I. On the one hand, many efforts were under the influence of Booker T. Washington, who sought an accommodation with white interests in order to maintain their support. In contrast, W. E. B. DuBois epitomized an opposition to this approach in 1905 when he called for "a conference 'to oppose firmly the present methods of strangling honest criticism.'"³⁴ The Niagara movement grew out of this meeting and by 1909 resulted in the formation of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. Such social workers as Jane Addams, Florence Kelly, and Lillian Wald assisted in these organizing efforts.

The Committee on Urban Conditions among Negroes in New York City, later to become the National Urban League, was another organization in which social workers were involved during this period. Its first executive, George Edmund Haynes, "was on the faculty of Fisk University and particularly interested in training black social workers."³⁵

As noted earlier, Mexican-Americans, as well as Native Americans, were confronted with efforts that took away their lands. One response to this trend was the development

³³Ibid., p. 312.

³⁴Ibid., p. 357.

³⁵Ibid., p. 361.

of small groups for protection and support. Some, for survival, became bandits. Organized protest, however, for Mexican-Americans began in agriculture or, as Howard states, "The roots of the Chicano movement lie in the fields."³⁶

In 1903, for example, Mexican- and Japanese-American sugar beet workers struck in Ventura, California.³⁷ In addition, throughout this period, but particularly from the 1880s on, many organizations came into existence whose function was, according to Alvarez, to preserve a Mexican-American way of life through "celebrations, social events, provision of facilities, information and communication networks."³⁸ The function of such organizations was to preserve a bicultural and bilingual existence. Some examples include the Penitente Order in New Mexico in the 1880s and *Mano Negra*, also in New Mexico, in the 1890s.³⁹

The Native Americans during this period continued to have well-developed forms of tribal organization, partly as a heritage of their early struggles for survival against white encroachment. However, the tribes were separated from one another geographically and structurally, thus often rendering them easy prey for governmental manipulation. Nevertheless, the militancy of the period in actual warfare, as well as persistent legal action, represents an impressive, though unsuccessful, effort to secure a greater measure of justice from American society.

³⁶Howard, op. cit., p. 95.

³⁷Ibid.

³⁸Salvador Alvarez, "Mexican-American Community Organizations," in *Voices: Readings from El Grito, A Journal of Contemporary Mexican American Thought, 1967-1973*, ed. Octavio Ignacio Romano-V (Berkeley: Quinto Sol Publications, 1971), pp. 205-214.

³⁹Ibid., p. 209.

The early Chinese immigrants were organized into family or benevolent associations, tongs, or business interests.⁴⁰ For the Japanese, the Japanese Association for Issei (first-generation Japanese in the United States) had some similar functions.

Thus, for these Asian groups, a major function of community organizations during this period was mutual benefit and cultural participation. For example,

people from the same *ken*, or Japanese state, often cooperated in various ways, and this was noticeable in particular trades. For example, Miyamoto writes that the first Japanese barber in Seattle was from Yamaguchi-ken. After he became established, he helped his friends from the same *ken* with training and money, so that, eventually, most of the Japanese barbers in Seattle were from Yamaguchi-ken.⁴¹

During this era, when associations existed or were created in many ethnic groups, organizations for the benefit of women also emerged. In 1868, Susan B. Anthony was a leading organizer of a working women's association to fight economic discrimination against women. In addition, during the next decade unions of women working in a number of industries such as laundries and shoe factories were organized. By 1886, there were 113 women's assemblies in the Knights of Labor.⁴² Other organizations also were concerned about the poor working conditions

⁴⁰For a discussion of evolving forms of Chinese-American community organizations, see Melford S. Weiss, "Division and Unity: Social Process in a Chinese-American Community," in *Asian Americans: Psychological Perspectives*, ed. Stanley Sue and Nathaniel N. Wagner (Palo Alto: Science & Behavior Books, 1973), pp. 264-273.

⁴¹Kitano, *Japanese Americans*, op. cit., p. 19.

⁴²For details of these and other endeavors, see "A Century of Struggle: American Women, 1820-1920," in Barbara Deckard, *The Women's Movement: Political, Socioeconomic, and Psychological Issues* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1975), pp. 243-284. This section draws heavily on that chapter.

of women. For example, in 1894, the New York Consumer's League presented information on these conditions. By 1896, this organization had branches in twenty states. In 1900, the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union was organized and throughout the pre-World I period it continued to organize despite many obstacles.⁴³

While working women were organizing themselves in their workplaces, more affluent women organized to secure the vote. The women's suffrage movement and the movement for the abolition of slavery had originally been one. The split came partially because northern business interests stood to gain from the black vote but could see no value in women having the same right.⁴⁴ This was symbolized when the American Equal Rights Association, working for black and women's rights, split in May 1869. Later that year moderate women organized the American Woman Suffrage Association while radical women formed the National Women Suffrage Association. These organizations remained separate until 1890 when they merged to form the National American Woman Suffrage Association. Unfortunately, the class bias of these organizations was evident in attacks on blacks as less fit to vote than women and in other statements made to ensure the acceptability of the women suffrage movement in the South.

The women's suffrage movement was able to see to it that the Nineteenth Amendment was proposed every year from 1886 to 1896, although it was defeated each time. The lack of strength to pass the amendment, according to one authority, was due to "their own conservative tactics and racist, elitist positions, which alienated

⁴³Ibid., p. 270.

⁴⁴Ibid., p. 262.

their potential allies."⁴⁵ With the emergence of militant supporters, however, such as radical farmers, the Progressive Party, and the socialists and a shift to more militant leadership, many states did come to adopt woman suffrage. By 1916, both major parties supported suffrage. In 1917, the Women's party turned to more militant tactics and picketed the White House. Partly, also, because of women's activities in the war and the public support of President Wilson, the House of Representatives finally passed the Nineteenth Amendment in January 1918. It took, however, another eighteen months for Senate approval.

Development of the Profession and Professional Education

For this period it is impossible to discuss community organization as a specialization in social work, which had itself not yet emerged as a separate entity. There were individuals concerned with coordinating charity, organizing neighborhood settlements, or mobilizing protest in racial matters, but these people had little common professional identity. Some training activities began to emerge in 1898 when the New York Charity Organization Society started a summer training course. This was expanded to a one-year program a few years later, and by the end of World War I seventeen schools of social work had come into existence in the United States and Canada. The Association of Training Schools for Professional Social Work was formed at that time also. The emphasis, however, was more on what became casework than on methods of community organization.

While the ethnic organizing of the period as well as that among women may

⁴⁵Ibid., p. 269.

have secured the support of social workers as *individuals*, this did not represent activities of the profession or of a social work method called community organization. Nevertheless, many precedents were being created for and lessons learned by those who sought to create a more humane society and this included social workers.

1915 TO 1929

Social Conditions

After World War I, several new conditions emerged that had a significant impact on community organization practice: urbanization increased markedly, industrial potential escalated, and racial conflicts intensified. By 1920 more than half of the population of the United States lived in cities, and industrial innovations were accelerated by the heavy demands on production created by World War I.

The twenties, nevertheless, was a decade of confidence in the economic system. As Lerner stated, "Big business of the 1920s, certain that it had found the secret of perpetual prosperity, claimed the right to the policymaking decisions not only in the economy but in the government."⁴⁶

Ironically, this period also brought some major crises in civil liberties. "After World War I there was a wave of raids and deportations; it arose from the uneasy feeling that the Russian Revolution had caused a shift in the world balance of power and spawned a fanatic faith threatening American survival."⁴⁷ The period also witnessed the intensification of activities of groups such as the Ku Klux Klan with antagonism directed against blacks, Jews, and the foreign born.

⁴⁶Lerner, op. cit., p. 279.

⁴⁷Ibid., p. 455.

The Condition of Minorities

Blacks. This was a period during which black Americans made strong attempts to improve their lives and were simultaneously subjected to major efforts at repression. Seventy-six black people were lynched in 1919,⁴⁸ and "the white national secretary of the NAACP was badly beaten on the streets of Texas."⁴⁹ Chicago experienced a severe "race riot" in 1919 which resulted in the death of 15 white and 23 black persons as well as injury to an additional 537.⁵⁰

However, progress occurred in many spheres of American life. The term *the New Negro* became prevalent in the 1920s, and this was supported by the increased self-respect of many black war veterans. During this period, distinguished people such as Langston Hughes, Countee Cullen, and Paul Robeson began their careers. Black school attendance jumped from 45 to 60 percent of the eligible school population between 1910 and 1930.⁵¹ In fact, in many ways the current emphasis on black power and black identity has ideological antecedents in this period.

Chicanos. These years saw a large immigration of persons from Mexico into what had become the United States. Between 1910 and 1919, almost two hundred and twenty-five thousand persons came, and in the next decade the number was almost double.⁵² According to one writer, "that striking increase is directly related to the miserable economic conditions in Mexico after ten

⁴⁸Fishel and Quarles, op. cit., 403.

⁴⁹Ibid.

⁵⁰Ibid., p. 405.

⁵¹Ibid.

⁵²Lopez y Rivas, op. cit., p. 85.

years of armed struggle."⁵³ Specifically, the Mexican economy was in a poor state after the Mexican Revolution while the southwestern United States was experiencing considerable economic growth.

There was an expansion and development of nonagricultural worker organizations during this period. As Moore notes:

In 1920 Mexican workers struck the Los Angeles urban railway. In later years the strikes in the fields and mines of the Border States were both more numerous and more sophisticated. The earlier ones were significant, however, because Mexicans were generally denied normal channels of political expression in any of the Border States except New Mexico.⁵⁴

Native Americans. During this period, the conditions of Native Americans continued to deteriorate as the government persisted in its policy of implementing the Dawes Act of 1887 which distributed land to individuals. The attempt to undermine the widely practiced custom of holding land in common for the good of all was continued. The act not only created severe economic problems but eroded traditional tribal government.⁵⁵ In fact, "The Indian Agent and his staff were 'the government' for most tribes from the cessation of treaty making to the 1930s."⁵⁶

In addition to the effects of the Dawes Act, two other actions also diminished tribal ties. From 1917 to 1921, the trust on land allotments of Indians of less than one-half Indian blood was terminated. Many Indian agents were also eliminated and their wards

⁵³Ibid., p. 39.

⁵⁴Joan Moore, *Mexican-Americans* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1970), p. 24.

⁵⁵Theodore W. Taylor, *The States and Their Indian Citizens* (Washington, DC: United States Department of the Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs, 1972), p. 17.

⁵⁶Ibid.

placed under school superintendents and farmers reporting directly to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs.⁵⁷ This focused activities on individuals, not tribes, and presumably moved Indians as individuals into non-Indian education and agriculture.

Asian Americans. The Immigration Act of 1924 epitomized the attitudes of the American government, if not of the society, to the foreign born. No immigration was to be permitted for Asians; low quotas were set for southern Europeans, and high ones for northern Europeans. This made it impossible, particularly for the Chinese who had not come as families, to form or reunite families. In Japanese communities, these years marked the birth and early development of many *Nisei*, or second-generation Japanese-Americans. With great determination, many *Nisei* moved into middle-class occupations.

Ideological Currents

The ideologies that were prevalent in the earlier period continued to exert a strong influence. The sense of complacency and optimism stemming from economic growth and affluence did find perceptive social critics, however. In addition, the following are ideas which developed during this period and which also molded social work practice.

Psychoanalysis. Some may find it strange to regard psychoanalysis as an ideology; nevertheless, the conditions of the period were conducive to the introduction of psychoanalysis as a major intellectual force in social work. This was a period of affluence, and many believed that the social environment offered so many opportunities and was other-

⁵⁷Ibid., pp. 17-18.

wise so benign that any problems must be the result of individual failure. Psychoanalytic practice was clearly oriented toward changing the individual and not the system. Social workers, as Jesse Taft observed, became preoccupied with the person and all but forgot the situation: "The most daring experimental caseworkers have all but lost connection with social obligation and are quite buried in their scientific interest in the individual as he has evolved through his own unique growth process."⁵⁸ The social worker disassociated herself from charity to be reborn a psychotherapist.⁵⁹

Anti-Intellectualism. Despite the increasing popularity of Freud's ideas, this was not a period of intellectual activity in the United States. Vice-President Coolidge attacked the colleges and universities as "hot beds of sedition."⁶⁰ Many intellectuals, along with T. S. Eliot, fled to Europe, finding America a "wasteland."⁶¹ American writers such as Sinclair Lewis castigated the American middle class, as F. Scott Fitzgerald did the upper class. It should also be remembered that the Scopes trial, testing the legal right to teach evolution in the schools, took place in 1925. According to one authority "only one event in the 1920s succeeded in arousing intellectuals of every kind of political loyalty: the arrest, trial, and execution of two Italian anarchists, Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti."⁶²

⁵⁸Roy Lubove, *The Professional Altruist: The Emergence of Social Work As a Cause, 1880-1930* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1965), p. 89.

⁵⁹Ibid.

⁶⁰Samuel Eliot Morison, *The Oxford History of the American People* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965), p. 909.

⁶¹Ibid., p. 910.

⁶²For a brief summary of the case and its effects on opinion, see Frederick J. Hoffman, *The Twenties: American Writing in the Post War Decade* (New York: The Viking Press, 1955), pp. 357-364.

Development of Community Organization Institutions

The Community Chest and United Fund. This period saw a continued increase in the number of welfare institutions. This proliferation of agencies generated insistent demands for coordination. The increase in such institutions was prompted primarily by accelerating urbanization. The war increased the pace as "some three hundred American communities organized war chests to cope with the mounting flood of appeals from national and local agencies."⁶³ The agencies' increasing needs for financing, despite the affluence of the period, prompted demands from both the philanthropists and the professionals for better fund-raising methods. The interests of these two groups were not identical, and this led to the development of two separate yet interrelated institutions—the community chest or united fund, on the one hand, and the community welfare council on the other. The separation of interests between the suppliers of philanthropic dollars and the dispensers of them had effects which can be seen to this day in community welfare institutions.

Lubove reflected this situation accurately when he declared:

Financial federation captured the imagination of businessmen by promising efficient coordination and organization of the community welfare machinery, immunity from multiple solicitation, economical collection and distribution of funds, and the development of a broad base of support which would relieve the pressure on the small circle of large givers. The corporation, increasingly regarded as a source of gifts, appreciated the conveniences of federated finance.⁶⁴

There was also opposition to this development. National organizations resented

⁶³Lubove, *op. cit.*, p. 189.

⁶⁴Ibid., p. 183.

the competition for local funds. Of particular importance to the contemporary scene in community organization is resistance to the erosion of "democracy" implicit in the development of a fund-raising bureaucracy. Lubove cited one chest executive who stated, "We are facing here the age-long and inevitable conflict which exists in any society between the urge for individual independence and initiative on the one hand, and the need for social control on the other."⁶⁵

Philanthropists wanted their funds spent efficiently and desired relief from the constant appeals of charitable solicitors. United appeals for financial support were created to serve these objectives, originating with the United Jewish Appeal in Boston in 1895.⁶⁶

Community chests evolved in several ways. First, welfare agencies joined to solicit funds, hoping to raise more money than each could obtain separately. In 1887, the Charity Organization Society in Denver initiated joint fund-raising among fifteen of its twenty-three cooperating agencies, an effort which proved financially successful in its first year of operation.⁶⁷ Community chests were also organized by councils of social agencies. In 1915, two years after its organization, Cincinnati's Council of Agencies brought twelve agencies together in a united appeal for funds. Before 1927, councils in St. Louis, Minneapolis, Columbus, New Haven, and Detroit had followed suit.⁶⁸

⁶⁵Ibid., p. 196. Lubove, here, was quoting Raymond Clapp, "Who Shall Decide Personnel Policies?" *Survey* 65 (1930), p. 103.

⁶⁶Lyman S. Ford, "Federated Financing," in Harry L. Lurie (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Social Work* (New York: National Association of Social Workers, 1965), p. 331.

⁶⁷William J. Norton, *The Cooperative Movement in Social Work* (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1927), pp. 50-54.

⁶⁸Ibid., pp. 93-99.

For the most part, however, community chests were initiated by large contributors. Often their first step was a charity endorsement bureau which later reorganized as a community chest. Businessmen and industrialists believed that welfare services, like public utilities, should be held accountable to the public. Because contributors rarely had time to investigate agencies that asked for support, local chambers of commerce organized bureaus to (1) establish standards for welfare agencies; (2) investigate individual agencies and measure their operations against their standards; (3) recommend those agencies that met the test; and (4) encourage members and the public to support organizations that received endorsement.⁶⁹

The endorsement bureau had its critics. Because it mainly represented the large business and industrial contributors, agencies viewed the bureaus as potentially autocratic and a threat to their autonomy. Furthermore, agencies believed that the organization might dampen contributors' interest and enthusiasm.⁷⁰ The demands upon a small number of contributors also became very great. The first major effort to remedy these conditions was taken by the Cleveland Chamber of Commerce. After initiating a study of the problem in 1907, the chamber launched the Federation for Charity and Philanthropy in 1913. Cleveland's federation is generally considered to be a major landmark in the history of community chests,⁷¹ a name which was first used in Rochester, New York, in 1919.⁷²

⁶⁹Ibid., pp. 24-29.

⁷⁰Ibid., pp. 29-30.

⁷¹Ibid., pp. 68-71.

⁷²Guy Thompson, "Community Chests and United Funds," *Social Work Year Book, 1957*, ed. Russell H. Kurtz (New York: National Association of Social Workers, 1957), p. 176.

Community chests were dominated by three kinds of people: contributors, particularly those who gave large sums; solicitors, the small businessmen, service club members and middle management types who helped to raise the chests' funds; and volunteers representative of the health, welfare, and recreation agencies that were supported by the chests. The membership delegated much of the decision making to a board of directors, which hired an executive. In the beginning, most of the work was done by volunteers. Volunteers still continue to play an important part in community chests.

World War I gave a great impetus to the development of chests. Overseas relief and other war-created welfare needs stimulated the development of nearly four hundred "War Chests." During the 1920s the number of communities with community chests increased from 39 to 353.⁷³

The Council of Social Agencies and Community Welfare Council. The first decades of the twentieth century saw the development of an increasing professionalism among those who helped the poor. The friendly visitor was replaced by the paid agent. The charity organization societies founded schools of philanthropy which, beginning around the turn of the century, became graduate schools of social work. The development of the social survey—a disciplined effort to obtain factors necessary for planning—was another manifestation of the growing professionalism. In short, the growing cadre of welfare professionals, with the support of many volunteers who served as board members of charitable societies, was interested in organizing a rational, systematic approach to

the welfare needs of communities. Their interest included providing for the gaps in service, detecting problems, and looking to future needs. This combination of professionals and volunteers formed councils. The first councils were organized in Milwaukee and Pittsburgh in 1909. By 1926 there were councils in Chicago, Boston, St. Louis, Los Angeles, Detroit, Cincinnati, Columbus, and New York.⁷⁴

Because of the potential conflicts noted earlier, one of the problems experienced by councils was their relation to community chests or united funds. Often councils have been regarded as the planning arm of the chest or fund, and this limited their relationship to publicly supported health and welfare agencies. Yet when councils maintained some degree of independence from chests and funds, they seldom could provide the necessary incentives to gain compliance with their plans. Those councils that were heavily influenced by chests or funds were often assigned responsibility for distributing the money raised in the united appeal, a function seldom performed by independent councils.

Another problem of welfare councils was their relation with constituents. In the beginning, most councils were confederations of welfare agencies, largely those supported by chests. Within such a federated structure, councils often found it difficult to take forceful action, not wanting to seriously offend their agency constituents, which had a major stake in welfare plans. With the growing professionalization of councils, they often were reorganized as councils of individual citizens with an interest in welfare problems and services. This shift was indicated in the change in name from "council of agencies" to "com-

⁷³Ford, op. cit., pp. 327-328.

⁷⁴Ibid., p. 37.

munity welfare council." Efforts were made to recruit those with a reputation for influence, and decisions have increasingly reflected the views of professional planners and their volunteer constituents rather than welfare agencies. In spite of this, welfare councils have not enjoyed a reputation for effective planning.⁷⁵

The Social Unit Plan. Roy Lubove⁷⁶ described a local development which anticipated one trend that later became important in community organization. This plan was launched in 1915 when the National Social Unit Organization was founded. A pilot area was selected in Cincinnati. The sponsors desired to test:

the theory that a democratic and effective form of community organization which stimulated people to define and meet their own needs has to divide the citizens into small, primary units, organize the occupational specialists, and insure an "organic" and coordinate working relationship between the representatives of groups having special knowledge or skill for service to the community and the representatives of the residents.⁷⁷

The social unit plan led to the development of block councils, block workers, and federations of such groups, referred to as the Citizens Council of the Social Unit. Occupational groups also elected a council. This program lasted three years and "concentrated on health services."⁷⁸ The movement did not expand in this form, perhaps indicative of the fact that the time for this idea had not yet come.

⁷⁵These changes did not occur until the late 1940s and 1950s, but are reported here to complete the discussion of community welfare councils.

⁷⁶Lubove, op. cit., pp. 175-178.

⁷⁷Ibid., p. 176.

⁷⁸Ibid.

The Organization of Ethnic Minorities and Women. Particularly in the South, many institutions developed among blacks because of the patterns of discrimination and segregation which existed during this period. Out of school segregation, educational organizations arose. Black newspapers also came into existence because news of the black community was ignored by the white press. The exclusion of blacks from white churches led to a variety of black religious organizations.⁷⁹

Many black soldiers hoped that their return from World War I would see a change in the patterns of racism they had suffered for so long. This was not to occur, as the Klan and other groups intensified their campaigns and "returning Negro soldiers were lynched by hanging and burning, even while still in their military uniforms."⁸⁰ One reaction to this was the Universal Negro Improvement Association of Marcus Garvey. This organization rapidly became the largest nonreligious black organization. The purpose of the movement was to send blacks back to Africa, and the attraction of this to many blacks was a clear indication of their disaffection with America.

There was also militancy, and as Franklin stated:

This was the spirit of what Alain Locke called "The New Negro." He fought the Democratic white primary, made war on the whites who consigned him to the ghetto, attacked racial discrimination in employment, and pressed for legislation to protect his rights. If he was seldom successful during the postwar decade and the depression, he made it quite clear that he was unalterably opposed to the un-American character of the two worlds of race.⁸¹

⁷⁹Much of the material in this section has been drawn from John Hope Franklin, "The Two Worlds of Race: A Historical View," *Daedalus* 94, No. 4 (Fall 1965), pp. 899-920.

⁸⁰Ibid., p. 912.

⁸¹Ibid., p. 913.

During this same period, a major thrust of Mexican-American organization was toward integration.⁸² This represented the desires of the growing middle class to secure their share of the American wealth. An example was the Order of the Sons of America, founded in San Antonio in 1921. An intent of this organization was to show Anglos that its members were different from Mexicans who cause problems.⁸³ The League of Latin American Citizens had similar objectives.

Meanwhile, Chicano laborers were waging their own struggle. Lopez y Rivas points out that "all over California, Arizona, Texas, New Mexico, and other states they went on strike for better wages and living conditions as well as an end to racist employment practices." These efforts, however, met with "violent repression."⁸⁴ Nevertheless, an important development was the founding in 1927 of *La Confederacion de Uniones Obreras Mexicanas*. This organization held its first general convention in May 1928. Delegates attended from twenty-one unions as well as mutual aid societies. Farm labor groups also struck the fields throughout California. The *Confederacion* itself engaged in major organizing activities throughout the 1920s and 1930s.⁸⁵

The actions of the federal government which had the effect of undermining Native American institutions continued during this period. One piece of legislation, the Snyder Act of 1921, continued to affirm the objective of the Bureau of Indian Affairs to provide "for the general support and civilization of Indians."⁸⁶ However, the

Meriam Report of 1928 recommended "an acculturation program on an understanding of the Indian point of view."⁸⁷ Even though these actions may have been inspired by good intentions, their patronizing nature was unresponsive of indigenous institutions.

One author, in an attempt to characterize efforts to organize women after the adoption of the Nineteenth Amendment, titles her chapter "Forty Years in the Desert: American Women, 1920-1960."⁸⁸ In the first place, there was no indication of a women's bloc vote, which some had feared. This was not to deny the fact, however, that in specific elections in those states that had adopted women's suffrage, the proportions of women voting differently than men made a difference in the outcome. An example was the defeat of antisuffrage senator John Weeks in 1918.⁸⁹

The National Women's Party, however, continued to operate. It maintained a platform committed to full equality and supported the first introduction of the Equal Rights Amendment into Congress in 1923. However, it was quite small and in 1923 had only eight thousand members as compared to fifty thousand three years before.⁹⁰

The League of Women Voters was founded in 1920. This group was much less militant than the National Women's Party and it declared in 1931 that "nearly all discriminations have been removed."⁹¹ The League was less concerned about women's issues than child labor laws, pacifism, and other general reforms.

The general conservatism of the 1920s took its toll on the women's movement. The

⁸⁷Ibid.

⁸⁸Deckard, op. cit., p. 285.

⁸⁹Ibid., p. 286.

⁹⁰Ibid., p. 287.

⁹¹Ibid.

⁸²Lopez y Rivas, op. cit., p. 62.

⁸³Ibid.

⁸⁴Ibid.

⁸⁵Alvarez, op. cit., pp. 211-212.

⁸⁶Taylor, op. cit., p. 19.

prohibition against child labor, which women's groups favored, was attacked as a subversive plot.⁹² It was even charged that all liberal women's groups were part of a Communist plot.⁹³ Despite this, women continued to found organizations including the National Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs (1919) and the American Association of University Women (1921).

Development of the Profession

Most of those who trained for social work in the first two decades of the twentieth century were studying to become caseworkers. However, by 1920 Joseph K. Hart had written a text entitled *Community Organization*, and between then and 1930 at least five books were written on the subject.⁹⁴ It is easy to see why the casework emphasis existed in view of the prevalent ideologies and issues of the period, emphasizing individual conformity to the "system." In fact, community organization practice during this period was aimed largely at enhancing agencies oriented toward personal adjustment. Except, perhaps, for the workers in settlement houses, the "social unit plan," and the organizations developing in the black community, little thought was given to the changing social institutions to meet the needs of individuals. Even in the case of settlements, the workers there often thought of themselves as educators, recreation leaders, or group workers. In the black community, organizers rarely identified with social work.

Nevertheless, some different ideas were beginning to emerge. Mary Follett foresaw

⁹²Ibid., pp. 288-289.

⁹³Ibid.

⁹⁴Meyer Schwartz, "Community Organization," *Encyclopedia of Social Work*, op. cit., 1965, p. 177.

the advantages to democracy of the organization of primary groups in the local communities.⁹⁵ Eduard Lindeman, who taught for many years at the New York School of Social Work, also spoke of the value of "an attempt on the part of the people who live in a small, compact local group to assume their own responsibilities and to guide their own destinies."⁹⁶

The emphasis of this period, however, was aptly summed up by Lubove when he wrote the following:

Federation employed the rhetoric of the early community organization movement, but its intensive concern with the machinery and financing of social welfare diverted attention from cooperative democracy and the creative group life of the ordinary citizen to problems of agency administration and service. It substituted the bureaucratic goal of efficiency through expert leadership for what had been a quest for democratic self-determination through joint efforts of citizen and specialist. Community organization had barely emerged as a cause before it had become a function absorbed into the administrative structure of social work.⁹⁷

1929 TO 1954

Social work, as well as other institutions in the United States, was deeply affected by the two major cataclysms of this period: the depression and World War II. To regard these years as a single period in American history may seem odd to some readers, but they cover a coherent period in the devel-

⁹⁵See for example, her book, *The New State: Group Organization, the Solution of Popular Government* (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1918), p. 217.

⁹⁶Eduard C. Lindeman, *The Community: An Introduction to the Study of Community Leadership and Organization* (New York: Association Press, 1921), p. 58.

⁹⁷Lubove, op. cit., p. 180.

opment of ideas and issues in community organization practice. A departure from this pattern took place in the fifties, marked by the desegregation decision of the Supreme Court and the end of McCarthyism, that period of ideological repression which received its name, as well as much encouragement, from the late Senator Joseph McCarthy of Wisconsin.

Social Conditions

To set the stage for the discussion of the history of community organization during the period, one should call attention to several social forces.

Depression Issues. The most apparent of the social forces at play was the vast increase in unemployment. The bank and stock market failures also removed whatever reserves people might otherwise have utilized in such a crisis. Mortgage foreclosures deprived many of their homes, farms, and small businesses.

The Growth of Government. The expansion of government programs was a direct result of the depression. Government expenditures, programs, and controls grew in unprecedented ways. The government became an employer, a producer of goods and services, and a vast resource to restore the industrial processes. The federal government also became the most significant planner and promoter of welfare programs through the enactment, in the mid-thirties, of such legislation as social security and the minimum wage.

The Growth of Unionism. The depression also stimulated a major upsurge of trade unionism. The founding of the CIO showed that the labor movement was at last free from the limits of a craft basis for organiza-

tion. The passage of the National Labor Relations Act in 1935 marked the beginning of an era in which government facilitated the development of unions and thereby became less the biased protector of business interests. The development of strong unions in the auto, steel, electrical, meat-packing, and other industries had a major impact upon the industrial scene. The organization of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters gave the black community an important labor spokesman, A. Phillip Randolph.

The International Scene. During this period, it became evident that the Communist party was firmly entrenched in the USSR. In Spain, Italy, and Germany, fascist governments seized power. American counterparts of these movements were apparent in the developments within the United States.

On the international level, these developments had consequences of the most serious nature for the United States. Just at the time in the thirties that many programs to solve the social problems of the country were being tested, the need to prepare for and then wage World War II increasingly absorbed the attention and resources of the American people. In fact, only with the war did the country clearly come out of the depression.

The Condition of Minorities

Blacks. The creation of many New Deal agencies "added credence to the emergent fact that for the first time the federal government had engaged and was grappling with some of the fundamental barriers to race progress."⁹⁸ On the other hand, there

⁹⁸Fishel and Quarles, op. cit., p. 447.

CONCLUSION

Small groups constitute an ubiquitous element in community organization. Yet, very little of group theory is reflected in both its theory and its practice. One wonders if many committees and other groups flounder because insufficient consideration is given to important aspects of group structure and process. In this paper, only a few components have been discussed. There are others, such as group conflict and its resolution, norm development, decision making, and so on, that are of equal relevance. Given the different nature of client groups, goals and strategies of intervention in community organization, there is need for more rigorous study and research on the application of small group theory within this area of social work practice.

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CORE ELEMENTS OF PRACTICE

7.

Fred M. Cox

COMMUNITY PROBLEM SOLVING: A GUIDE TO PRACTICE WITH COMMENTS

This problem-solving guide was developed by the original editors and their students. Community practitioners will find that the guide directs their attention to a number of factors central to assessing community problems and developing a course of action for attacking them.

There have been a number of efforts to provide a model to guide community organization practice. Murray G. Ross developed a set of principles to guide community organization and a discussion of the roles of the organizer (16, pp. 155-228; 17, pp. 157-231). Ronald Lippitt and his collaborators studied a wide range of planned change efforts, which include efforts at the community level. From this study, they formulated a discussion of the phases of planned change, the role of the change agent, an approach to diagnosis in planned change, and an analysis of the forces operating for and against changes (9). Roland Warren provides a five-stage model of the "development and change of community action systems" (25, p. 315 and pp. 303-39). Robert Perlman and Arnold Gurin offer a "problem solving model" in their study of community organization, prepared under the auspices of the Council of Social Work Education (12, pp. 61-75). This list is by no means comprehensive (19, pp. 504ff.), but it includes those that have been most influential in shaping the present effort.

The guide is ordered sequentially as the factors considered are likely to be encountered

in practice. The guide should be used flexibly. The experienced practitioner may not need to explore each point as carefully as one new to a situation. Few will have the opportunity to employ it systematically in every practice context. Nevertheless, we believe the practitioner will find it useful as a reminder of issues that may otherwise be overlooked or questions that provoke thought that may have an important bearing on practice decisions and outcomes. Some practitioners will be confronted with more "givens" and fewer choices than others. A clear understanding of the "givens" as well as the options is crucial for effective practice.

Like most general models, this one may fail to call attention to certain questions of importance in specific situations. Many practitioners will want to refine and elaborate the guide to suit the particulars of the practice situation in which they are involved. In general, however, we believe that the guide can contribute to a more logical and coherent approach to confronting problems in the multiple pressures and confusions of community practice.

THE GUIDE

This section briefly outlines the main categories comprising the guide to community problem solving. It will be followed by a more elaborate commentary that provides further detail about each of the steps in the process. In preparing a problem-solving

statement at the outset of a project, the practitioner uses this commentary as a basis for deciding about what to include in the initial analysis.

I. Preliminary Considerations

A practitioner starts out by spelling out certain givens in the intervention situation that serve to structure and shape further actions. Intervention is typically carried out within an agency or organization that establishes the ground rules and gives the worker an assignment (whether specific or broadly conceived) to implement. The sponsoring agency has a preexisting mission and formulates the broad goals that are to be aimed for. It also typically has evolved preferences about strategies and tactics, which the practitioner has to take into account. Within the agency, factors of various kinds color the work: specific decision makers who create policy, lines of authority, norms of operation, and programmatic structures. The practitioner, as an employee of the agency, brings to bear on the assignment personal motivations and capacities, which intersect with the opportunities that are provided in the organizational environment and form a unique meld. Such factors should be made explicit at the outset as part of designing a plan of action.

II. Problems

An early step in all practice entails a problem analysis and needs assessment in order to provide a firm basis for action steps. It is important to identify the type of problem, its location geographically and socially in the system, and its scope, and to determine those who are affected by it. Past change efforts should be clarified so that they can be built upon in an effective way. The practitioner brings to the situation only one per-

spective among others; therefore it is useful to discern the perceptions of those who are participants in the action or who will be affected by it in one way or another.

III. Social Context of the Problem

To gain a meaningful understanding, the problem has to be examined in a sophisticated way. What was the origin of the problem? Can it be explained through some theoretical perspective such as communication blocks, institutional racism, or interorganizational conflict? What structures and factions either maintain or can potentially alleviate it? What are the consequences of taking action or failing to do so for different elements in the community: Who gains and who loses?

IV. Intended Beneficiaries

Who are the people or groups that stand to gain from the intervention? These can be identified with respect to demographics, spacial location, ethnic identity, economic and political standing, and so forth. Cleavages within the beneficiary group should be described, as well as their relationships with various parts of the community system.

V. Goals

The goals of various parties in the situation should be clarified, including the beneficiary system, the agency, and significant others. Based on the overall analysis, the practitioner needs to delineate a set of professional preferred goals, with an order of priority. These should include task goals related to concrete problems and process goals related to community competency and system maintenance.

VI. Strategy

The practitioner needs to go on to design potential strategies to address problem situations. A set of relevant tasks have to be laid out and an action system conceived that is made up of participants and allies. In addition, it is important to identify people and forces who will interfere with or resist the action plan. Needed resources and their availability have to be assayed. In light of this examination a preferred strategy should be outlined.

VII. Tactics

Tactics comprise the mechanics of carrying out a strategy. First there is the question of entry—where to start and with whom? The beginning phase also entails the notion of leverage—what initial actions give the best chance of sustaining the strategy? There exists the important matter of determining how to work interactively with the action system. Specific expectations have to be formulated, including an informal "contract" between the practitioner and those making up the action system. Some implementation steps include training and supporting participants, scheduling actions over time, using resources effectively, and dealing with the opposition in appropriate ways.

VIII. Evaluation

Action in itself is not the essence of intervention. Actions are calculated to bring about beneficial outcomes. It is important in thinking ahead to consider means whereby to examine results in order to determine objectively and empirically whether goals were achieved and to what extent. The practitioner should indicate how the effectiveness of the strategy will be measured, as well as the effectiveness

of the tactics. Only in this way will learning be derived concerning the viability of various practice options, thereby improving practice.

IX. Modification, Termination, or Transfer of Action

As an intervention experience nears resolution (as indicated through evaluation), it may be necessary to formulate new goals and strategies in order to move into a next phase. On the other hand, it may be time for the practitioner and agency to withdraw. In that case certain termination actions are necessary, including preparing the action system for the change. Concluding steps may involve transferring responsibility to a new agency, or institutionalizing the results within the community to insure the stability of the change. It might be useful in doing a problem-solving analysis to look ahead and devise a scenario that predicts potential results and suggests terminal actions.

ELABORATIONS¹

As part of the effort to increase the professional character of community organization practice, we need to develop guidelines for decision making that are grounded upon tested generalities. As our knowledge base expands, it should be possible to rely more heavily on insights drawn from the social and behavioral sciences. The problem in basing decisions on tested knowledge is to find a way to join the hodgepodge which is the reality of community practice and the generaliza-

¹The author acknowledges the contributions made by his colleagues John L. Erlich and Jack Rothman, whose critical comments and suggestions were used extensively in preparing this supplement to the preceding guide.

tions derived from research, which necessarily oversimplify, and select a few factors believed to be of overriding importance.

This problem is a difficult one for at least two reasons. First, our knowledge of what factors are most influential and their effects upon matters of importance to the practitioner, together with the various conditions that affect such cause and effect relationships, is very limited. Typically, we must be content with a combination of practice wisdom and partially tested theory validated under conditions quite different than those faced by each practitioner. For example, conclusions about group behavior are often based on laboratory data rather than field studies.

Second, even when knowledge is very full and based on rigorous study, there are serious problems in applying it. Scientific knowledge is the knowledge of probabilities, of the chances that certain actions or events are likely to be followed by particular consequences. But even a high probability of B being followed by A leaves room for the possibility, in some minority of instances, that A will not produce B. And there are always newly emerging contingencies, the effects of which are unknown, and relatively unique configurations of events and conditions that were not anticipated in the research studies. Thus, even under the best conditions, we must guard against expecting too much from scientific knowledge in guiding practice decisions.

What does the problem-solving guide contribute to this process? First, it suggests the major types of information that must be obtained by the practitioner if he or she is to reach informed decisions. Second, it offers the outline of an interconnected set of frameworks within which to collect this information. It does not, however, provide propositions or generalizations to which decisions must be referred; these comments

will suggest some additional sources we have found useful for this purpose. The comments are organized in the same order and under the same headings as the guide above. Wherever possible we relate these comments to the three modes of community organization around which this book is organized.

I. PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS

A. Summary of Assignment

The practitioner provides a brief orientation to the nature of the assignment. If the guide is used for training purposes, the instructor may find this summary particularly useful.

B. Agency

The organization that sponsors the practitioner's work is the agency referred to. Its primary significance is in the possibilities it opens and the constraints it places upon practice.

Social action is typically sponsored by groups of like-minded people who feel generally oppressed by the wider society, are offended by particular governmental decisions or social norms, or share common interests they believe can be achieved more effectively through collective action. The group is held together by some common identity (ethnic or racial characteristics, ideological or cultural similarities, goals, a piece of turf, a shared sense of being oppressed by the larger society). While the sponsor is likely to be homogeneous in some respects, necessary funds may be generated by the group itself or may come from outside sources which may not fully identify with the sponsor, its goals, or, particularly, its methods. This constitutes a problem for some social action groups because, as they engage in controversial

activities, they may jeopardize their financial support. On the other hand, to the extent they are homogeneous they are able to pursue their objectives single-mindedly, without undue debate over ends and means.

Locality development may be sponsored by a national government, as in the case of many community development programs in developing countries or in industrialized countries with groups of people isolated from modernization. In such cases there may be conflict between the aims and values of the national government and the people toward whom locality development is directed. Governmental sponsorship, however, may bring otherwise unavailable resources to bear upon problems of underdevelopment. In other cases, locality development is sponsored by groups who seek self-development, often at the initiative and with the continued assistance of some outside group (American Friends Service Committee, a community development program in a land-grant college). Under these conditions, considerable emphasis is placed upon representing various segments of local people and upon their voluntary choice of aims and activities. Given the diversity of people within a locality, problems often arise in finding consensus and in sustaining motivation to work on common problems, but, because these are necessary, the programs chosen represent what local people really want and may be more permanent than those imposed from outside.

Social planning may be sponsored by government at various levels or by private organizations. Backed by constituted authorities or the socially or politically elite, these agencies tend to view their mandate as deriving from the established political process or from democratic procedures in which all citizens are at least nominally free to participate. They typically focus on bringing technical skills to bear upon social

problems and are dependent upon the sources of legitimacy, so that they often overlook the views of those who are the presumed beneficiaries or targets of their planning efforts. Insistent demands for wider participation may create operating problems for social planning agencies. If the agencies can secure substantial support, both financial and political, and highly qualified specialists, however, they may be able to resolve social problems to a greater degree than if support from those affected by the plans were required or fewer resources were available.

The extent to which organizations are bureaucratized has a major impact upon the kinds of tasks they can undertake and the strategies and tactics available to the practitioner. Organizations vary not only in internal structure but in relations with the social environment. They emerge out of the needs of particular constituents, with whom they have a variety of understandings about goals and methods. As noted in the text above, social action agencies are oriented toward their members, while social planning agencies are created by elites to control social problems experienced by nonelites. Zald discusses this with special reference to factors affecting the autonomy of the strategies available to the community organization agency (Article #5). Rein and Morris discuss the effects of the planning organization's goals and structure upon the strategies it employs (13, pp. 127-45).

Parenthetically, it should be noted that formal organizations may be important to the practitioner not only as sponsors of action but as allies in a joint effort or as targets of strategy.

C. Practitioner

The practitioner's activities can be analyzed from two perspectives. The first,

which examines the practitioner's motivation, capacity, and opportunity, was developed by faculty members at the University of Chicago's School of Social Service Administration (14). This perspective raises three general questions: (1) To what extent do the personal and professional goals of practitioners coincide, reinforce, compete, or conflict with the goals of those they are trying to help and with those of the sponsoring agency? (2) Does the practitioner have the basic qualities of intelligence, ability to empathize with others, a sense of personal identity, and the special skills and knowledge necessary to operate effectively in a particular community organization assignment? (3) Does the practitioner have the support of the agency, the human and financial resources that are necessary to do the job with a reasonable expectation of effective performance? If there are impediments in the situation, what, if anything, can be done to correct them? Ronald Lippitt and his collaborators give attention to some of these questions (9, pp. 92-99).

The motivation, capacity, and opportunity required will vary with the type of practice and the nature of the sponsoring agency. For example, the practitioner's ideological predilections and world view will affect the motivation to work for various types of agencies and the willingness to use different strategies and tactics. Skills in working with different kinds of people (poor people, local elite) and in using various techniques (making population projections, teaching people how to handle unfamiliar situations) affect the capacity to work in different settings. The types and amounts of resources needed for effective practice vary for agencies with various scopes, goals, and strategies.

Role theory provides perhaps an even more useful perspective for analyzing the practitioner's work. The ambiguity and

conflict in role definitions by various persons with whom the practitioner interacts, the discontinuity between the various roles one plays currently and between past and present roles, and the personal strain involved in learning a new role and coping with the problems inherent in role ambiguity, conflict, and discontinuity must be taken into account in understanding the practitioner's behavior and decisions (22, pp. 17-50; 9, pp. 91-126).

II. PROBLEMS

This section of the guide directs the community organization practitioner's attention to an analysis of the difficulties he or she is trying to remedy. The problems of concern are usually social rather than personal, affecting a substantial portion of the people served and out of harmony with their preferences. They may be substantive in character, i.e., problems such as mental illness, insufficient housing, or delinquency, or they may involve process, affecting the way the society, the community, and its institutions are organized, formally or informally, for dealing with social problems. Often the two are closely connected as, for example, when it is assumed that the negative reaction to the mentally ill stems from the lack of community-based institutions for dealing with them—well-organized family care homes, recreation programs, emergency services for coping with personal life crises, etc. Community practitioners are typically concerned with problems of both substance and process.

At this point the guide calls for careful observation and description. Explaining the problem is reserved for the next section. The practitioner describes the kind of problem dealt with as clearly as possible, where

it is located, how widely it is distributed among different kinds of people, and the degree to which one group is affected in comparison to another. The practitioner looks at past efforts to improve conditions, who made them, the extent of their successes or failures, and the probable reasons for these outcomes. He or she gives particular attention to differences in perceptions of the problem among the affected groups.

The varying ways in which the problem is perceived will be of particular importance. The agency, various subgroups of the client, and the practitioner may all see the problem a little differently and thus favor different solutions.

In the context of social action, the problem typically will be viewed as one of social injustice—an oppressed minority not receiving its fair share of political, economic, and educational resources, a group that has been deprived of some benefit or has had some social cost inflicted upon it, or a group seeking some benefit for itself at the expense of others for reasons it considers justified. Of increasing importance recently, many negatively regarded groups seek improved status and respect.

In a locality development context, the problem often will be defined as a failure to modernize, to develop the necessary capital and skills to facilitate industrialization at an appropriate rate or to build the necessary services ("infrastructure") needed to support an urbanizing population. The problem may be regarded as opposition to change (strong traditional or new but counterproductive forms of social organization), anomie (languishing social organization), or loss of local autonomy (an organized community losing control to national business, philanthropic, and governmental institutions). A normative view held by some community developers is that the problem stems from the failure of local

democracy, the lack of concern about and a sense of responsibility for local problems.

Social planning agencies tend to define the problem as one or more fairly discrete social problems (mental illness, crime and delinquency, poverty, poorly organized services) for which they seek various technical solutions. The problems with which social planners deal are seen as forms of deviant behavior or social disorganization. Deviant behavior, such as mental illness, delinquency, or child abuse, is at variance with prescriptions for particular social roles. Merton makes a useful distinction between two types of deviant behavior, nonconformist and aberrant, which is particularly appropriate in the light of unrest among women minority groups, gays and students (10, pp. 808-11). The nonconformist announces his or her deviant behavior, challenges the legitimacy of rejected social norms, tries to change norms regarded as illegitimate, and calls upon higher social values as justification for actions. Conventional members of society recognize that the nonconformist is dissenting for disinterested reasons. In contrast, the aberrant individual hides his or her acts from public view, does not challenge the legitimacy of broken norms, tries to escape detection and punishment, and serves personal interests through aberrant behavior.

Social action groups of oppressed people may define their behavior as nonconformist and seek responses from the rest of society that first confirm this definition and ultimately redefine the behavior, prompting the nonconformity as acceptable rather than deviant. For example, those seeking abortion law reform, acceptance of homosexual preferences, or equality in job opportunities may use nonconformist means to secure redefinitions of abortion, homosexual behavior, and equal employment opportunities as nondeviant. Social planners may

assist them through legitimate ("conformist") means that are possible within the context of their work—drafting legislation, taking matters to court, enlisting the support of community leaders, and so forth. Social planners may also participate in efforts to redefine the behavior of some deviants who, by this definition, are aberrant but whose crimes are trivial and are not regarded as morally reprehensible, or as victimless. The smoking of marijuana in moderation may increasingly be regarded as a trivial offense at best or a victimless crime at worst. Those who engage in drug abuse, prostitution, gambling, and homosexuality are often hurting no one but themselves. Even where behavior cannot be redefined as acceptable, social planners may assist in relieving exacerbating responses, through plans for bail reform and community care for the mentally ill, for example. Finally, planning services to modify the behavior of deviants, using new techniques such as behavioral modification, will continue to be useful for a number of forms of deviant behavior.

Other social problems are regarded as symptoms of social disorganization, not necessarily involving deviations from prescribed norms but rather reflecting incompatibilities between various parts of a social system, such as different rates of change (for example, technology changes more rapidly than social values). Poverty, housing shortages, water pollution, unemployment, and racial discrimination are often regarded as examples of social disorganization that constitute social problems social planners seek to solve.

Locality development practitioners typically view social problems from this standpoint, focussing on those that retard the maintenance or enhancement of a society or community (sharply increasing birth rates, general apathy, lack of entrepreneurial skills, or a failure of leadership). They are

also concerned with the inability of a locality to obtain resources or achieve results from self-help efforts.

Another way of looking at social problems is offered by Arnold Rose (15, pp. 189-99), who defines two perspectives. One, which we will call "disjunctive theory," regards social problems as arising from different meanings being attached to objects that form the context of social interaction or from different values being assigned to the behaviors displayed in relation to those objects. Marijuana (an object) is regarded by some as a potentially dangerous mind-altering drug and by others as a means to a pleasant "high." The smoking of marijuana (behavior in relation to the object) is disvalued by some and enjoyed by others. Poverty in the United States today (a set of objects or conditions) is regarded by some as an unfortunate but inevitable by-product of the free enterprise system and by others as a needless hardship inflicted upon substantial (though decreasing) numbers of people by the economic system. Living in poverty (behavior in relation to that condition) is regarded as avoidable and remediable by individual effort or as essentially irremediable "tough luck" by some and as unnecessary deprivation remediable by collective effort by others. In each case, the problem is regarded as arising from lack of agreement on meanings, values, or both.

The disjunctive theory is often held, at least implicitly, by those practicing locality development and leads to emphasis upon the socialization process, education, and communication. If meanings attached to the same objects differ, efforts can be made to give people "the facts" so that increasingly meanings can be shared. If values associated with particular behaviors conflict, communication between those who disagree may ultimately lead to a greater degree of consensus.

The other perspective Rose calls "conflict theory." From this point of view, social problems are the product of competition for scarce resources (wealth, prestige, power) which results in painful struggles over their distribution, with some being dissatisfied at the outcome.

Conflict theory assumes that values are held in common, that is, most people want the same things and will fight over their distribution, while disjunctive theory assumes that social problems arise from wanting different things or defining the same things in different ways. Those engaged in social action tend to regard social problems from the perspective of conflict theory. Although these practitioners may agree that some secondary grounds for conflict may arise from different meanings being attached to the same events (for example, the lack of a common understanding about the "facts" of poverty), they argue that the basic problem is one of maldistribution (of jobs or income). Social action practitioners try to solve social problems by mobilizing power to induce a redistribution of the valued objects in favor of their constituents or intended beneficiaries.

III. SOCIAL CONTEXT OF THE PROBLEM

A. Origins

The practitioner must take care to interpret the origins of a problem. He or she may understand how a problem came to be by examining its origins, but cannot thereby explain its persistence. Conditions that brought about a problem originally often fade, so that present conditions can only be explained by reference to factors currently operating. The practitioner must search for contemporary conditions that are causally

connected with the problem and try to change them.

An effort should be made to understand the historical roots of the problem, particularly if there is a long or significant history affecting the present state of affairs. Coleman discusses what he calls residues of organization and sentiment that build up as people interact in community life and may take the form of collaborative patterns, expressed in latent or manifest forms of social organization or in organized cleavages such as those between rival political parties or ethnic groups. They may also be expressed in sentiments of liking and respect or of hostility (4, pp. 670-95).

B. Theory of the Problem

It is at this point in the analysis that attention is directed toward a search for controlling factors. Assuming that most problems are sustained by a wide variety of factors and that some are more influential than others, the practitioner's task is two-fold: First, one must locate factors that have a major effect on the problem to be corrected. Second, one must choose problems one can reasonably expect to influence, given the time, money, personnel and other resources at one's disposal.

In many social action contexts, the problem will be understood as some form of conflict between "haves" and "have-nots." But greater specificity is required. Which particular interests are pitted against one another? What are the dynamics of the conflict? Are there any aspects of the problem or any facts that do not seem to fit into a conflict perspective? What are the implications for intervention? In many cases of locality development, the problem will be regarded as arising from barriers to communication or

different rates of change, i.e., some form of disjunction or social disorganization. But it is important which specific theory or set of theories is selected, for this will exercise an important influence on strategies and tactics chosen. Most practitioners engaged in social planning will consider alternative theories explaining various social problems they are charged with ameliorating. But, again, the specific theory chosen is of great importance in shaping the action taken. If, for example, lower-class male delinquency is conceived of as arising from a lack of legitimate opportunities for success in American society, efforts will be made to expand those opportunities. If, on the other hand, delinquency is thought to arise from psychological problems or parental rejection, efforts will be directed toward various forms of counseling or the strengthening or substitution of parental relations. Or, if the labeling of youngsters as delinquent and the consequent processing through the criminal justice system are thought to be responsible for the perpetuation of delinquent behavior, efforts will be made to decriminalize certain behavior and handle young people who transgress social norms outside the criminal justice system.

Unfortunately, the explanation of the problem chosen by (or more typically implicit in the behavior of) the practitioner is usually limited by the ideology and values of the employing organization or the practitioner. The practitioner should explore his or her own preconceptions and those of the employer to determine what limits such preconceptions place on the choice of an explanation for the problem. However the theory of the problem arises, whether it is implicit in various predisposing values or is more rationally developed, it will have a major influence on the goals

and strategies chosen for dealing with the problem.

C. Structural-Functional Analysis of the Problem

The practitioner begins with an assessment of available "theories of the problem." One selects the most reliable theories, and within them the factors that are both potent and potentially controllable. The next step is careful observation of the particular social problem in its context, collecting information within the framework of the theories and hypotheses selected earlier. The outline suggests that both the impact of various factors on the social problem in question and the effect of the problem on these factors be assessed. For example, we might identify particular social structures (schools, employers) that systematically deny opportunities to persons of lower socioeconomic or ethnic minority status, thus creating discontent, delinquent behavior, and so forth. We might then show the impact of such behavior on schools, ethnic minorities, and so forth, emphasizing the differential effects on various groups. This, of course, has implications for which groups, individuals, or organizations may be recruited into organized efforts to alleviate the problems.

Two useful terms in this section of the commentary are functional and dysfunctional: The functional consequences of action strengthen and unify social systems; dysfunctional consequences produce conflict or threaten disruption of existing social patterns. However, these terms should not be confused with "good" and "bad." Functional consequences can perpetuate what is, from the practitioner's perspective, an undesirable system, such as patterns of racial discrimination in housing and

employment. Likewise, dysfunctional consequences may be exactly what the practitioner desires. For example, the early sit-ins, in addition to disrupting preexisting patterns of race relations, tended to enhance the self-esteem of black people and provide experience in contentious organized action.

IV. INTENDED BENEFICIARIES

The "client" is defined as the intended beneficiary of the practitioner's activities. It may be a group of people, a formal organization, or a population category. Clients can be analyzed in terms similar to other forms of social organization. Some of the factors that may be most important are outlined in the guide. The major implication of this section is that the beneficiaries must be identified and understood both in their context, i.e., their relations to other social phenomena, and in their internal structure. We must also be sensitive to changes that have taken place in the group and the reasons for them.

The definition of intended beneficiaries forces the practitioner to be clear about whom he or she is trying to help and to differentiate them from others who are regarded in more instrumental terms. There was a time when it was conventional for the community organizer to say that the client is the community. This rhetoric tends to hide the fact that particular actions may benefit some, harm others, and have little effect on still others. The suggested definition makes the practitioner consider whose interests will be sacrificed last if decisions must be made requiring that someone pay a price. It also demands that the practitioner consider how much to expect others to "pay" for the sake of the intended beneficiaries and decide whether the price is justifiable.

If they are a group of individuals with strongly held common interests that can be

rather precisely defined, the practitioner will have little difficulty in knowing what benefits to work for on their behalf. On the other hand, one is likely to have difficulty in gaining allies and support for the group. If they are a heterogeneous group with common interests that can be defined only at the most general level, the practitioner probably will have trouble in defining precisely what to aim for. The chances of alienating some faction of the clientele are increased, but the group is likely to be much more inclusive, and thus the practitioner will have less difficulty in gaining needed outside support.

As Rothman notes (Article #1), the beneficiary group is viewed differently in the several contexts of practice. In locality development, they are citizens and participants in local problem solving. In social planning, they are consumers and recipients of services. In social action they are victims of oppression and employers or constituents of the practitioner.

The kind of beneficiaries one is able to serve is limited, in important ways, by the type of organization that employs one. That is, it is most difficult for a practitioner to give primacy to the interests of a group that is not the primary beneficiary of his or her employer. Blau and Scott have developed a typology of organizations based on the identity of the groups that are the primary beneficiaries of organizations (2, pp. 42-57). The main implication for practice is that the practitioner experiences grave difficulties in making clients out of groups other than those that are naturally the primary beneficiaries of the type of organization employing him. For example, the primary beneficiary of a mutual benefit association is its members. If practitioners employed by, say, a labor union define some nonmembers as the client—perhaps the people living in an impoverished neighborhood—they are likely to run into

difficulties with members who resent the diversion of their dues for purposes not directly related to their welfare. Community practitioners employed by such agencies as public assistance bureaus sometimes experience difficulties when they select goals with which the public is out of sympathy. Part of the reason for these difficulties is a failure to recognize the true character of such social service agencies as commonweal organizations whose prime beneficiary is the general citizen instead of, as commonly believed, service organizations whose primary beneficiary is the clientele.

V. GOALS

At some point in his or her work, the practitioner must define as clearly as possible the particular goals to be achieved with the beneficiary. Lack of clarity may lead to goal displacement, i.e., the unintended replacement of goals by new, often unrecognized objectives. Under some conditions—when the situation is very unstable, when there is little experience to guide action, or when knowledge of aims would help those opposed to them—it may be necessary to be vague in public statements or to move toward goal definition through a process of successive approximation. Many other factors also lead to goal displacement—insufficient resources to pursue multiple goals, factional differences in interests, procedures which come to be valued by those who benefit from them, and so forth. Precise goal definition is one defense against goal displacement, however, and provides some criteria against which results can be measured. Resistance to goal displacement should not be used as an excuse to avoid adopting new goals when old ones have been achieved or are no longer appropriate, or new resources make it possible to add goals.

The practitioner must take into account not only his or her personal objective but also the views of the sponsoring organization, the participants, and other groups whose support is needed or whose resistance or objections must be anticipated. It is not necessary to accommodate the interests of the opposition or of those who are largely indifferent to or unaffected by the action, but one must do so for those whose cooperation, whether as active collaboration or passive awareness and the absence of hindering responses, one must have. Those whose interests must be taken into account if the practitioner is to achieve his or her objectives are called the "action system." (This term is used in the guide under the heading "Strategy.")

As suggested above, various groups have different goals, attach varying importance to particular goals, and have contrasting sets of priorities. Factions within groups may also differ in these ways. In taking these differences into account, the practitioner may decide on a strategy of "something for everyone," or may begin with one easily achieved goal of fairly high importance to all elements in order to build confidence in the organization's capability. One may develop some other rationale for selecting goals, but information about the relative priorities and salience of the goals of different factions is essential to a reasoned decision (11, pp. 25–31).

Social problems may reside in a group's relations with its environment (inadequate police protection or unresponsive public officials) or among its members (uncoordinated activities, low morale, lack of commitment). Goals are of two parallel kinds. For example, a welfare council may appeal for additional public funds for a child care center or try to develop support for a human relations commission. These are commonly referred to in the literature as "task goals."

Other goals affect the maintenance and enhancement of the organization (resolving destructive factional rivalry or transforming member apathy into involvement and commitment). These are called "process goals." In general, both types of goals must be served, but at particular times one type may be more important than another. At one time it was generally believed that the community practitioner should pursue only process goals, that is, be concerned exclusively with facilitating or "enabling" clients to achieve self-defined goals. Rothman argues persuasively that the practitioner need not be limited in this manner (18, pp. 24–31).

VI. STRATEGY

Perfect rationality (or anything approaching it) is unattainable in most practice situations. Computer technology may enable some to come a bit closer. But most of us must, as Herbert Simon puts it, "satisfice" rather than "maximize" the efficiency and effectiveness of our decisions (20, p. xxv).

However, some practitioners approach questions of strategy with predetermined formulas, agency traditions, and little imagination. While it is not feasible to consider every possibility and identify the single best way to achieve objectives, it does not follow that one strategy is as good as the next. We ask the practitioner to consider at least two good possibilities and exercise judgment in choosing the best one.

Perhaps more than any other activity, strategy development offers the practitioner an opportunity for creativity. In applying the guide, he or she sketches each strategy, outlining the minimum tasks required to achieve success; the necessary elements of the action system; the resistance (opposition), interdependence (entanglements),

and interference (competition and indifference) forces that may be encountered; and the plans to handle them (9, pp. 71–89). Finally, the practitioner evaluates his or her ability to carry them out and develops a rationale for choosing between the various strategies being considered. As a general approach to decision making this applies to all types of practice. However, the relative emphasis given to various tactics (research, client participation, confrontation with organizations and their leaders) will vary with the model of practice used.

To the extent that success depends upon a correct theory of the problem and an effective strategy, success may be limited by the choices permitted by the elites or the political process. Because social planning strategies normally depend upon the effective manipulation of large-scale bureaucracies, success may also depend heavily on whether the strategy chosen can be effectively administered. And finally, because those whose actions are required for success—the functionaries and the targets—are not ciphers but people with interests and values that guide what they will respond to and what they will do, strategies that assume values about which there is little consensus or which assume a nonexistent community of interests are likely to enjoy limited success.

Some recent analyses suggest that strategies that operate as much as possible in a way analogous to a competitive market situation are most likely to succeed. They maximize individual choices and allow for individual differences. They require a minimum of bureaucratic complexity, especially detailed rules and numerous functionaries to enforce or monitor compliance. It has been suggested that this is the reason for the failure of such programs as the War on Poverty, the success of Social Security, and the potential of income main-

tenance programs based on negative income tax principles (7).

VII. TACTICS

Strategy shades imperceptibly into tactics. The inspiration for much of this part of the guide comes from Lippitt and his colleagues (9). Among the questions the practitioner is asked to consider are: Where is it possible to gain a foothold in the targets? At what point are efforts likely to be most effective? For example, the practitioner may have access to other practitioners working in low- or middle-echelon positions in a target organization. His or her analysis, however, may lead to the conclusion that, to achieve the objective, the practitioner must gain access to the top executive. One may, therefore, bypass colleagues in the target organization and approach a member of one's board with the necessary social and political contacts to gain the ear of the target agency executive.

In order to avoid misunderstandings, it is important for the practitioner to communicate with key people in the action system (those whose cooperation is needed to carry out the strategy) so that they may develop common ideas about such things as definition of the problem, objectives, approaches, roles each participant will perform, and amount of time each participant will commit to the endeavor. The resulting set of agreements is referred to as the contract. Although the concept is borrowed from the law, it does not imply legal or even written form. The expectations must be as clear and unambiguous as possible, and all necessary participants must understand and commit themselves to the terms of the contract.

In carrying the plan into action, it may be necessary to train and support participants who feel more or less uncertain about what

they are doing. This is particularly relevant for those who are inexperienced in the sort of activities required by the contract. The timing of various actions must be carefully planned. Resources of several kinds may require difficult coordination—it may be necessary to induce competing professionals to work together or to provide the press with newsworthy events involving large numbers of people so that politicians will take the action system's demands seriously.

It is desirable to consider an "action-reaction-action pattern" borrowed from Alinsky (1). We refer to these patterns when one group makes a move, intended to elicit a response from an adversary, that makes possible further action to achieve objectives that could not have been otherwise undertaken. For example, a group might leak information to an adversary that it plans a massive disruption of the adversary's business. The expected response is an offer to negotiate which, in turn, makes it possible to obtain concessions favorable to the group that would not have been secured by an initial request for negotiations. Such tactics depend on credibility; if the adversary does not believe that there is a genuine threat, it is not likely to negotiate.

The practitioner should anticipate that some form of opposition to the program undertaken by the action system may emerge and make plans to handle it. Under some circumstances, no such opposition will develop—organizing a council on aging or applying for funds from the federal government to mount programs for the aging should arouse no controversy or opposition. If insurmountable opposition can be expected, however, plans should be changed unless the practitioner is deliberately trying to heighten awareness of impotence and stimulate anger as a prelude to other, perhaps stronger forms of action. If opposition is inevitable, a variety of approaches is avail-

able to cope with it in ways that may further the action system's objectives.

VIII. EVALUATION (3, 5, 6, 21, 24)

Evaluation should be an ongoing process. Plans must be worked out for the collection of information from participants in the action system regarding effectiveness with respect to both task and process goals. This may be quite informal (setting aside a portion of a meeting to discuss "how we're doing") or much more rigorous (standardized data collection, written reports) depending upon the size, complexity, and other requirements of the effort in which the practitioner is engaged. The important thing is that assessment not be overlooked, for the process allows the practitioner and the organization to revise their program if activities are found to be less than satisfactory.

Practitioners often find annual or semi-annual meetings good opportunities for taking stock. The results may be set forth in a periodic report. There is a tendency at such meetings to "put the best foot forward" and overlook difficulties in order to maintain or enhance morale, build financial resources, and avoid offending those who have been active in the organization. Ordinarily it is best to find ways to say what may be the unpleasant truth in a manner that minimizes problems. For example, it is possible to express gratitude for individual contributions while calling attention to persistent difficulties that exist "in spite of the best efforts of everyone involved."

IX. MODIFICATION, TERMINATION, OR TRANSFER OF ACTION

Evaluation of program and organizational effectiveness may lead to any one of sev-

eral conclusions. First, the practitioner may conclude that the program is operating much as expected, is achieving its intended purposes, and should be continued. Second, he or she may find that some aspects are faulty, because of an erroneous analysis of the situation, a poor strategy, or particular actions that were inappropriate or poorly carried out. This conclusion should lead to necessary revisions. Third, the practitioner and those he or she is working with may conclude that the program has served its purpose or, alternatively, is hopelessly inept. In either case, the conclusion should be to discontinue operations and the practitioner must plan carefully for this. Finally, for a variety of reasons the practitioner may be leaving the job. Under these conditions, it is necessary to arrange either the transfer of professional responsibilities to another practitioner or the termination of the program.

CONCLUSION

These comments suggest how the guide may be used and offer some additional references which are intended to give it a broader scope and greater utility. We hope that practitioners will use the guide to remind themselves of some of the more important factors they need to take into account in planning their work.

Obviously the busy community practitioner will be unable to utilize fully the analysis suggested here in daily work. However, many of the steps in the problem-solving process will become part of the professional "equipment" he or she may apply, perhaps less formally and less rigorously but nonetheless effectively, in making day-to-day practice decisions. This is the hope we have had in preparing the guide and using it in teaching community practice.

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14.

Sylvia Martí-Costa and Irma Serrano-García

NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT:
AN IDEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

Community development is a process which, through consciousness-raising, promotes and utilizes human resources, leading to the empowerment of individuals and communities so that they can understand and solve their problems and create new circumstances for their livelihood. As part of this process, needs assessment may be utilized as a central method to facilitate the modification of social systems so they become more responsive to human needs.

At the individual level, community development promotes psychological growth and enhancement by channeling energies into self-help projects and through the genuine participation of individuals in those

decisions that affect their lives. The basic assumption that underlies this reasoning is that most human beings can solve their problems when they obtain access to resources and create alternatives. The emphasis is on their strengths and their development (Rappaport, 1977).

Awareness of problems and of change possibilities is achieved by raising an individual's consciousness from its current or real level to its possible capacity. Real consciousness is defined as an individual or groups' understanding of reality at a given time. Possible consciousness is the maximum understanding that can be achieved by an individual or group according to its

material circumstances at a given historical moment (Goldman, 1970).

Consciousness-raising includes critical judgment of situations, the search for underlying causes of problems and their consequences, and an active role in the transformation of society (Ander-Egg, 1980). It is an awareness of human dignity and is essential in the exploration of the relationship between the social order and human misery and in the discovery of the shortcomings inherent in our society (Freire, 1974). It facilitates individual and collective participation in building a new and less oppressive social order, thus affecting the general well-being of the population by enhancing the relationship between individuals and society. Needs assessment is valuable in the consciousness-raising process, because any social movement should start from and respond to the felt needs of the population, in other words, their real consciousness.

Community development can foster consciousness-raising through the involvement of individuals in change efforts. Community development activities need to be grounded in a specific political commitment that responds to the liberation of the powerless groups of society. This does not ignore the participation of the powerful in the maintenance or change of the present social order. It does, however, require a personal and professional commitment to the oppressed because of the mission of prevention—understanding and relieving human suffering.

Contrary to this view, many social scientists have fostered the value-free, apolitical, and ahistorical character of their disciplines throughout several decades (Moscovici, 1972; Weimer, 1979; Zufiga, 1975). This position, which may be referred to as "the myth of neutrality," distorts the real value-laden and political nature of the-

ory, methods, and practices and thus serves to alienate us from ourselves and others (Ander-Egg, 1973). It creates divisions and distrust within our ranks and resentment from those that participate as "subjects" or recipients of our work, feeling used, manipulated and misunderstood. Thus, it is necessary to examine this myth which has resulted in the social sciences serving the dominant groups of society.

The "myth of neutrality" has reasons for its existence. In some cases it has been sponsored by individuals who clearly believe in it, but in most cases, it has been accepted inadvertently by social scientists. One of the ways in which this occurs is by considering objectivity and neutrality as synonymous and inseparable concepts which are highly desirable in social scientific endeavors.

Those that hold that neutrality and objectivity must go together state that social scientists should not take political stances toward the object of their studies because this will hamper their research efforts (Myrdal, 1969). To them objectivity is defined as the capacity to study facts as they occur, without adhering to previously formed opinions and judgments and with the willingness to abandon positions that are proven false, inadequate, and unsatisfactory (Ander-Egg, 1977). Neutrality, its inseparable counterpart, is defined as a valueless stance before the objective reality (Martí, Note 1).

It is said that if researchers are not neutral, they cannot be objective (Martí, Note 1). This does not ring true as both concepts are different and clearly distinguishable, and while the pursuit of objectivity is desirable and necessary, the search for neutrality is not only impossible, but unwarranted. Objectivity is desirable because its definition implies the existence of defined values and positions which one is willing to

change when an examination of reality requires it. Neutrality is impossible because every activity takes place in a particular political context.

If the political nature of the social sciences is recognized and accepted then an explicit definition of social scientists' values is necessary. It is our position that this value stance must be characterized by a commitment to the disadvantaged and powerless groups within a given society. This commitment is to the abandonment of a spectator role and the activation of a professional's mind and art to the service of a cause (Palau, Note 2). This cause should be the significant transformation of inequities in society which implies activism, risk, initiative, and a willingness to fight for clearly defined points of view.

To summarize, needs assessment is an integral part of community development, the process of consciousness-raising. It implies a political commitment which undermines the traditional view of a neutral science and a firm commitment to the exploited, underprivileged and powerless groups in society.

This paper will show that needs assessment is a political process that can be conceptualized as a tool for the organization, mobilization and consciousness-raising of groups and communities. This implies (1) that the diverse uses of needs assessment methods be placed on a continuum, ranging from the perpetuation of control and the maintenance of the social system to the achievement of radical social change; (2) an emphasis on multiple techniques of needs assessment that facilitate collective activities, leadership development, growth of organizational skills, and participation of community members in interventions within research (Irizarry & Serrano, 1979); and (3) the belief that it is necessary to examine ideologies and values

as they influence objectives, the selection of needs assessment techniques, intervention strategies, conceptual frameworks, and the utilization of obtained data.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Purpose

Needs assessment is part of a process used to plan social service programs (Pharis, 1976; Siegel, Attkisson, & Cohn, 1977). It is used to determine the problems and goals of the residents of a given community to assure that an intervention will respond to the needs of the population that is being sampled (Warheit, 1976).

The purposes that sustain the use of needs assessment methodology can be placed on a continuum (Table 14.1) according to their political roles. Towards the top of Table 14.1 are purposes that foster system maintenance and control; towards the bottom are ones that promote social change and consciousness-raising. Social system maintenance and control efforts include those activities which are carried out to maintain and/or strengthen the status quo. They also include first order change efforts which alter some of the ways in which the system functions but not the ideology on which it is based (Watzlawick, Weakland, & Fisch, 1974). Radical, or second order, social change efforts imply consciousness-raising and structural and functional alterations.

In consonance with these definitions, the very bottom of the continuum shows needs assessment as a mechanism used by community residents for participation and control in decision making. Needs assessment becomes a technique that facilitates second order social change.

The very top of the continuum lists purposes that foster system maintenance and

control, including those that are used to obtain additional funding for already established community programs (Siegel et al., 1977) so as to guarantee their continuation. In the middle of the continuum, but still focusing on maintenance and control efforts, are included purposes such as (a) planning for decision making and program evaluation (Murell, 1976); (b) gaining additional input toward personnel recruitment; (c) describing, measuring and understanding different aspects of community life (Siegel et al., 1977); (d) determining discrepancies between residents' and professionals' points of view (Ronald, Titus, Strasser, & Vess, Note 3; and (e) obtaining knowledge about community resources so as to link these to agency services.

In analyzing this continuum it is important to notice that most needs assessment efforts are directed towards consumer satisfaction and agency survival. These are

legitimate and necessary goals; however, if technique development is limited to these goals, it will be incomplete and unsatisfactory. Needs assessment methodology, if it is to respond to a commitment to the powerless and to the fostering of social change, must (a) emphasize techniques that, singly or in combination, facilitate grouping and mobilizing people; (b) foster collective activities; (c) facilitate leadership development; and (d) involve residents in the entire research process. These characteristics are essential so that the technique can facilitate consciousness-raising.

Categorization and Evaluation of Techniques

At present there is a great diversity of needs assessment techniques. In some instances it is suggested that different techniques be combined focusing on diverse kinds of

interventions (Aponle, 1976; Pharis, 1976; Siegel et al., 1977). Others suggest that only one technique be used with one line of intervention preferred (Clifford, Note 4; Evans, Note 5; Zautra, Note 6). In order to respond to the goals of organization, mobilization, and consciousness-raising in communities, the multiple technique approach is more desirable since a more precise view of reality is obtained. More data are gathered which will vary quantitatively and qualitatively, thus providing a thorough appraisal of community needs. Another reason for the combined use of techniques is that their limitations and deficiencies can be balanced. However, it is also important to study how each individual technique contributes to the goal of greater mobilization.

Needs assessment techniques can be grouped in three different categories defined by the contact they provide between the researcher and community residents. This contact is extremely important as it may be used to foster collectivization, mobilization, leadership development, and resident involvement (Ander-Egg, 1980; Sanguinetti, 1981), characteristics that are essential to a new focus on needs assessment goals.

No Contact with Participants. In this category, techniques permit no relationship between the intervener and the participants. These techniques are rates or percentages under treatment, social indicators, social area analysis and dynamic modeling (Kleemeir, Stephenson, & Isaacs, Note 7; Bell, 1976; Murell, 1976; Pharis, 1976). In general terms, these methods try to determine community needs by utilizing qualitative and quantitative data from several sources, such as demographic records and other social indicators. They are based on the assumption that community needs and problems that appear in official statistics are representative of community prob-

lems. The major limitation of the "non-contact with the participant" techniques lies in their absolute lack of direct mobilization potential. Since the residents are not involved in the needs assessment project—in fact, it can even happen without their knowledge—their involvement in social action efforts is not to be expected.

Contact with the Agency or Community. The "contact with the agency or community" category includes observation (Ander-Egg, 1978), service provider assessment (Kelly, Note 8), key informants (Pharis, 1976), behavioral census (Murell, 1976), surveys (Clifford, Note 4; O'Brien, Note 9), nominal groups (Delbecq, Van de Ven, & Gustoffsen, 1976), and community forums (Kleemeir et al., Note 7) among other techniques. The interaction that these techniques allow for takes place basically through three means: observations, interviews, and group meetings.

Observation facilitates interaction by the observer's mere presence in the setting. Interviewers interact individually and in groups with community residents, service providers, or other key informants to directly obtain data. This interaction takes place openly, as in community forums, or in a more controlled manner, as in nominal groups.

Key informants, nominal groups, community forums, and surveys respond to the goals of mobilization and consciousness-raising in the community. The first three techniques encourage community input by eliciting residents' discussions and introspections about the collective nature of their problems and needs. They serve to strengthen communication networks in the community and they facilitate the process of program planning. Survey techniques share some of these qualities if the survey is constructed, coordinated, and administered by community members. This process

TABLE 14.1
Continuum of Needs Assessment Purposes

	Purpose
Political Role	Guarantee the economic survival of service programs
Control System	Respond to interest group pressures
Maintenance	Provide services required by communities
	Program evaluation
	Program planning
	Public policy decision making
Social Change	Measure, describe, and understand community life styles
	Assess community resources to lessen external dependency
	Return needs assessment data to facilitate residents' decision making
	Provide skill training, leadership, and organizational skills
	Facilitate collective activities and group mobilization
	Facilitate consciousness-raising

generates great involvement and knowledge and the ready acceptance of results by the rest of the community (Sanguinetti, 1981).

The nominal group technique has these, and other, advantages. Because of the structured nature of its process (Delbecq et al., 1976), it (1) maximizes the amount, diversity, and quality of the problems and alternatives proposed; (2) inhibits the control of the group by a few vocal persons (Siegel et al., 1977); (3) allows conflicting opinions to be tolerated; (4) fosters creativity; (5) facilitates attention to the contributions of marginal group members; and (6) emphasizes the role of needs assessment as the basis for program creation and planning. These four techniques have the highest mobilization potential.

Combined Techniques. This category includes convergent analysis (Bell, 1976), community impressions (Siegel et al., 1977), community meetings/surveys (Kleemeir et al., Note 7), and others. Convergent analysis techniques include techniques of service utilization, social indicators, and surveys. Each technique is used with a specific objective in mind and it is expected that, overall, the information offered by the techniques should give an estimate of those persons whose needs are not being satisfied.

Community impressions and community meetings/surveys have several common elements. The former include the techniques of key informants, data revision, and community forum. The latter includes the first two steps in addition to a survey, allowing the data to be validated and permitting additional verbal input from participants. Although all these techniques require a lot of energy and effort, they are the best alternative in the needs assessment process because they combine high mobilization potential with the more traditional criteria of representativeness, validity, and reliability.

Criteria to Judge the Adequacy of Techniques

Given the diversity of techniques, it is necessary to develop specific factors or criteria that should be considered in judging the adequacy of a technique. Some authors have examined this issue and have proposed criteria for the selection of techniques. These criteria include: the nature of the problem, the skills of both the researcher and the participants, available resources (League of California Cities, 1979), representativeness, the specificity required of the information (Murell, 1976), and the amount of political risk that the sponsoring group desires to tolerate (Aponte, 1976).

Although all these criteria are useful, additional criteria should be considered if the needs assessment effort is to contribute to community organization and mobilization. These criteria are presented in Table 14.2 and contrasted with more traditional views. The following dimensions are used as a guideline for this comparison: the goals, sources, content, and processes of the assessment.

A major distinction between the two sets of criteria is their goals. One set emphasizes prevention and promotion and the awareness of the collective nature of needs. The other works from a remedial perspective which focuses on the individual and on fostering dependency on external resources. The impact of these differences is most noticeable in the assessment process since a collective focus requires a collective intervention and an individual focus does not.

An evaluation of previously mentioned techniques according to the community organization and mobilization criteria appears in Table 14.3. As can be seen, key informants, surveys, nominal groups and community forums are the most adequate

TABLE 14.2
Suggested Criteria to Evaluate the Adequacy of Needs Assessment Techniques

Dimensions of Needs Assessment Process	Criteria	
	Criteria That Foster Mobilization	Traditional Criteria
Goals of Assessment	Prevention and promotion	Treatment
	Awareness of collective nature of needs	Individual focus
	Encourage collective action	Foster dependency on external resources
Source of Input	Community residents	Service providers
	Marginal groups	Total population
Content of Assessment	All perceived needs	Assessment of needed services
	Internal community resources	
Processes of Assessment	Facilitate community involvement and control of process	Assessment carried out by "experts"
	Facilitate face to face interaction between intervener researcher and participants	Lack of community participation
		Interaction tightly controlled by scientific standards
	Data belong to participants	Data collection and future planning controlled by agencies
	Planning and collective action carried out by intervener-researcher and participants	

techniques. It is important to stress, however, that no single technique can be seen as valid for all times and circumstances; therefore, they should be tailored to the particular situation in which the needs assessment is conducted.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Irizarry and Serrano (1979) have developed a model, Intervention within Research, which integrates needs assessment into a

community development approach. It uses needs assessment as its methodological foundation and the concept of problematization as its ideological guideline (Freire, 1974). Problematization, our translation for the term *problematización*, refers to the process whereby consciousness-raising takes place. If the latter is seen as the goal, then problematization involves the different strategies whereby it can be achieved.

The model conceptualizes the processes of intervention and research as simultaneous and interdependent. It also assumes that all phases of the model should be permeated

TABLE 14.3
Evaluation of Needs Assessment Techniques According to Their Potential for Mobilization
Organization and Consciousness-Raising

Criteria	Techniques												
	Social Records	Computer Use	Observation	Social Indicators	Dynamic Modelling	Systems Model	Surveys	Key Informants	Forum	Nonpolar Group	Service Provider Assessments	Behavioral Census	Key Persons
Obtains information from community residents							X		X	X			X
Obtains information from marginal groups	X						X		X	X			X
Achieves change in services provided				X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Facilitates identifying a wide range of needs		X	X	X			X		X	X			
Facilitates development of internal resources								X	X	X		X	X
Control of information by residents			X	X			X	X	X	X		X	X
Oriented toward prevention			X						X	X			
Collective view of problems									X	X			
Commitment to residents' participation in general									X	X			
Commitment to residents' participation in research							X		X	X			
a. data collection							X		X	X			
b. instrument construction							X		X	X			X
c. data analysis							X		X	X			X
d. data returns									X	X			X
Fosters relationship between residents and intervener								X	X	X			X
a. more time together								X	X	X			X
b. dialogue								X	X	X			X
Facilitate collective activities									X	X			X
a. two or more persons									X	X			
b. two or more persons regarding common problems									X	X			
c. adding the discussion of possible solutions									X	X			
d. initiate collective action									X	X			

with explicit ideological inputs that lead to consciousness-raising.

The objectives suggested for this model include: (1) the creation of collective efforts to solve community problems as defined by community residents; (2) the achievement of individual and group participation in the analysis of social reality; (3) the creation of grass-roots organizations; and (4) the development of political skills among participants, resulting in their increased involvement in public affairs.

The model includes four phases. The first phase, familiarization with the community, includes a review of all written and statistical material regarding the community, and several visits to the same. This approach provides knowledge regarding the community's history, its structures, and the processes which facilitate the intervener's entry into the community. It should emphasize the early identification of key persons in the community through informal communication or through more structured means.

The second phase, which arises from a later revision of the original model (Martí, Note 1), is characterized by the creation of a core group that must be composed of both key community persons and interveners. This core group has planning, coordination, and evaluation responsibilities throughout the entire process of intervention within research.

The creation of this core group has positive psychological and operative repercussions. Since the group is formed with community people, a more effective dialogue can take place. It is also possible to increase their commitment and guarantee the group's continuance in this way. In addition, the key person can acquire skills through modeling or training that will be useful to future community work.

One of the most important tasks of this group is the direction and coordination of

the needs assessment. This begins with the core group taking an active role in evaluating the relevance of the different needs assessment techniques to their particular community. The group's next step is the consideration of alternative actions to develop an effective propaganda campaign to inform residents of the needs assessment. In this effort it is essential to obtain the support of other organized groups in the community.

The core group should direct the needs assessment process per se as well as the process of returning the analyzed data to community residents. This can be done through letters, individual visits, group meetings, or community assemblies. The method used will be determined by the needs assessment technique previously used, by the number of participants it entailed, and by the number of human resources available. The data should be returned promptly and should be explained in simple terms.

The third phase, formation of task groups, includes group activities suggested by the needs assessment. In this phase, short- and long-term goals are defined and further action plans developed. To carry out these activities an organizational structure must be created. It is suggested that for this purpose a general community meeting should be held where task groups are formed around the needs assessment priorities. This general meeting should be planned and conducted by all participants with the support and guidance of the core group.

In addition to the task groups, workshops and other social, cultural, educational, and recreational activities must be fostered. Workshops should concentrate on the development of skills so as to help community groups deal effectively with outside forces that rally against their efforts. Some

possible topics for the workshops are leadership, skills to deal with service agencies, interpersonal communication, propaganda, and organizational skills. Particular attention should be given to internal group processes so that the task groups' decision making will improve, their leadership struggles diminish, and their cohesiveness increase. We believe that this last characteristic is particularly important and that both the workshops and group tasks should emphasize cohesiveness.

The last phase in the model, involvement of new groups, is initiated after some of the short- and long-term goals of the task groups are achieved. This involves the development of new goals which should help in bringing together other community groups. The steps described should be repeated in a cyclical manner because needs change throughout the process and the community may develop other goals and interests.

CONCLUSION

This paper has presented an alternative ideological framework to evaluate and direct needs assessment efforts. It has also presented a model for its use for community development. Community residents can and should control intervention within research efforts that directly or indirectly involve them and scientists should facilitate this control. If some of these changes are incorporated into current needs assessment efforts, scientists will be more responsive to the people to whom their major efforts should be directed.

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throughout the world. The picture shows "an expanding latticework covering the globe," Durning (1989, pp. 6-7) continues. "At the local level, particularly among the close to 4 billion humans in developing lands, it appears that the world's people are better organized in 1989 than they have been since European colonialism disrupted traditional societies centuries ago." Community organizing efforts, with hundreds of millions of members, have proliferated worldwide in the past 20 years, extending from nations in the West to those in the South, and, most recently, with extraordinary results, to those in the East (Frank and Fuentes, 1990, p. 163).

Similarly, the persistence of grassroots social action, as well as their proliferation, is another hallmark of our contemporary era. Many efforts have come and gone in the past decade. But the old rule of thumb that social action community organizing, like that pioneered by Saul Alinsky, lasts no more than six years, is no longer valid. ACORN celebrated its 20th anniversary in 1990, National People's Action (NPA) did so two years later, and COPS soon thereafter. Citizen Action, TMO in Houston, the New Jersey Tenants Union (NJTU), and many others recently passed the ten-year mark, with no signs of declining despite having to organize in very adverse conditions. Grassroots efforts tied to national issues, such as pro-choice, gay rights, and the environmental movement, not only persist but continue to grow.

THE NATURE OF CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL ACTION

But what is the nature of contemporary, community-based, social action organizing? Are these community-based social action efforts all of the same piece? Do

prior models (Rothman, 1968; Fisher, 1994) capture the complexity of current efforts? If a global proliferation exists, what are the shared, essential characteristics of contemporary, community-based, social action organizing? Building on the insights from new social movement theory (Epstein, 1990; Melucci, 1989), contemporary social action organizing worldwide shares the following characteristics:

First, the efforts are community-based, that is organized around communities of interest or geography, not at the site of production (the factory) or against the principal owners of capital as was the case of most pre-1960s organizing (Offe, 1987).

Second, the organizations are transclass groupings of constituencies and cultural identities such as blacks, ethnics, women, gay men, neighborhood residents, students, ecologists, and peace activists. Labor becomes one, not *the*, constituency group. Class becomes part of, not *the*, identity (Brecher and Costello, 1990; Fisher, 1992).

Third, the ideological glue is a neopopulist vision of democracy. The groups reject authoritarianism: in the state, leadership party, organization, and relationships (Amin, 1990). Their organizational form is most often sufficiently small, loose, and open to be able to "tap local knowledge and resources, to respond to problems rapidly and creatively, and to maintain the flexibility needed in changing circumstances" (Durning, 1989, pp. 6-7). Some see contemporary social action as "nonideological," because the organizations dismiss the old ideologies of capitalism, communism, and nationalism and because they tend to be without a clear critique of the dominant system. But others argue that ideological congruence is their essence. Their "neopopulist" principles and beliefs are what make them so important and filled with potential (Dalton and Kuechler, 1990; Offe, 1987).

Boyer and Riessman, 1986; Fisher and Kling, 1988; Boyte, Booth, and Max, 1986).

Fourth, struggle over culture and social identity play a greater role in these community-based efforts, especially when compared to the workplace-based organizing of the past, which focused more on economic and political issues. "After the great working class parties surrendered their remaining sense of radical political purpose with the onset of the cold war," Bronner (1990, p. 161) writes, "new social movements emerged to reformulate the spirit of resistance in broader cultural terms." Feminism. Black Power. Sexual identity. Ethnic nationalism. Victim's rights. Of course, culture and identity—grounded in historical experience, values, social networks, and collective solidarity—have always been central to citizen social action (Gutman, 1977). And, of course, identity and constituency efforts include economic and political issues. But as class becomes increasingly fragmented in the postindustrial city and as the locus of workplace organizing declines in significance, resistances that emerge increasingly do so at the community level around cultural issues and identity bases (Touraine, 1985; Fisher and Kling, 1991).

Fifth, strategies include elements of locality development self-help and empowerment. An aim is building community capacity, especially in an era hostile to social change efforts and unwilling to support them. Some of the more effective efforts go beyond community capacity building to target and make claims against the public sector. They see the future of community-based social action as interdependent with political and economic changes outside their communities. They understand that the state is the entity potentially most responsible and vulnerable to social action claims and constituencies

(Piven and Cloward, 1982; Fisher, 1992). But most contemporary community-based organizing seeks independence from the state rather than state power. As Midgley (1986, p. 4) points out, central to the rationale of community participation "is a reaction against the centralization, bureaucratization, rigidity, and remoteness of the state. The ideology of community participation is sustained by the belief that the power of the state has extended too far, diminishing the freedoms of ordinary people and their rights to control their own affairs." Community capacity building becomes a natural focus, reflecting anti-statist strategies and decentralization trends of the postindustrial political economy.¹

¹This argument of a common new social movement form plays out a bit differently in other parts of the world. One key difference is that the old social movements in the Third World (South) and Second World (East) were nationalistic and communist, respectively, not social democratic as in the West (Wallerstein, 1990). Given their subordinate position in the world economy, the old social movements—in the South, for example—did not have the power to deliver material security or political liberty. They often became arms of Western imperial control. In response, community movements "mushroomed" all over the South. Like counterparts in the West, they are community-based, constituency or identity oriented, neopopulist in ideology, and focused on self-help strategies. But in the South, community movements put greater emphasis on material needs (Frank and Fuentes, 1990). Where old social movements achieved distributional victories only for a few, as in the southern hemisphere, or where such victories did not include significant minority segments, as in the United States, new social movements struggle to achieve a minimal standard of living and get basic services like housing and healthcare. Where material victories have been won, primarily among the more affluent in the United States and Western Europe, the social base tends to be the educated middle class (Merkel, 1987). But where basic material needs still remain to be won in the South and among the oppressed and disenfranchised in the West, new social movement forms include the poor and powerless and interweave struggle over postmaterial and material objectives.

HISTORICAL ANTECEDENTS: THE ROOTS OF IDEOLOGIES AND STRATEGIES

One of the key causes for this common form of social action organization is the common heritage of citizen resistance since the end of World War II. It is this common heritage that continues to structure and inform contemporary efforts. For our purposes I emphasize five major historical roots: the (1) community-based resistance of Saul Alinsky, (2) liberation struggles of people of color, (3) urban decentralization and citizen participation programs, (4) new left movement, and (5) new social movements. Of course, this is not to suggest that the heritage of community resistance does not include efforts prior to 1945 (Fisher, 1984; Fisher, 1992). Nor is it to suggest that all contemporary community mobilization efforts build on each of these antecedents or that these are the only sources. Admittedly, roots are more numerous and entangled than here suggested, but the following five are essential to contemporary community-based social action.

Of course, basic survival concerns are important even in those groups in the West professing to hold to "postmaterialist" values. Survival is tied to ridding the world of nuclear weapons, toxic wastes, domestic violence, or AIDS, all of which cut across class lines. Relatedly, the politics of identity, concern for personal and political freedom, and the desire to belong to a supportive and habitable community are of concern to new social movement efforts worldwide. Democratic self-help—community empowerment—is their essence. Predictably, new social movements develop easily among the affluent and around postmaterialist issues. But they succeed better as agents of transformative social change when they combine both distributional and postmaterialist objectives. The distributional demands ground identity in a class politics that understands, at least implicitly, the need in a postindustrial global economy to target the public sector and struggle for state power as well as develop democratic alternatives at the grassroots.

(1) Community-Based Resistance of Saul Alinsky

While the organizing projects of Saul Alinsky during his lifetime never amounted to much in terms of material victories and while his projects only took off when the southern civil rights movement shifted to northern cities in the 1960s, the community-based, constituency-oriented, urban populist, confrontational politics developed by Alinsky in the United States provides one of the earliest models of the community-based social action form (Fisher and Kling, 1988). Beginning just before World War II, Alinsky's work in Chicago built on the older, union-based models of social action, such as the Congress of Industrial Organizations and Communist Party United States of America (Horwitt, 1989; Fisher, 1984). From these it drew its labor organizing style, conflict strategies, direct-action politics, and idea of grounding organizing in the everyday lives and traditions of working people. But Alinsky's model added something new: a kind of labor organizing in the social factory (Boyte, 1981). The community organizer was the catalyst for change. The task was to build democratic, community-based organizations. The goal was to empower neighborhood residents by teaching them basic political and organizing skills and getting them or their representatives to the urban bargaining table (Fisher, 1994; Boyte, 1981). Both the site of production (supporting labor demands) and the public sector (making City Hall more accountable) served as the primary targets of Alinsky organizing.

This was an insurgent consciousness of "urban populism," based in neighborhood "people's organizations," oriented to building community power, discovering indigenous leaders, providing training in democratic participation, and proving that

ordinary people could challenge and beat City Hall (Boyte, 1986; Booth and Max, 1986; Swanstrom, 1985; Horwitt, 1989). At their weakest, Alinsky efforts sought to replace the political program and ideology of the old social action efforts with the skills of democratic grassroots participation, the abilities of professionally trained organizers, a faith in the democratic tendencies of working people to guide organizations toward progressive ends, and a reformist vision of grassroots pluralistic politics. At their best, however, Alinsky efforts continue to empower lower- and working-class, black and latino community residents and to demand expanded public sector accountability and public participation in an increasingly privatized political context (Fisher, 1994; Horwitt, 1989; Rogers, 1990; Delgado, 1986; Kahn, 1970). Alinsky may not be the "father of community organizing," but, especially in the United States, his work and the work of his successors has been seminal to social action community organizing (Boyte, 1981).

(2) Liberation Struggles of People of Color

Much more significant in terms of impact are the liberation struggles of people of color throughout the world since the 1950s. The civil rights movement in the United States and the national liberation struggles in the southern hemisphere served as important models for a community-based, ethnic/nationalist politics oriented to self-determination and sharing the political liberties and material affluence of the societies that exploited people of color. As a model for grassroots direct action and insurgent consciousness, the southern civil rights movement spawned most of what was to follow in the United States and established important precedents for others throughout

the world (Branch, 1988; Morris, 1984; Reagon, 1979). The liberation struggles in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East, as well as specifically early efforts in Ghana, Vietnam, Iran, Guatemala, and Cuba, not only provided models for people worldwide, including activists in the civil rights movement in the United States, but symbolized the mobilization of a worldwide liberation struggle of people of color. The demand for national self-determination for all people (not just those of European descent), the opposition to policies of racism and imperialism, and the plea of the civil rights movement for "beloved community" helped pierce the consensus politics of the 1950s and early 1960s. More recent liberation struggles in Nicaragua, El Salvador, and South Africa, to name but a few, continued to challenge conservative, racist, and imperialist paradigms in the 1980s and 1990s.

The continuous liberation struggles of people of color emphasize three lessons critical to the insurgent consciousness of contemporary community activism. First, citizen insurgency is not a political aberration. It is a legitimate and important, informal part of the political process to which all those without access to power can turn. Second, if oppressed people—often illiterate, rural peasants with few resources—could mobilize, take risks, and make history, then people of other oppressed or threatened constituencies can, with sufficient organization and leadership, do the same. Third, strategy must include both community self-help and constituency empowerment, on the one hand, and the struggle for state power, or at least the targeting of the public sector as the site of grievances and as a potential source of support, on the other. This dual quality of building community capacity and targeting the state, though not always in equal

balance and often in tension, as exemplified in struggles between the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), was as true for the civil rights movement in the United States as it was for the liberation struggles in the Third World (Carson, 1982).

(3) Urban Decentralization and Citizen Participation

The struggles of people in the southern hemisphere dramatized the exploitative nature of the imperial postwar political economy at the very moment in the 1960s that some progressive capitalists, political leaders, and planners in both the public and voluntary sectors found themselves unable to address mounting urban problems at home. From 1960 onward, as liberal leaders such as presidents Kennedy and Johnson in the United States advocated for modest social reforms and a more democratized public sector, pressure mounted for urban decentralization and citizen participation. The Community Action Program of the 1960s in the United States and the Urban Programme of the late 1960s in Britain were among the most noted of public projects seeking "maximum feasible participation" at the grassroots level. But such programs proliferated widely, making state-sponsored municipal decentralization and community participation an international phenomenon (Kjellberg, 1979; Blair, 1983; Midgley, 1986; Chekki, 1979).

Of course, such postwar programs differ dramatically from Alinsky and liberation movement efforts in their origins and problem analysis. They are initiated largely by reformers in the public and voluntary sectors—professionals such as urban planners and social workers, who either seek modest structural change or find themselves too

constrained on the job to do much more in their agencies than deliver needed services at the grassroots level. As such, these initiatives represent a more institutionalized, more formalized wing of the community-based social action phenomenon. They tend, as well, to implement decentralized structure and democratic participation into public agencies without a sense for the contradictions inherent in doing so, but with a knowledge of the importance of linking the state and grassroots activism. The state becomes not the target of democratic insurgency but the employer and supporter of citizen initiatives (Merkl, 1985). At their worst, these measures defuse and coopt insurgency. At their best, contemporary organizing draws from this legacy a commitment to serving the people, to advocacy, and to citizen participation: (a) Deliver services at a grassroots level where people will have better access. (b) Include more people, even lay people, in the decision-making process at a more decentralized level. (c) Make sure they have real power to make decisions and control resources. (d) Struggle from within the state bureaucracies and agencies to achieve economic and participatory democracy for the greatest number of urban dwellers.

(4) The New Left Movement

Despite the efforts noted so far, urban problems and tensions continued to escalate in the 1960s. In response, direct action movements mounted, especially in the United States. Early SDS (Students for a Democratic Society) and SNCC (Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee) community organizing projects focused on "participatory democracy" and "letting the people decide," seeking not only to pressure local and national policy but to create "prefigurative," that is alternative, social groups (Breines,

1982; Evans, 1979). They also developed a critique of American policy abroad and the liberal consensus at home. They built a movement in opposition to the politics of both corporate capital and the old social movement. After 1965, organizing adopted more nationalist and Marxist perspectives; Black Power efforts, for example, were less concerned with participatory democracy and more interested in challenging imperialism abroad and at home, winning "community control," and building black identity (Jennings, 1990).

Such efforts in the United States were part of an insurgent trend in the West. Massive peace protests in the United Kingdom registered strong disapproval of Cold War policies, directly challenging social democratic regimes. These early efforts, among others, initiated a widespread "New Left" movement throughout the West, one which was soon to expand beyond university sites and student constituencies to develop, according to Ceccarelli (1982, p. 263), into "an unprecedented outburst of urban movements": Paris and West German cities in the Spring of 1968; Prague, Chicago, and Monterrey, Mexico, during that summer; in Italy the "Hot Autumn" of 1969 and the urban conflicts of the early 1970s; squatters in Portuguese cities after the April Revolution; and urban social movements in Madrid and other Spanish cities after Franco. All testify to a massive grassroots mobilization which developed rapidly, and perhaps even unprecedentedly, throughout Europe, the United States, and parts of the Third World (Ceccarelli, 1982; Teodori, 1969).

Concern for and experimentation with participatory democracy, nonhierarchical decision making, prefigurative cultural politics, linking the personal with the political, direct-action tactics, and constituency based organizing (students, the

poor, etc.) characterized new left insurgent consciousness (Jacobs and Landau, 1966; Breines, 1982). Unlike the new social movement resistances to follow, the new left emphasized the formation of coalitions or political parties tied to national revolutionary/emancipatory struggles. There was a sense in the late 1960s, in cities as disparate as Paris, Berlin, Berkeley, and Monterrey, that "successful and autonomous urban movements are not a real alternative outside the context of a revolutionary national movement" (Walton, 1979, p. 12). The struggle over state power, over who should make public policy, fueled local organizing efforts. Grassroots efforts were for most activists a democratic means to larger objectives which transcended the local community. This strategy persists, in a more reformist form, in certain notable national efforts since then, such as the Green parties in Europe, the Workers Party in Brazil, and the Rainbow Coalition idea in the United States (Spretnak and Capra, 1985; Alvarez, 1993; Collins, 1986).

Community-based social action efforts which followed tended to borrow more heavily from the "newer" side of the New Left. These activists saw community organizing, alternative groupings, and grassroots efforts as at least the primary focus if not the sole end. They emphasized democratic organizational structure, the politics of identity and culture, existential values of personal freedom and authenticity, and the development of "free spaces" where people could learn the theory and practice of political insurgency while engaging in it. So did much of the New Left, but the other, more Marxist segments, closer in style and politics to the old labor-based social action, adhered strongly to older concerns with public policy and winning state power (Evans,

1979; Evans and Boyte, 1986; Carson, 1982).

(5) New Social Movements

Despite a marked backlash worldwide against the radical activism of the late 1960s, the 1970s and 1980s witnessed not the end of community-based activism but the proliferation of grassroots activism and insurgency into highly diversified, single-issue or identity-oriented, community-based efforts. These efforts, the subject of this essay, include women's shelters and feminist organizations, efforts in defense of the rights and the communities of oppressed people of color, struggles around housing, ecology, and peace issues, gay and lesbian rights and identity groups, and thousands of neighborhood and issue-based citizen initiatives, complete with organizer training centers. While these organizing efforts vary from one national and local context to another, they share a common form and movement heritage. Based in geographic communities or communities of interest, decentralized according to constituencies and identity groups, democratic in process and goals, and funded most often by voluntary sources, they serve as the archetype for contemporary social action.

The roots of their insurgent consciousness, while not always direct, can be found in the ideals discussed thus far: (1) that ordinary and previously oppressed people should have a voice and can make history, (2) that citizen and community participation, which gives "voice" to people previously silent in public discourse, is needed to improve decision making, address a wide range of problems, and democratize society, (3) that "by any means necessary" covers the gamut of strategies and tactics from revolutionary to interest-group politics, (4) that culture, whether found in a traditional ethnic

neighborhood, battered women's shelter, counterculture collective, or gay men's organization, must be blended with the quest for "empowerment" into an identity- or a constituency-oriented politics, and (5) that "the personal is political," articulated first by radical feminists in the late 1960s, guides people to organize around aspects of daily life most central to them, while keeping in mind that struggles over personal issues and relationships—personal choice, autonomy, commitment, and fulfillment—are inextricably tied to collective ones of the constituency group and the larger society.

Most commentators tend to see the focus on democracy as the essence of new social-movement insurgent consciousness and the source of its potential. As Frank and Fuentes (1990, p. 142) put it, the new social movements "are the most important agents of social transformation in that their praxis promotes participatory democracy in civil society. Pitkin and Shumer (1982, p. 43) go further, declaring that "of all the dangerous thoughts and explosive ideas abroad in the world today, by far the most subversive is that of democracy. . . . [It] is the cutting edge of radical criticism, the best inspiration for change toward a more humane world, the revolutionary idea of our time." And these democratic projects have had profound impact: empowering participants, teaching democratic skills, transforming notions of political life, expanding political boundaries, returning politics to civic self-activity, strengthening a sense of public activism, raising new social and political issues, struggling against new forms of subordination and oppression, and even advancing agendas of the middle class to which formal, institutional politics remain closed (Roth, 1991; Slater, 1985).

But while the emphasis on democracy unites these efforts, it also helps detach them in the western industrialized nations

from the material needs of the poor, and it contributes to their fragmentation into a plethora of diverse, decentralized community organizations. The pursuit of democracy, without sufficient concern for equality, has resulted in the failure of the new social movements to address the material needs of the most disadvantaged. Moreover, the new social movement origins in culturally oriented, identity-based efforts tend to fragment social change efforts in general (Fisher and Kling, 1993). For example, the diversity and flexibility that theorists of postmodernity attribute to contemporary society are nowhere more evident than in the variety of these new social movement efforts. A commitment to diversity embodies their emphasis on democratic politics. It encourages each constituency or identity group to name its own struggles, develop its own voice, and engage in its own empowerment. This may be the future of politics, a "postmodernization of public life," with its "proliferation of multiple publics [and] breaking down of rigid barriers between political and private life" (Kaufmann, 1990, p. 10). But the central challenges to these efforts require more immediate and realistic strategies. How do they encourage diversity and counteract fragmentation? How do they influence or get power at levels—the city, state, and nation—beyond their own limited universes and at the same time build community capacity? How do we organize grassroots social action efforts and at the same time build a larger social change movement or political party, the size of which can only accomplish the needed, large structural changes?

PRACTICE IMPLICATIONS

Without question, the fragmentation of contemporary social action weakens the possibility for coherently imagined challenges to

current problems. To address this problem of contemporary organizing, the historical dialectic of domination and resistance must be understood and fashioned in terms of the *interplay* between class, community, and the search for new cultural orientations. In this regard Kling and I have offered elsewhere the following sets of strategies (Fisher and Kling, 1991).

First, mobilization in the fragmented metropolis demands that broad coalitions be sought between various constituency groups, and that community politics be more cohesively integrated with electoral activity. Single community-based efforts are not large enough to challenge the enormous power of corporate capital or centralized government. Because community problems almost always originate beyond local borders, the ability to effect change depends to a great extent upon coalition-building. The success of coalition-building, however, ultimately will be based upon whether specific ways can be found to break down the racial and cultural barriers that are so entrenched in the United States and growing again in Western Europe.

Pressure group politics, even through powerful coalitions, is not enough; movements must also struggle to win and hold power, not simply to influence it. The electoral arena must become a prime target for social movement mobilizing while, at some later point, political parties serve the critical role of formalizing and structuring relationships between loosely formed coalitions and constituency-based groups (Boyte et al., 1986; Delgado, 1986; Spretnak and Capra, 1985). We offer such advice knowing how coalition and electoral efforts draw already scarce resources away from the fundamental task of grassroots organizing. But the local and the global are equally necessary, and numerous models of such dually focused practice have emerged over time.

custom of following established procedures. Overcoming such obstacles is by no means easy. Consider, for example, the difficulties that might be anticipated in attempting to shift the program focus of a medical clinic serving primarily young mothers and their children, to a medical checkup program for the aging, or of getting a citywide planning agency to develop neighborhood planning "outposts."

Adding a new program to an existing agency may result in serious coordination problems between functional units, may lead to conflict with other agency activities, and may ultimately lead to its "benign neglect."

On the other hand, establishing a new agency is often costlier than expanding the services of an existing organization. An established agency is often well recognized and supported in the community. Its staff has the training and experience to run the agency and knows how to handle all its administrative details. Moreover, the agency may have all the basic equipment necessary for the new service or program. New agencies often flounder because of the lack of experience and expertise.

PROCEDURES IN ORGANIZING A NEW SERVICE OR PROGRAM

Identifying the Need for Service

No new agency or program should be initiated unless it is propelled by the existence of a concrete and viable need. Self-evident as this may seem, attempts are too often made to develop new services without a clear definition and articulation of the needs to be met. Lack of clarity and specificity of needs is likely to result in two undesirable consequences. First, it makes it far more difficult to mobilize community

support for the new program. Second, the actual design of the program may be haphazard, ad hoc, often leading to ineffectiveness and inefficiency. A cardinal principle in program design is that the greater the clarity of the program's objectives, the better its chances for success.

Identifying unmet needs in the community is a complex task that necessitates several steps. The concept of "need" itself often defies adequate definition. What is perceived as a need by one group may not be so considered by another. Nevertheless, there are a number of ways in which planners can get a quick orientation to needs. The following are illustrative strategies:

1. Planners might start by examining available statistical reports such as census data, local Social Security office data, county government surveys, health surveys. While information on the number of potential clients in a given area, their distribution in various neighborhoods, their level of income, housing patterns, health conditions and the like might not indicate what they "need," such information is often suggestive.

2. The planner-organizer might then take a second step: identifying the various agencies in the area that serve the community. This involves finding out whom these agencies serve and what types of services they offer. Statistical reports issued by relevant agencies, the local welfare council and the public social service agencies may be of particular importance. Some communities may have developed information systems for a network of agencies that could provide invaluable data to the planner-organizer.⁶

⁶See for example, CHILDATA. Council for Community Services in Metropolitan Chicago.

3. A third step is to explore with the staff of the agencies that are current or potential providers of services to the target population the concerns and problems it has identified regarding gaps or inequities in services.

4. Very early in the process, planners should meet with community groups to discuss their wants, preferences, and interests.

5. A more systematic data-gathering procedure might be developed through a "needs survey" of the neighborhoods in which potential clients are most likely to reside. The facilities of a college or university or a local mental health center, as well as civic groups and volunteers, can be mobilized to conduct the survey. Questions should be designed to elicit information about the problems and unmet needs of those interviewed. A social-indicators-type survey is one of the most useful of the new devices to get at such information.⁷

An important concomitant of the planner's information-gathering activities is his or her effort to increase the community's awareness of the needs of the target population. Involvement of community leaders and representatives of agencies in determination of these needs sensitizes them to existing problems and lays the groundwork for mobilizing them into action. Awareness on the part of key groups and agencies in the community is often fundamental to the initiation of new programs.

Mobilizing Support for the Service

It is extremely difficult to develop a new program without the existence and active support of a group in the community that is

highly committed to its development. The planner-organizer must often initiate and organize such an action group. The action group then gathers resources and influence, actively representing the new program's objectives, and fights for its support in the community. In short, it assumes an advocate function. Sometimes this group will be the planner's advisory council. At other times it will be a specially organized task force on transportation or protective services or some other need. Again, it may be a purely ad hoc coalition of interested parties.

What persons should the planner-organizer mobilize into such a group? Perhaps more than anything else, participants should share a keen interest in and concern for the welfare of the target population. To be truly responsive, it must include representatives of the clients themselves. Potential for influence is another criterion for inclusion. The greater the individual prestige of the members, the greater their potential for collective influence. Influential members may include representatives of civic organizations, financial institutions, church organizations, and the like.

The higher the level of understanding about the problems of the target population among members of this group and the greater their expertise in the delivery of services to them, the more realistic will be the group's efforts and the greater the credibility of its suggestions to the community. Planners often enlist members of professional associations, physicians, social workers, etc., to assure this expertise. Having representatives of community agencies in the group increases the chances that their support for a new program will be forthcoming.

The function of such a group might be: to formulate the overall objectives of the new program; to identify the target popula-

⁷D. Fruin, "Analysis of Need," in M. J. Brown, ed., *Social Issues and the Social Services* (London: Charles Knight, 1974): 27-56.

tion to be served; to identify sources of financial support for the new program; to present the program objectives to important institutions in the community (such as city council, county government, mental health board, United Fund); or all of these.

This group might also examine in detail the information and ideas developed by the planner-organizer. Although the group itself need not develop a detailed plan for action, consensus regarding the type of program to be developed is helpful. Sometimes, of course, consensus is difficult to reach. Participants must be aware that differences in opinion or in conclusion are possible, and that these experiences can be healthy. An action group should provide the arena where ideas can be exchanged, proposals explored, and creative thinking encouraged. Ultimately, the group should formulate a basic plan for a new program by identifying and agreeing upon its major objectives and the population it should serve.

It is from this action group that a body in charge of defining or reviewing the policies for the new program may ultimately be drawn. This may be formalized as a board of directors, as an advisory council, or as an internal task force within an existing agency. The importance of an action group of this kind cannot be overemphasized. In the founding stages of the new program, the planner-organizer will need to rely heavily on its support, energy, and creativity, and most importantly, on its ability to mobilize necessary resources for the program.⁴ The existence of an advocate group is no less crucial when the planner decides to launch the program within an existing agency, than when an entirely new structure is to be developed.

⁴M. Znid, "The Power and Function of Boards of Directors: A Theoretical Synthesis," *American Journal of Sociology* 75 (July 1969): 97-111.

Assigning Responsibilities to a Board or Advisory Council

When the interest group has developed an adequate level of cohesion and formulated a basic statement regarding the mandate of the new program, it may be reconstituted as a formal board or council. It might then be given any of the following charges:

1. Development of a specific plan for the implementation of the new program
2. Responsibility for obtaining the basic resources to get the program started
3. Authority to hire or approve the director of the new program
4. Accountability for the activities of the program director and the disbursement of fiscal resources

The board or council must be helped to develop some internal division of labor to ensure that the necessary tasks will be fulfilled. This may involve designating members as president or chairman, secretary, treasurer, program planning subcommittee and the like. In addition, clear procedures for decision making must be formulated. These steps are of particular importance since the board's decisions are bound to have critical impact on the character and direction of the program.

Defining the Mission of the New Agency or Program

Establishment of a new program requires a carefully planned blueprint that specifies both mission and operational objectives. It requires a thoughtful assessment of the feasibility of achieving each objective and identification of the essential means for implementing it. Identified needs coupled with available resources and means must be translated into a series of program objectives aimed at meeting these needs.

The planner-organizer plays a crucial role at this stage. Possessing critical information regarding needs, as well as knowledge about potential resources, he or she must help the board, advisory council, or task force to reach consensus on what the organization's mission will be.

This mission is defined in terms of needs to be met, populations to be served, and services to be given. This mission, however, must be translated into operational terms. This requires first of all, *specification of the needs to be addressed*. These needs are prioritized (step no. 1), and *objectives specified* (step no. 2). It is not necessary that the most crucial need be acted on first. Sometimes what is most easily accomplished takes precedence on the planner's timetable. But the ultimate mission must always be kept in mind.

Specifying the Objectives

Specifying the objectives of the program is a process of moving from the general to the specific through careful assessment of alternatives. Assume, for example, that there is a consensus to focus on the needs and prob-

lems of aged persons living alone. In the process of identifying the needs of such a population there arises a growing awareness that they are most likely to experience problems in personal management. Such consensus does not lead directly to programs or services. Are these problems expressed in poor household management, in inadequate diet, in poor personal care, in social isolation? Which of these problems are of the greatest urgency? If agreement on the urgency of these problems can be reached, they may be ordered on a chart. In Figure 28.1, four specific problems are identified and ordered in terms of importance.

The next task (step no. 3) is to *specify* the "target" population to determine more exactly what older persons are to be helped by the new or expanded services. A similar process is followed to identify those who manifest the problems most acutely. These may be found in a minority population with low income, residing in a specific neighborhood. Agreements must be reached concerning this target population, as its characteristics will determine the feasibility of various alternatives for responding to the needs.

FIGURE 28.1

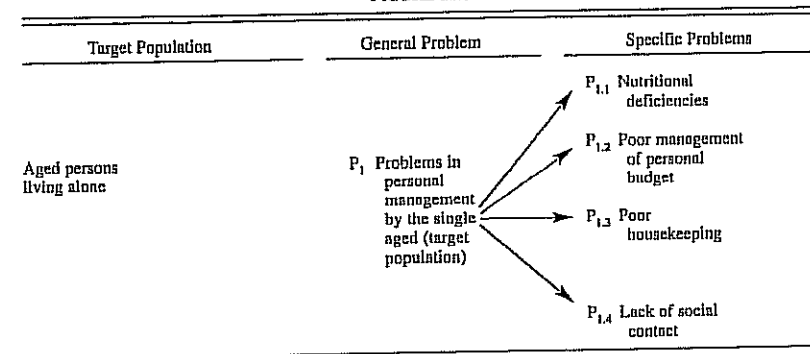
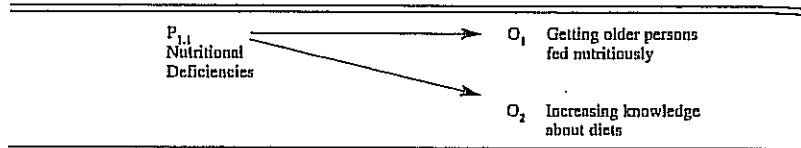


FIGURE 28.2



The choice of the target population should also reflect contingencies regarding the attainment of needed resources. Grants may be earmarked for certain categories of older persons. Certain agencies may be able to provide certain services only to older persons living in their geographical jurisdiction. Also, if it will take two years and \$200,000 to develop a service for persons living in neighborhood X, while a similar level of service to persons in neighborhood Y is possible for far less and in only nine months, the choice of initial target population may be clear.

Next comes *exploring alternative program approaches* to dealing with specific problems of the target population (step no. 4). For example, in addressing the problem of nutritional deficiencies the objective may be to provide meals to a given population. Alternatively, the service might be an educational one, in which older persons are taught about proper diet (see Figure 28.2).

Similarly, in response to financial management problems, program objectives may

include helping older persons to use their financial resources more efficiently, increasing access and use of banking services, and the like (see Figure 28.3).

Through this process a list of potential agency or program objectives can be developed.

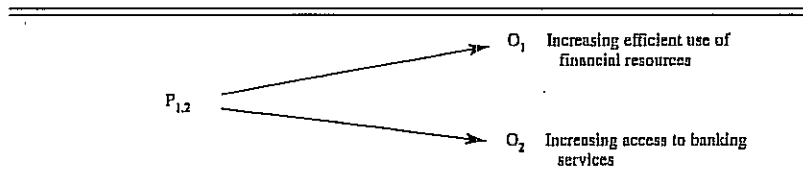
Doing a Feasibility Study

After an inventory of alternative objectives has been formulated, a feasibility study of each (step no. 5) is necessary.

Some of the criteria to be used are as follows:

1. What would be the fiscal cost?
2. What would be the manpower requirements?
3. What facilities and equipment would be needed?
4. How receptive to the objective could the community be expected to be?
5. What would be the anticipated support of the objective by other community agencies?

FIGURE 28.3



With such information on each objective, the planning task force must now shift its focus to the other side of the coin, namely *assessing the potential money and credit* the new program could hope to obtain (step no. 6). Some of the elements in such considerations are:

1. The availability of federal and/or state grants
2. Potential contributions by local government
3. Donations and contributions by local private organizations such as United Fund
4. In-kind contributions by social service agencies and social clubs
5. Availability of volunteers to offset or reduce staffing costs

In considering various sources of support, it is often necessary that the new program be affiliated with, or an integral component of, an existing agency. The auspice-giving or sponsoring agency may be able to allocate a certain portion of its budget for the new program, cut the administrative or overhead costs, or provide the organizational auspices required as qualification for grants.

Following the feasibility study, the board, council, or task force must then, on the basis of all the information on options and constraints, determine which services the new program will provide. This process culminates in a comprehensive policy statement specifying the consented objectives of the new program, the rationale for their adoption, the kinds of services to be provided, the clients to be served, and the individuals and groups who have assumed responsibility for the program and will be accountable for it to the public. Such a statement may serve as a charter, which may be required if the program is to

become incorporated. In any event, it is a claim for domain and a statement of intent.

Obtaining Seed Money for Start-Up

Some planner-organizers assume that no project should commence unless all the resources needed to ensure its success are secured. This view fails to recognize that the most effective way to obtain needed resources may be to start the project and count on its visibility, demonstrated utility, and receptivity by clients to attract new resources. A program once started often generates its own momentum, attracting supporters unknown prior to the project's initiation and quickly developing spokesmen for itself in the community. This, of course, is not always the case. Many programs have foundered on inadequate funding, regardless of the need for the services. Every beginning necessitates some risk taking. The constraint of inadequate financial resources is a limiting factor, but it need not be an inhibiting one.

Nevertheless, basic "seed" or "start-up" money is often necessary. The planner-organizer, with a knowledge of federal and state funds and grants, and through contacts with local agencies, plays a crucial role in locating and obtaining funds. Together with the sponsoring agency or members of the board, task force, or advisory council, the planner-organizer may initiate or provide technical assistance toward: (1) the submission of grant proposals to federal or state governmental agencies or to private foundations; (2) fund-raising campaigns with the help of local civic associations, fraternal clubs, or churches; (3) solicitation of donations from industrial and commercial organizations; (4) competition for local or revenue-sharing funds; (5) presentations before the United Fund; (6) development of contracts with established

community agencies, such as a community mental health board, for the provision of funds for the new program; (7) locating in-kind resources (such as facilities and equipment) through enlistment of the aid of social clubs and the news media; (8) mobilizing volunteers to provide the initial manpower needed to start the program.

The initial resources gathered for the new program must be allocated for two basic purposes: to set up the actual service or program, and to promote the program in the community, attracting additional resources. Often, because of inadequate financing, there is a tendency to ignore the second purpose. Yet if those resources are not allocated to promotion, the program may quickly reach a dead end. While it may be difficult to divert limited dollars from needed services, failure to do so may be shortsighted, ignoring the fact that organizations must survive to be successful. Promotion requires more than money, however. It usually requires the assignment of staff to carry it out.

Specifying the Program Technology

The program objectives formulated in the new program's policy statement do not necessarily define the means to achieve them. The "set of means" by which the objectives are to be accomplished is called the *program technology* of the organization.

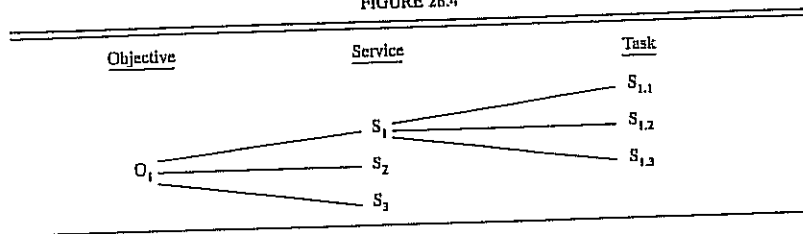
As the technology becomes articulated, it provides a series of guidelines for the type of staff and skills needed and the daily tasks to be performed in serving clients.⁹

The components of a program technology can be derived from the program objectives discussed earlier. In the previous example, the problem of nutritional deficiencies led to identification of two objectives—getting older persons fed nutritiously, and increasing their knowledge about diets. In attempting to implement the first of these objectives, the planner-organizer should explore every possible type of service that relates to providing adequate meals for the aging. Schematically, the process can be presented as shown in Figure 28.4.

Thus S₁ may be a meals-on-wheels service, S₂ may represent a cooperative cooking program for small groups of older persons in a given neighborhood, and S₃ might be a hot lunch program at the neighborhood schools. The choice of the specific service may be based on such criteria as: (1) known success of similar programs elsewhere, (2) availability of expertise to implement it, (3) availability of other necessary resources, (4) receptivity by the aged to be served.

⁹On the concept of human service technology see Y. Hasenfeld and R. English, eds., *Human Service Organizations* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1974): 12-14.

FIGURE 28.4



Assuming that the meals-on-wheels program has been adopted, the next series of specifications identifies the major tasks required to provide the service. For example, S_{1.1} stands for organizing volunteers with cars; S_{1.2}, preparation of weekly visits by a nutritionist; S_{1.3}, preparing the meals at the kitchen of the local church, etc.

In short, this process provides a blueprint of all major tasks necessary to make the program operative.

Implementing the Program Technology

Once the choice of technology is made and its components identified, the new program can proceed to obtain the needed personnel. The program technology itself can be used to provide guidelines for the type of personnel required, and to specify the skills required of staff. It can, in fact, be used as the basis for writing job descriptions—although these should not be overly prescriptive or rigid.

Any program, in its initial phase, will require a great deal of flexibility from its staff. Staff may be called upon to switch roles and assume various tasks as the need arises, even though tasks calling for particular skills must be performed by qualified personnel.

The success of the meals-on-wheels program, for example, may hinge on the skills of a nutritionist needed to plan well-balanced meals. A program in which volunteers cook and deliver meals may only seem to be successful but in fact be missing the objective of getting older people fed nutritiously.

Once personnel are hired they must be given the responsibility to perform those tasks for which they are qualified. A nutritionist, for example, may not be the right person to supervise or organize drivers for the "wheels" part of the meals program.

There is often a tendency to assume that a higher level of credentials implies proficiencies in many areas. Yet a nutritionist with an academic degree may know little about counseling or working with volunteers. Often a volunteer is much better qualified.

Developing an Appropriate Delivery Structure

Division of labor, then, is all-important. Effective division of labor requires three critical organizational decisions: Who does what? In what order must various tasks be performed? Who is accountable for what is done? The first decision requires identification of the tasks to be performed and the persons to perform them. The second decision is related to sequence and coordination. Some tasks must be performed before others can be begun. Those that are performed sequentially may be separated among several work units. Other tasks must be performed together and belong to the same work unit.

In every organization there are certain sets of activities for which a supervisory person may be held accountable. The following principles may prove useful in guiding the development of an appropriate set of structural relationships.¹⁰

1. Those activities which need to be done simultaneously or in close proximity to each other are generally best grouped together. In the example given, the menu planning and the cooking activities should be in the hands of certain staff, while the handling of the delivery of the meals can be in the hands of another group. A set of

¹⁰P. R. Lawrence and J. W. Lorsch, *Organizations and Environment* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1967).

activities which must be closely coordinated should be conducted or supervised by a single unit supervisor.

2. Activities that have different time and space schedules and contingencies should generally be grouped separately. For example, the meals-on-wheels program should be separated from a group counseling program.

3. Tasks which can be performed through explicit routines should be separated from tasks that are nonroutine. For example, determination of membership, registration, and fee assessment are routine tasks. They should not be performed by those who provide consultation to community groups, a highly nonroutine activity.

4. Activities which require different ways of relating to the clients should be separated. For example, recreational activities for older people should not ordinarily be provided by the staff who give intensive individual counseling. While the same staff could conceivably do both, there ought to be a clear distinction between their two functions.

5. Staff should not be subjected to multiple supervision if at all possible. If it is necessary for more than one supervisor to relate to a particular staff person because of multiple roles that staff person performs, clear distinction must be made regarding the areas of jurisdiction of each supervisor.

The period of initial implementation of program technology is a period of trial and error. It requires a great deal of flexibility and no little tolerance for failure and for ambiguity. Open-mindedness and willingness to explore alternative routes are essential ingredients. During the early stages of program development, lines of communication with staff and clients must

be kept as open as possible. Feedback is essential if the program is to adjust to unexpected exigencies. Staff who work directly with the community can provide invaluable information on the operationalization of the technology and its problems, its failures, and its successes.

It is probably desirable to have a "dry run" of the technology to test its organization and to acquaint the staff with its roles and duties. This can be accomplished through simulation techniques prior to putting the program into the field. Another approach is to select clients who are willing to volunteer for the service, even though the "bugs" in it may not have been fully shaken out.

Developing Inter-Agency Relationships

Concurrent with development of the technology of an agency or program is the development of a "support structure." This structure refers to the organization's patterned relationships to those elements in its environment that provide it with the resources necessary to attain its service and maintenance objectives. These elements include:

1. Clients or *consumers* of its service
2. Fiscal, manpower, technical, and other *resources* essential to the goal-oriented performance
3. *Complementary or supportive services* without which an agency's services would be unattainable, inadequate, or ineffective
4. Support or recognition from regulatory and auspice-providing bodies which give the program its *authority or mandate*

Managing the flow of these elements to and from the program requires establish-

ment of a variety of exchange relationships with other organizations in the environment. This environment is described as an agency's "task environment." It is composed of all those groups and organizations whose actions directly affect the agency's goal attainment. Exchange activities leading to receiving elements from the task environment may take the form of: (1) competition, (2) contractual agreements, (3) cooptation, or (4) coalition formation.¹¹

Agencies and programs are frequently in *competition* with each other for needed resources. One agency may compete with another for a federal grant by offering to serve more clients per dollar; it may compete to obtain better-trained staff by offering better benefits.

Human services agencies often make *contractual arrangements*, in which one organization agrees to do something for another (often in return for something). Without such arrangements, many services would be poorly performed or left undone. Examples abound. Agencies may exchange staff with complementary competencies on a temporary basis. One agency may do the mailing and publicity for another. A community group may contract with the Welfare Council to assess the service needs of a particular neighborhood. A county department of social services may purchase services from other agencies for its clients, including recreation, mental health, or protective services it does not have the staff to provide directly.

A new program or agency may also attempt to *coopt* key persons from other agencies whose services it seeks. Cooptation is accomplished through involving others in the design of a service or delivery of a ser-

vice program. Cooptation strategies are employed when involvement and its rewards are likely to give those who might otherwise oppose a program a greater appreciation for why it is needed and what it is intended to accomplish. Their involvement may not only nullify potential opposition, but may actually increase support.

When agencies pool their resources in a joint venture, they form a coalition. Coalitions differ from contracts in that the latter require explicit agreements about what one party will do for the other. Coalitions, on the other hand, are binding only insofar as working together leads to some mutual goal attainment.

It is not essential for parties in an exchange relationship to benefit equally from the exchange, or to have fully complementary goals. It is only necessary that each part perceive the relationship as being of some benefit to itself.

The choice of each of these strategies depends on numerous conditions, particularly those pertaining to the perceived status and desirability of the new program in the community. The more secure and the greater the importance attached to the agency's services, for example, the more likely it is to employ competitive and contractual strategies.

Enlisting Needed Elements from the Environment

In the discussion that follows, attention will be given to how agencies recruit resources or manage the flow of needed elements from the environment itself.

Clients. Clients can be recruited through referrals by other agencies informed about the new program. Clients may also be informed of a service through the news media. To reach some isolated clients, it is

¹¹K. Benson, "The Interorganizational Network as a Political Economy," *Administrative Science Quarterly* 20 (June 1975): 229-46.

often necessary to launch a door-to-door campaign using volunteers.

Inadequate interpretation of an agency's services or intake policy may result in inappropriate referrals. An agency that turns away many ineligible clients causes a serious and unnecessary hardship to those clients and to its staff as well. It does harm to its own image, often damaging its relationships to other agencies. Thus it is critical for the new program to disseminate accurate and specific information about eligibility, both to the public and to other social agencies. Changes in eligibility criteria should be promptly communicated to all referral sources.

Permanent Sources of Funding. Often a new program must expend some of its initial and temporary resources on activities aimed at securing additional, more permanent sources of funding. Examples of such activities include: (1) entering into negotiations with the United Fund or United Way; (2) preparing grant applications to federal and state governmental agencies; (3) organizing a group of community influentials willing to sponsor an annual fund drive; (4) negotiating with local governmental bodies such as community mental health boards or county commissioners to incorporate the program under its sponsorship.

These and other activities require that certain staff members spend considerable time and energy meeting with potential funding sources, exchanging ideas, and presenting the agency's case.

It is often desirable to designate a specific staff position for such activities and hire a person with considerable experience in mobilization of resources.

Knowledge and Expertise. No new program can function without adequate access

to at least the minimal amount of necessary knowledge and expertise. In the long run, the success of an agency may hinge on the quality of services it offers, and that quality may be in direct proportion to the knowledge and expertise of its staff. Inadequate and erroneous information could be disastrous.

The planner-organizer can mobilize expertise through: (1) enlisting the services of experts in the field from nearby institutes and universities; (2) consulting with and visiting programs of similar nature in other communities; (3) arranging information exchanges between the staff of the new agency and that of an established one in another area; (4) exploring the available literature on the problems or needs the program attempts to deal with; (5) obtaining consultation and relevant publications from appropriate state and federal agencies; (6) arranging for training and continuing education seminars.

Complementary Services. The effectiveness of any program is dependent in no small measure on the availability of complementary services for its clients. It is not enough to give one's own service well. No matter how highly specialized a service, the organization providing that service must still assume some responsibility for the general welfare of its clients. It cannot shy away from its obligation to make sure that clients receive other needed services.

This is particularly true when the effectiveness of the very services provided by the agency is dependent on the complementary services of other agencies. For example, if an agency develops a child-care program, it cannot in good conscience ignore the health needs of the children, and it may contract for periodic medical examinations with the local "well baby" clinic. A nutrition program for the aged might not be

successful unless it also enlisted cooperation from the outreach staff of the Information and Referral Service, the Visiting Nurses Association, or the Mental Health Crisis Center.

A new program must identify the crucial services it will need to enlist from other agencies and programs in order to meet its own objectives. It is within the planner-organizer's responsibility to see to it that such services are or will be made available. Without them, the new program may fail.

These complementary services can be arranged through several means: (1) actual purchase of such services from another agency; (2) contract of exchange of services between the two agencies; (3) a unilateral decision by the other agency to provide the needed services as a gesture of goodwill; (4) a coalition of several agencies with different services all committed to serve the same clients.

Monitoring and Evaluation. Every program is subject to the monitoring and evaluation of some overseeing agencies. These may be state licensing organizations, other governmental units, local administrative boards, professional associations, citizens' groups, or other interested parties. Often these regulatory agencies exert considerable influence. They may impose very specific requirements for the agency to meet.

A state agency, for example, may annually audit the financial transactions of the program, or it may check the extent to which the facilities conform to state regulations. A professional organization may be responsible for accreditation without which outside grants cannot be received.

The planner-organizer must see to it that the program has developed the appropriate mechanisms by which it can meet the requirements of these regulatory agencies.

This is not a mere bureaucratic formality. Accrediting bodies and standard-setting organizations are often the key sources of legitimation and support of a new program. For example, an agency approved for internship of urban planners will gain considerable prestige and recognition in the professional community and could, therefore, attract good staff. Similarly, an agency that receives a favorable evaluation by a state agency is more likely to obtain future state grants.

Maintaining appropriate relations with the various agencies and organizations necessitates the establishment of "boundary roles" for program staff. Persons in these roles develop and maintain linkages between the new program and relevant organizations in its environment.¹² A staff person may be designated as the liaison with the state social service agency, county government, local hospital, etc. The duties of boundary personnel include: (1) establishment of the necessary relations with outside groups and organizations; (2) resolution of whatever difficulties may arise in the course of a relationship; (3) obtaining relevant up-to-date information about the activities of the partner to the relationship; (4) establishment of contacts with key staff in that organization or group who may be favorable toward the agency; (5) alerting the agency to new developments that may alter the relations between the two.

The ability of an agency to seize on new opportunities in the environment, to adapt to new changes, and to be prepared for new constraints depends on the effective job performed by the occupants of these boundary roles. They serve as the ears and eyes of

¹²H. Aldrich and D. Hecker, "Boundary Spanning Roles and Organization Structure," mimeographed paper (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University, 1974).

the agency, without which its ability to adapt, grow, and develop would be seriously hampered.

Legitimation and Social Support. Underlying all the inter-agency relations described above is a pervasive need of the program to obtain legitimation and social support. The success of the program in achieving viability is dependent on its ability to become a recognized "institution" in the community. Once the program is perceived by key elements in the community as desirable, indispensable, and an important contributor to the general welfare of the community, it has been "legitimated." Legitimacy implies that the community is willing to accept it as a viable and necessary component of the service structure.¹³

Support and legitimacy do not come easily; neither are they cheap. Concerted efforts to achieve them must be made by program staff. Support generally requires at the very least a satisfied community group or gratified clients. This is the core of an agency's constituent base. This constituency should also include other social service agencies that benefit in some direct way from the services offered by the new program. The constituent base should also include community influentials and professionals who are committed to the well-being of the target population.

Other mechanisms to promote support for the program include: lectures and presentations by staff to various community groups; establishment of an influential board of directors; public visits to the agency's facilities; reports by the news media of the activities of the agency; etc.

¹³P. Selznick, *Leadership in Administration* (New York: Harper, 1957).

But necessary as these are, none is sufficient without solid constituent support.

Getting Staff to Perform Adequately

Persons choose to work in organizations and agencies for a variety of reasons. They often join an agency staff with personal expectations and aspirations. The agency, on the other hand, expects them to perform in accordance with its needs, demands, and schedules. There may be many points of incongruity between personal aspirations of staff and organizational expectations. The larger the discrepancies, the greater the strains and the less likelihood that staff will perform adequately.¹⁴

Planner-organizers can help a new program determine adequate criteria for staff selection and realistic expectations for performance. Individuals who become employees of an agency make a contractual agreement whereby they accept the role requirements assigned to them in exchange for the various inducements provided by the agency (salary, work satisfactions, good working conditions).

A great deal of misunderstanding can be avoided if the agency specifies its requirements at the point of recruitment. Clearly written requirements can guide the agency to hire staff who have the needed skills, aptitudes, and attributes. Recruitment, however, is only a limited mechanism to ensure that staff will perform adequately. Socialization is a critical organizational process through which staff internalizes agency norms and values and learns specific role obligations. Two important socialization mechanisms are training and staff development.

¹⁴L. W. Porter, E. E. Lawler, and J. R. Hackman, *Behavior in Organizations* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1975).

In the final analysis, however, effective and efficient role performance by staff is predicated on the design of a work unit that is congruent with the tasks it has to perform.¹⁵ Tasks can be categorized by two major variables: (1) *Task difficulty*, which refers to the degree of complexity, amount of knowledge needed, and reliance on nonroutine decision making. For example, determination of service eligibility may be a very simple task based on few explicit decision rules, while planning community services necessitates consideration of many factors, reliance on extensive knowledge, and complex decision making. (2) *Task variability*, which refers to the degree of uniformity and predictability of the work to be done. For example, preparation of monthly statistical reports is a relatively uniform and predictable task, while developing ties with various agencies calls for a variety of procedures.

Tasks which are low in complexity and variability call for a work unit structure which is essentially bureaucratic in the classical sense of the word. Tasks which are high in complexity and variability necessitate a work unit structure which is "human relational." In a bureaucratic structure line staff has very limited discretion; there is a clear hierarchy of authority; and coordination of staff is based on an extensive set of rules and operating procedures. In a human relation structure, the discretion of line staff is high; relations with supervisory staff are collegial; and coordination is based on feedback from the other staff.

When the task has both complex and noncomplex components or variable and nonvariable elements which cannot be separated, a "mixed" structure will be most

appropriate.¹⁶ Based on the nature of the "mix" such a structure may provide line staff with high discretion in some specific areas and none in others. For example, the task of intake may be of such type. Workers may have high discretion in defining the problem of the client, but none concerning determination of fees, scheduling, and the like.

It can be readily shown that each structure is most efficient if appropriately matched with the characteristics of the tasks to be performed. This is so because the work unit structure is designed to elicit the behavioral and role prescriptions that each task requires.

When conflict arises between two units or among several staff members because of overlapping jurisdictions, lack of coordination, or lack of mutual understanding, an ad hoc task force to deal with the conflict may prove helpful. In a multi-service center, for example, a conflict could arise between the outreach staff and the counseling staff. The former may feel that they do not get any help in scheduling appointments and in coping with problems they encounter in the field. The counseling staff, on the other hand, may feel that it is asked to do the work of the outreach staff and that the outreach staff fails to understand what the counselors are trying to accomplish. To resolve the conflict, an ad hoc task force might be established with representatives of both parties to arrive at an acceptable solution, or an integrator position might be created.

The integrator role requires that a third party become the mediator between parties in the dispute. The integrator is generally a person with adequate knowledge of the activities of the units of persons he or she attempts to

¹⁶Eugene Litwak, "Models of Organization Which Permit Conflict," *American Journal of Sociology* 67 (Sept. 1961), pp. 177-84.

¹⁵C. Perrow, *op. cit.*, Chapter 3.

bring together, and may be in an authority position in relation to both. In the example above, the integrator might be a person who has expertise in both outreach and counseling, so that his directive to both units will be respected. His function is to identify areas where coordination needs to be established and procedures that can be developed to minimize conflict. He also serves as a mediator, interpreting to each unit the issues and problems the other unit needs to solve.¹⁷

A further word: Conflict is not necessarily dysfunctional to an organization. To the contrary. It can help to effectively identify operational problems, philosophical differences, or staff deficiencies. Properly managed, conflict situations assure a changing and responsive pattern of agency operations. Conflict is often a symptom of healthy adaptation to changing needs and expectations.

Developing an Intelligence and Feedback System

There is a strong correlation between the extent to which an organization can adapt to changes in its environment and the effectiveness of its "intelligence" system. An effective system enables the organization to evaluate its own activities in relation to changes and developments in its environment. Without such a system, the organization may find that its services and modes of operation are rapidly becoming obsolete. An effective and efficient intelligence system can provide the program with the new information and knowledge required to adjust to changes from both within and without.

In general, an intelligence system fulfills three interrelated functions: monitoring the external task environment of the agency,

internal auditing of staff and client activities, and evaluation of the agency's outputs.

The *monitoring of the agency's external environment* is intended to alert the agency to important changes and developments in the various units upon which it is dependent. These include federal and state programs, the programs of local social service agencies, new legislation, etc. Monitoring activities can also be directed at identifying new developments in service techniques. Finally, external monitoring is required to inform the agency of changes in the character of the population it seeks to serve.

The main purpose of *internal auditing* is to inform the agency of the activities of the staff vis-à-vis the clients. Information generated by internal auditing enables staff to assess the progress of the clients and to determine future courses of action, and enables the agency management to evaluate the operation of the service technology. Without such evaluation, the agency has no way of determining whether it is achieving its service goals at some reasonable level.

Evaluation of agency *outputs* occurs after clients have been served by the agency. The emphasis is on what happened to clients and how many were served.

Fulfillment of each of these intelligence functions requires several steps: (1) collection of the necessary data; (2) analysis of those data so that they are useful and used; (3) transmission of relevant information to appropriate decision makers; and (4) interpretation of the information in order to generate additional knowledge. Since the final step of the intelligence process is the generation of knowledge, malfunction in any of the previous steps is likely to adversely affect the capability of the intelligence system to develop that knowledge.

Effective external monitoring systems are dependent on the performance of boundary personnel who maintain close ties

with external units and who actively scan the environment for new resources. Staff members assuming boundary roles may develop specialized working relations with a given set of organizations. The contact person gathers essential information about the availability of given resources and the conditions of their use, and transmits this information to staff members who can use it. This is a necessary function if the agency is to remain up-to-date on changes and developments in its environment.

Personnel who perform boundary roles must develop expert knowledge about the characteristics of the resources in their areas of specialization. They must also be able to develop cooperative and informative relationships with the major suppliers of these resources, and must develop analytic skills necessary to assess and evaluate developments and changes in the nature of the environment. Perhaps most important, they must acquire effective and efficient communication channels to decision makers within their own organization.

Internal auditing enables staff to carry out its activities on an informed and rational basis. Internal auditing is directed at (1) the case or client level, and (2) the operational or departmental level. The function of internal auditing at the case or client level is to provide staff with all the necessary information for decision making at every juncture of the client's career in the agency.

This often requires the use of a client "case record." Each client served by the agency should have a record which includes basic information about him, his own perception of his needs, and the service objectives for him. Actions taken by staff and periodic evaluations of the client's performance in the agency should be systematically recorded and the impact of those services noted. A client record could

be organized around topics such as background information, health status, income, housing, nutrition needs, and interpersonal problems. Each action or referral should be recorded in the appropriate topic section.

A scheme must also be developed for the uniform classification and codification of the information items to be used; and procedures for information gathering, update, and retrieval must be planned. This process requires that the basic information the agency plans to collect and use be classified and coded in a system of categories that are explicitly defined, unambiguous, and uniformly applied throughout the entire agency. This process can be used to enable staff to develop an orderly and rational sequence of services aimed at assisting the client to achieve his service goals. It can also be used to monitor the actions taken and to signal staff when new or different decisions need to be made.

Auditing procedures at the "operations" level attempt to answer basic managerial questions about the modes of operation of the agency or units thereof. These could include the analysis of all activities done for clients suffering from visual handicaps; the success of various treatment technologies; analysis of the type of referrals used by the agency; or the responses of staff to clients who drop out. The findings of such auditing enable the agency to evaluate its operating procedures and make necessary adjustments or changes.

Findings may specify such information as (1) the type of clients arriving at the agency, the range of problems they present, and the services they request; (2) assessment of the services given to different cohorts of clients, the consequences of those services, or whether adequate follow-up is done by staff; (3) the performance of various staff regarding size of case load; average number of contacts

¹⁷P. R. Lawrence and J. W. Lorsch, op. cit., Chapter 9.

with clients; (4) type of resources or intervention techniques used.

Perhaps the most important function of an intelligence system is to enable the agency to evaluate its service outcomes. In the final analysis, an agency can justify its existence only if it can show competence in attaining its service objectives. To do so, it must develop reliable procedures to evaluate the use of its services. The problems involved in attempts to measure are extremely complex. They stem from the fact that there is no consensus regarding a norm of "success," nor are there valid and reliable methods to measure success.

There is, however, some risk of developing inappropriate *output measures*. This can be observed when the number of clients seen by staff becomes the measure of success. When this criterion is adopted by staff, it may gear its efforts to obtaining a high ratio of clients per worker while reducing the amount of time spent with each. There is also a tendency of organizations to adopt "symbolic" criteria when faced with the difficulties of developing substantive criteria. Symbolic criteria are testimonies by staff or clients, display of the "successful" client, self-evaluation, and other approaches that may be highly misleading and in fact could cover up serious failures by the organization.

Any evaluation of an agency may be painful in that it is likely to expose serious gaps between expectations and accomplishments. Such an exposure may undermine the legitimacy of the agency. Yet an agency cannot improve its services if it lacks adequate outcome measures or fears the consequences of such measures. In the long run, lack of adequate outcome measures may lead toward the deterioration of the organization.

An agency's service goals are often multidimensional, with various subgoals

and tasks. The design of valid and reliable outcome measures requires recognition of this fact. In general, outcome measures should relate to the goals of each subsystem in the agency. Outcome measures differentiate between the initial state of the client at the point of entry and the terminal state of that client at point of exit from the agency.

In a complex service program, the new client goes through a series of assessments, which are often updated and corrected with the collection of additional information. These assessments may cover a range of attributes and problems, such as personal care, motivation to participate, health status, financial problems, etc. These include the gamut of areas in which the agency activity plans to intervene in order to improve the status of the client. At point of exit, these same attributes are reassessed and the amount of progress shown by the client through actual performance or his own evaluation is recorded. Because an agency may have succeeded more in some areas than in others, one measure cannot summarize the range of activities undertaken by the agency, nor can it reflect the complexity of attributes and problems presented by the client.

Multiple measures are necessary. Each of these should include concrete and precise descriptions of client attributes and behaviors. These measures must become an integral part of the service technology itself. They may serve as assessment devices for the client's progress in every stage of his association with the agency. In fact, they should logically follow the activities that have been specified in the service technology. They should be embedded in the daily work of the staff and not external measures imposed on the agency without direct reference to what it actually does. Needless to say, such mea-

asures must be constantly reexamined, updated and refined.¹⁸

Successful use of measures for service outcome necessitates a comprehensive and effective *follow-up* system. Without one, the information necessary for evaluation could not be obtained. The basic function of follow-up is to gather the necessary information regarding the consequences for the client of services given. It is the basic mechanism by which the agency can find out what has happened to its clients. Unfortunately, few service agencies have established such sophisticated measures. In a number of cases, in fact, output measures of the type described could be overly costly in relation to the sophistication of the services provided.

CONCLUDING NOTE

The process of establishing a new program is highly complex and requires considerations of many inter- and intra-organizational factors. It is not surprising, therefore, to find that while community workers and action groups may conceive of imaginative and innovative service programs, their ability and success in implementing them are at best modest. As was shown in the above discussion, each step in the process of implementation requires a particular set of skills, expertise, and resources. Inability to enlist them at crucial points in the program development may lead to failure or to detrimental consequences in the ability of the program to fulfill its objectives.

¹⁸C. Wells, *Evaluation Research* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1972).

Thus, the systems approach used here alerts the planner-organizer to the intricate interrelations among the various building blocks of the program. It identifies the points at which the establishment of certain subsystems must assume priority over other organizing activities. Nevertheless, it should not be concluded that the model presented here is deterministic, in that each of the steps identified must be so followed. It should not be assumed a priori that an organization is a tightly coupled system in which each component must be closely articulated with all others. There is evidence to suggest that many programs may function quite adequately even if some components or subsystems are not fully developed or are not closely inter-linked. The systems approach advocated here enables the planner-organizer to assess at each point in the program development process the need for the establishment of certain organizational components. For example, the planner-organizer may find that a feasibility study is unnecessary since resources have already been earmarked for certain types of programs, or that whatever service technology will be developed, support of key groups in the environment is assured.

Moreover, it has been stressed throughout that agency or program development involves a great deal of trial and error in the face of many unknown parameters. The approach developed here merely attempts to identify the critical parameters the planner-organizer must consider and thus reduce some of the risks that are inherent in any program implementation.