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City University of New York, 1988

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POLITICAL IDEOLOGY AND PROFESSIONAL CAREERS: A STUDY OF RADICAL SOCIAL SERVICE WORKERS

by

DAVID WAGNER

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Sociology in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, The City University of New York.

1988

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This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in Sociology in satisfaction of the dissertation requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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Abstract

POLITICAL IDEOLOGY AND PROFESSIONAL CAREERS: A CASE STUDY OF RADICAL SOCIAL SERVICE WORKERS

by

David Wagner

Adviser: Professor Michael Brown

At a historical point in which middle class 'baby boomers' have generally been consigned to a 'yuppie' class, the following study explores the relationship between upward mobility, professionalization, and persistence of radical political ideology by intensively studying members of a leftist collective of human service workers. Through in-depth interviews, textual analysis, and longitudinal data collection, the author follows a population of radicals over time to explore what constitutes a "radical career," whether radical political ideology is considered complementary with professional loyalty, and to what degree militant social action is constrained or encouraged by professional advancement.

The first part of the study presents data about how subjects came to define themselves as radical, embarked on professional careers, underwent professional training, and how after, considerable experience in professional careers, they now define their political ideology and its

relationship with career interests and advancement. Early interest in human service professional careers and radical political ideology is closely linked, and an even closer association between radicalism and professionalism typifies subjects' experience with professional socialization. Experience in the job market, however, fragments "radical professionalism" with most subjects finding themselves critical of their training and the professions. Significantly, political socialization appeared more stable over time (from the 1960s to 1980s) than professional socialization, with a strong persistence of leftist ideological commitment on the part of subjects with a relatively weaker attachment to specific professions or careers over the years.

In the latter part of this study, subjects' attempts to implement radical actions at their workplaces or in the professions over the last decades are analyzed. In sharp contrast to the persistence of radical ideology, political activism appears constrained in the 1980s as radicals become absorbed in "labor market shelters" in which they tend to identify their political commitment with their employing agencies and, like the radicals of the 1930s and 1940s, have moved from anti-authority militancy to an 'absorbed' radicalism located in the mediating institutions of the state, trade unions, and the academy. The historical

conditions for radical middle class movements are analyzed and explanatory theories are presented.

Acknowledgments

The following study would not have been possible without the enthusiastic participation and cooperation of the unnamed subjects, who not only gave extensively of their time, but were willing to risk exposure of their personal and political lives at a time of political conservatism. The author thanks them for their trust and hopes the material in the study accurately reflects on their lives and advances the principles for which they stand.

The study would not have been possible conceptually and emotionally without the support of the adviser, Professor Michael Brown, and most of all, without not only the support, but active input from Marcia B. Cohen, who lived this study twice as a participant in the events and through the writing of the dissertation.

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CHAPTER I

WHITHER THE RADICALS-IN-THE-PROFESSIONS?

Introduction:

Topics of interest to Sociology and to the other social sciences, as well as to the general public, have a tendency to be time-bound. As social movements rise and claim the headlines of national media, a variety of theorists, researchers, and writers jump on board and develop accounts of the phenomenona at hand. So it was with the mass student unrest and the rise of the New Left in the 1960s. For example, by 1973, Kenneth Keniston could identify more than 300 articles and books on radical student movements alone (Keniston,1973). A decade and a half after the official demise of the major New Left organizations, as the nation appears enveloped by conservative political domination, the issue of radicalism among professionals, the "middle class," and intellectuals receives less attention. More often social scientists have joined the media in ascribing much of the "baby boom generation" to a categorization of "Yuppies" or young urban professionals who are apparently enjoying high upward mobility and high levels of consumption and who are conservative and complacent as they hit their 30s and 40s.

The social construction of the term "yuppies" by the media, beginning in the 1984 election, along with other

popular terms for the presumed de-radicalization of an age cohort ("The Big Chill"), are highly debatable. For one thing, the numbers of 1960s youth radicalized by the civil rights movement, the New Left, the anti-war movement, etc. does not appear to have ever exceeded 11% of those polled (Lipset, 1976, p.5) or one million people (Sale, 1974, p.11), and probably, a more cautious estimate that only one-third of these youth were actually "revolutionaries" (Lipset, 1976, p.47) is accurate. But despite the problematic nature of the "Big Chill," the discourse of the mid-1980s raises important sociological questions. Did those radicalized in the 1960s and 1970s become absorbed by careerism in the "long march through the institutions" that German student leader Rudi Dutschke warned that radicals would have to embark on after their days of student training? Was Max Weber correct in noting, many decades ago, that political activity was integrally related to dispensable job requirements (Weber, 1946, pp.84-85), and that therefore the social structure of occupations reduces the possibility of radicalism which was related to social statuses of students or marginally employed youth?

In the late 1960s, young New Leftists were acutely aware of the dangers of "co-optation" and "selling out" which "Establishment" roles and careers presented. Self-consciously, they often strived to avoid positions of high status and power in a kind of "Great Refusal" (Breines, 1982)

of the privilege of middle class society. Others, perhaps in greater numbers, sought to practice radical politics within those professions that presumably would "serve the people": particularly medicine, social work, urban planning, law, and teaching. The most self-conscious radicals entered the professions distinguishing themselves from the normative attitudes of the 'Establishment' professionals; they were radicals-in-the-professions, but not of the professions. The radical career would be different:

> The first principle of orientation for a radical who chooses to work in a profession is that he (sic) is different. He (sic) must reject and separate himself(sic) psychologically from the commonly held social definition of his (sic) work. He (sic) must substitute an agenda of his(sic) own...A radical cannot have an orientation toward professional 'success.' If we function as radicals, high status and respect and rewards in the professional establishment are foreclosed. We must expect job instability, the likelihood of getting fired periodically, the danger of increasing difficulty in finding jobs...(Haber and Haber, in Long, 1969, p.302).

Twenty years after such prescriptions, there has been little or no research on the "radical career." The question of whether 'middle class' radicals do indeed sustain their radical political ideologies while employed in the "system" has rarely been a subject of study. Do radical careers resemble more normative professional career patterns? What is the impact of upward mobility or downward mobility on radicals? And how does the decline of certain radical social

movements impact upon those who were the "committed youth" described by Kenneth Keniston (1968).

The study of a group of self-consciously radical professionals historically and longitudionally can cast in broad relief the many contradictions and gaps in theoretical literature in the Sociology of Work and Occupations and Political Sociology. Further, such a study can undermine the broad political assertions of the popular culture (and often Sociology as well) which tends to freeze large groups of people into political-occupational categories ("professionals"intellectuals" or "white collar") which may not in themselves be particularly explanatory in relation to consciousness and political ideology. A qualitative analysis of the actual experience of social actors tends to complicate the easy labelling of individuals, and adds to our understanding of the complex dynamics of political consciousness, history, and careers.

The following chapter will seek to introduce the problematic nature of the theoretical literature on the relationship between political radicalism and those who occupy the "middle strata" of society under capitalism. Two dilemmas are identified. One problem is a social structural one; to the extent a middle strata group is identified and analyzed as being "professional," as opposed to "white collar" employees or "intellectuals," they are more likely to be perceived as politically conservative than potentially radical. Social scientists then debate whether particular

sectors in capitalist society are subject to embourgeoisement or proletarianization. A second problem emerges from the limited analyses of how radical professionals themselves interpret the relationship of ideology and social status; do they view themselves as part of a profession or occupational culture or do they view themselves as deviants or guerillas within these social statuses? This discussion will then be applied to the problematic nature of evaluating Social Service professionalism and radicalism. The need to analyze radical social service ideology and consciousness, and study the relationships of radicalism in the Social Services with social movements in a historical framework will then be raised.

The Social Structural Dilemma: Professionals, White Collar Proletarians or Intellectuals ?

Social theory about the "middle strata" has developed historically in such a way that how a particular occupational group or sector is labelled often then determines the assumptions made about their political ideology and potential for social action.

For example, the general tendency within Sociology has been to associate the process of professionalization with social stability and political conservatism. Early

contributors to the Sociology of Work and Occupations such as Emile Durkheim, A.M.Carr-Saunders and P.A. Wilson, T.H.Marshall, and the Functionalist school led by Talcott Parsons, stressed the essence of professionalism and professionalization as:

> ...a positive force in social development, standing against the excesses of both laissez-faire individualism and state collectivism, and on the other hand as harmful monopolistic oligarchies whose rational control of technology would lead to some form of meritocracy (T.Johnson, 1972, p.12)

Not surprisingly, this view of professionalization as quite contradictory to political radicalism was reinforced in the 1960s and 1970s when widespread unrest among students, consumers, clients, and professionals themselves, emerged in the strongest rebellion against professional elites since the Jacksonian period. Theorists attacked the professions as "hidden hierarchies" (Gilb, 1967), stressing the exclusiveness, elitism, and social closure endemic to professionalism and professionalization (Haug and Sussman, 1969; Freidson, 1970, 1972; Roth, 1974; Illich, 1977). Radicals influenced by the New Left in particular were, by the end of the 1960s, calling for an abandonment of professional privilege. An example is suggested in an early issue of the journal The Radical Therapist:

> ...We must collectivize emotional support and help, and end the mercenary nature of professionalism..."Radical Therapists" should raise high the motto:We want to put ourselves out of business! (Agel, 1973, p.80)

While treatments of professionalization have become more dynamic in recent years and less global in their condemnation, the most sophisticated treatments have argued that professionalization as a middle class social movement is a project aimed at "collective mobility" which attempts to secure elite legitimacy for professional groups to advance themselves by successfully exerting a "skill claim" (Larson, 1977). Such analyses may not deny the possibility that a few isolated professionals could be politically radical, but generally they do suggest that professionalization is a process of embourgeoisement closely linked to achieving status and becoming part of the social elite of society. Clearly movements of radical professionals cannot be easily explained on a social structural basis, if professionalization is solely seen as a successful quest for mobility and status.

At its extreme, the sociological analysis of professionalization tends toward over-determination. As Epstein notes in reviewing the literature on Social Work professionalization, the critique of professionalism fails to account for the very social actors who so often attack professionalism. As he pointed out, "those critical of social-worker conservatism...(are) social workers who, by

standards of education, expertise, professional participation, and prominence, are (themselves) highly professionalized" (Epstein, 1969, p.34).

A totally counterposed view of the relationship of professionals/middle strata workers in capitalist society suggests that rather than a process of embourgeoisement, the social processes of the 20th century are leading to a proleterianization of these groups. Some Marxist perspectives suggest that professional or intellectual labor can be considered "white collar proleterians." As early as 1912, some Marxist theorists, argued that white collar workers, including professionals and intellectuals, were subject to the same conditions as the industrial proleteriat. They were propertyless, deprived of the ownership of the means of production, and would be subject more and more to unemployment, loss of status and income, and immiseration. To theorists such as Emil Lederer, the white collar workers were "proleterians in false colors," diverted from their true self-interest by false consciousness (Oppenheimer, 1985, p.73).

The argument that professional and intellectual workers are essentially members of the working class, albeit stratified into the higher regions of such a class, has had widespread support from many radical theorists (see Corey, 1935; Mills, 1956; Oppenheimer, 1973; Derber, 1982). Yet, the proleterianization argument has many ambiguities to it,

as noted in recent Marxist efforts to further clarify and elucidate class analysis (see Wright, 1980; D. Johnson, 1982; Derber, 1982). While it is relatively easy to establish that <u>some</u> major professional occupations have moved from free standing petty bourgeois positions in the division of the labor to an employed salariat (see for example, Wagner on nursing, 1980; McKinlay on physicians, 1932), other professions may show opposite tendencies. For example, Social Work, has historically been a salaried profession with virtually all social workers subject to the constraints of wage labor. Recent statistics reveal that, rather than proleterianization, a strong movement has been underway towards a private entrepreunerial form of self-employment through the practice of private psychotherapy (see data base NASW, 1985; for comment see Wagner, 1985). Further, as the most sophisticated theorists have noted, the proof that lack of ownership of means of production or even relative declines in income or job security leads necessarily to left-wing political ideologies is absent (in fact, as Dale Johnson, 1982, notes in his introduction, it may lead to participation in right-wing movements or apathy as well as leftism; see, also, Mills, 1956, for a pessimistic analysis of the employed white collar salariat's ability to develop its own ideology).

When the very same groups discussed above, particularly teachers and professors, artists and performers, or students, are viewed as "intellectuals," a different

tradition of analysis emerges. Both the tradition of Mannheim (1955) which saw intellectuals as essentially "rootless" or relatively autonomous from class determination, and the Marxist analysis of some intellectuals being pulled toward the side of the proleteriat in times of class polarization emerge as dominant motifs. In fact, the very term "intellectual" used as a noun, arose in late 19th Century France as a perjorative term to describe the anti-clerical and anti-military "men of letters" who supported Drefyus against the right (Brym, 1980, p.12). The Marxist analysis of intellectuals was further developed in the writings of Antonino Gramsci (1971) who located intellectuals' potential for radicalism in their class origins, education, and organic ties with the dominant classes of society. In the 1960s, at the same time that "professionals" were being attacked as conservative in the United States, "new working class" theory was being imported from Europe. These theorists (Gorz, 1964; Mallet, 1969; Touraine, 1971) saw a tremendous potential for revolutionary leadership emanating from the forces of "educated labor" who were subject to bureaucratization, technologization, and proleterianization. Some social scientists have in fact argued that intellectuals constitute a "New Class" who are bound together by their common education, discourse, and world outlook to become a revolutionary vanguard (Gouldner, 1979).

The high level of abstraction of much social theory and the lack of empirical work on professionals and intellectuals, makes for great difficulty in applying much of the social science and political theory. To what degree is political consciousness shaped by social class origins and by the processes of upward mobility (professionalization, embourgeoisment) or downward mobility (proleterianization)?

While it is suggested that the highly general ascriptions of embourgeoisement or proleterianization to an entire professional/white collar strata, as well as the assumption of "rootlessness" of intellectuals, are unproven, the discussion above suggests that the economic and social mobility of the middle strata may certainly be a strong factor in the presence or absence of political radicalism as well as historic attachment/dimunition of radical ideology. There appears to be almost complete agreement that some form of malintegration into society, stemming from either economic conditions and/or political exclusion, correlates historically with radical movements of intellectuals (Brym, 1980). As we shall explore in this study, radical social movements in the Social Service professions, can be analyzed, in part, as a function of "blocked mobility" of professionals at certain points in American history.

Ideology and Radicals-in-the-Professions: "True Professionalism" or "Negative Class Consciousness"?

In addition to the social structural question, a major dilemma for social scientists and for radical professionals themselves, has been the evaluation of the meaning of radical political ideology in relation to the loyalty to the profession or discipline that occupants train for. In other words, do radical professionals (or intellectuals or white collar workers) strive to de-professionalize or transcend their own disciplines and professional norms or do they attempt to effect radical politics from their positions of professional skill and prestige? It has been argued persuasively both that radical professionals and intellectuals find their political ideology complements their worklife since, in fact, they often come to radicalism as a result of taking the idealism, service ethic, and altruism of professional norms seriously; and that, conversely, radicals socialized to professional and middle class norms must in fact transcend the very bounds of their professional and class self-interest and elitism that is fostered by bourgeois culture, in order to develop a radical consciousness.

Both arguments were prominently made in the late 1960s and 1970s. Those who optimistically saw "a changing face of professionalism" described young doctors, lawyers,

architects, city planners, and social workers as taking the tenets of professionalism seriously, perhaps more seriously than their older "Establishment" colleagues. These young professionals saw "good medicine" or "good law" as, in practice, being prevented by the inequality of service provisions and the bureaucratic domination of the State, the organized professional associations, and the defense/research/business establishment. Matthew Dumont, writing in the first issue of the journal Social Policy, saw a "profoundly revolutionary" nature to the "New Professionalism"; not that these professionals would reject the norms of their professions or the skills of their disciplines, but that they took seriously the commitment to citizens/clients above the closed guilds of their associations and institutions, and that they had absorbed the sense of purpose, compassion, and change which was the ideal function of university and professional education (Dumont, 1970).

In analyzing the New Left and the professions, particularly radical planners, Robert Ross (1977) came to similar conclusions. While some of the activity of the radical professionals appeared disruptive and conflictual, in actuality, professionals who served the State were returning to a "true professsionalism" in which bureaucratic control was being attacked by radicals through the traditional vehicle of the "service ethic" and "loyalty to the client" (Ross, 1977). Given that most professional work

was now performed in and mediated by bureaucratic structures, the New Left revolt could in some ways be seen as a movement to re-assert professional autonomy:

> In this sense, the advocate planner represented a revival, even an intensification of professionalism in planning... the planners, along with many other activist professionals of the period, looked to an identifiable client for their mandate...this thrust to direct responsibility to an underprivileged or mistreated client had many overtones of a renewal of the service ethic which historically is appealed to as the 'moral pivot' of professionalism...(Ross, 1977, p.702)

A number of studies in the 1960s developed empirical measures which attempted to separate the idealistic precepts of "professionalism" from the loyalty to employing institutions which was characterized as a "bureaucratic orientation"(Wilensky, 1964; Billingsley, 1964; Epstein, 1970a, 1970b, 1970c). While these studies did not analyze the consciousness of radical or young idealistic professionals to consider the actual social meanings they themselves imputed to their work, the studies did suggest that highly abstract professional norms of service, client self-determination, and client rights were more compatible with idealism than was loyalty to employers or institutions.

In contrast to the vision of young radical professionals as being the "true professionals" who identify strongly with the normative goals and values of the profession, much New Left literature suggested that being a

radical meant abandonment of primary loyalty to a particular profession, to any normative professional Codes of Ethics, and to the professional privilege that accrues from professional status. Some of the goals set by Students for a Democratic Society's (S.D.S.) "Radicals-in-the-Professions Project" are enumerated by Barbara and Alan Haber in their review of the first "Radicals-in-the-Professions" conference:

> ...A radical cannot see his loyalty as being to the profession or institution in which he (sic) works. Our loyalty is to our political comrades and to the political aims for which we are organizing. Obviously this presents a moral difficulty because others will assume we have traditional loyalties; and we will, in fact, be playing a two-faced game, knowing that we will 'betray' them when difficult issues arise. But then, that is what being a radical is about and the question is whether you betray your professional colleagues or your political comrades...Radicals cannot accept without reservation the code of ethics and responsibility of their professions...They are sanctifications of certain types of social relations, purposes and loyalties. Conventional ethics entrap us into support of things which we do not support politically and into loyalties which conflict with our own values and politics. We must develop both a critique of established ethics and a counter code which squares with our values...Radicals in the professions must avoid provincialism. Intraprofessional issues are generally important only as they lead to consciousness or action on issues of national policy, power and institutional change. Without this perspective, the organizer is more likely to be professionalized than the profession organized...(Haber and Haber in Long, 1969, pp.302-304). (author's emphasis)

Viewing the crux of New Left radicalism as being the

challenge to the class interests and power held by professionals, including themselves, Barbara and John Ehrenreich suggest that what was distinctive about radical professionals in the late 1960s and in the 1970s was their ability to transcend not only their particular disciplines and professions, but their self interest in the interest of surrendering skill "to the people:"

> ...the radicals-in-the-professions took a dramatic step beyond traditional PMC (Professional-Managerial Class) class interests. The great importance of this direction, or strategy, of New Left activism is that it embodied a critical self-consciousness of the PMC itself-a kind of negative class consciousness. The radicals-in-the-professions challenged the PMC not for its lack of autonomy (as the student movement had in the early sixties), but for its very claims to autonomy-objectivity, commitment to public service, and expertise itself. 'Demystification' was the catchword. Radical doctors wanted not only to free their professions from the grip of the 'medical industrial complex,' but to demystify medicine. Radical lawyers would open the law books and make elementary legal skills available to the people. Radical psychiatrics would lead the assault on psychiatric mythology and show that any sensitive community person could easily replace them. Radical teachers would expose the capitalist functions of education. And so on. Credentialling barriers would tumble. The rule of experts would be abolished-by the young experts... (Ehrenreich and Ehrenreich, in Walker, 1979, p.39) (author's emphasis)

The ultimate goal of "de-professionalizing" the professions is suggested by the Ehrenreichs' analysis as well as numerous other radicals writing in the 1960s and 1970s (see Haug, in Halmos, 1973 ; Gerstl and Jacobs, 1976),

and was imputed as being the radicals' true motivations by many non-radical academic observers (see Specht, 1972, for example).

In perhaps an extreme fashion, the diametrically opposed views of radical professional ideology, as representing a "true professionalism" or a "negative class consciousness," suggest how imprecise the phrase "radicals in the profession" is, and how little empirical study has yet been done on the specific ideologies and consciousness of middle strata radicals. As we shall explore further below, the committed radical who views his/her beliefs as complementing the values and norms of his/her profession, and the committed radical who views him/herself as only a temporary occupant of particular jobs or statuses, not identified with a particular profession, but with a superordinate commitment to radical ideology, may be two co-existing types of consciousness apparent within the same social context. Or the two contrasting perspectives, being "of" a profession or being "in," but not "of" a profession, may characterize middle strata social movements at particular points in their historical development and not in others.

Social Work, Professionalization, and Radicalism:

There are several reasons why an analysis of radicals

in the Social Work profession provides us with a fruitful area of inquiry related to radical careers, political ideology, and professionalism. First, there is some empirical and ancetodal evidence that historically and cross-nationally, social service work has attracted a large number of self-conscious radicals.[1] Second, Social Work as an occupation has struggled over the course of the 20th Century with the question of professionalization, with many liberals and radicals opposing a professionalization strategy and publicly urging de-professionalization. Thirdly, there is some recent available historical work on radical social workers in the 1930s and 1940s (Fisher, 1980; Spano, 1982) which permits us to compare the radical professionals of the 1960s-1980s through a historical sociological method; in contrast to a paucity of historical research on radical movements in other professions.

Both the social structural questions (does mobility and the professionalization process lead to conservatism; and does proleterianization or blocked mobility lead to radicalism?) and the ideological questions faced by radical professionals (is radicalism complementary with the norms and ideology of the profession or must it be counterposed to professional norms and ideology?) stand out in sharp relief in reviewing the key issues faced by Social Work.

The Social Structural Argument: Professionalization or De- Professionalization?

Throughout the history of Social Work, two arguments about professionalization and professionalism have been combined. The argument over an "objective" accounting of how "professional" Social Work is at any given time has often been collapsed with argumentation over the desirability of professionalization.

Since Abraham Flexner declared in 1915 that Social Work did not meet the criteria of a full profession (NCCC proceedings, 1915), the field has been greatly obsessed with the question of status. Indeed, functionalist sociology would describe Social Work as a "semi-profession" (see Etzioni, 1969; Toren, 1971) or as an "emerging profession" (Goode, 1960), and radicals have frequently argued that "objectively" Social Work resembled working class occupations in status, income, and power (see Social Work Today, 1934-36; Wagner and Cohen, 1978). As suggested earlier, radicals and many liberal reformers, imputed professionalization to be a conservative social movement, while suggesting that identification with, and downward mobility towards, working class/white collar status would be more conducive to left-wing goals for the occupation. Consistent with our earlier argument, the one treatment of social service workers as "intellectuals" which the author could locate, ascribed radical potential to the profession

(Zald & McCarthy, 1975).

If the debate is considered only to be one of objective "social facts," the argument takes on a "Rashoman" character. The appelation of "social worker" is broad enough (since the vast development of a welfare bureaucracy in the 1930s and the large growth in paraprofessional and Human Service staff in the 1960s and 1970s) to accomodate and support both analyses. If "Social Work" is defined as those practicing clinical, administrative, planning, community organizing, and other social work functions with a minimum of a Masters degree in Social Work (M.S.W.), as it tends to be defined by professional schools and professional leadership, there is strong evidence that Social Work is a profession. The dominant leadership of Social Work since the turn of the century has pursued a professional strategy: developing professional schools, raising the level of credentialling required for practice; developing professional associations; lobbying for licensing and exclusion of the non-trained;and moving to corner new markets for professional practice with attendent higher income and prestige(for example the psychotherapy market; the market for administration in the public and non-profit sectors; and even attempting to develop a role in corporations) . That this "professional project" has been successful is reflected not only in the number of professional schools and associations in Social Work, but by

statistics available from the National Association of Social Work (1985). Social workers who are members of this most professionalized segment of the field have achieved salaries exceeding school teachers, nurses, urban planners, and engineers; in fact, falling below only physicians and attorneys in the only comparative statistical data available. Further, these social workers are increasingly employed not only as caseworkers or group workers, but as private clinical therapists, administrators, supervisors, planners, consultants, and educators.

However, the most highly conscious professional social workers represent only about 100,000 of the nearly one half million workers labelled by the Bureau of Labor Statistics as "social service workers" (Siegal, 1986). An analysis of the low income of the nation's half million social service workers reveals an average salary below the American labor force as a whole, and would in all probability reveal low status, low job control, and low autonomy. As with the professions of nursing and teaching, professional leaders in Social Work have been unable to control the boundaries of their own field in such a way as to exclusively define the purview of "Social Work" as a professional endeavor in order to exclude those without graduate degrees or professional socialization from practicing. The working conditions of non-M.S.W. social workers, and their high rates of unionization, tend to support the more de-professionalized argument about Social Work.

The "objective" argument around Social Work professionalism, however, should not deter us from analyzing the strong sub-text in these arguments over the desirability of professionalization in Social Work. Social Work history reveals that the field arose as a result of several contradictory missions and centers of practice. The casework segment of Social Work, which has led the professionalization project, emerged from the charity organizations that sought to develop objective criteria for the assessment of paupers by the method of "social diagnosis." The casework paradigm developed in close relation to medical and legal metaphors of diagnosis and evidence, and moved in hospital social work, psychiatric social work, and family service agencies toward close ties with the medical model (Lubove, 1965, pp. 22-54). A very different segment of Social Work, the Settlement House movement, developed as a social reform movement and adhered to a de-professionalized model. Settlement residents were often unpaid (other than room and board), disinterested in professional status, and more interested in social action and legislation than in psychological diagnosis (see Ehrenreich, 1985).

As early as the 1920s, the key decade of Social Work professionalization (Lubove, 1965; Ehrenreich, 1985), those closely tied to reform movements objected vehemently to professionalization as a tactic and to the dominance of

social casework, rather than social action or political reform, as the core paradigm for Social Work. Eduard Lindeman, a professor at the New York School of Social Work, saw social workers as being in danger of being a "tool of power groups," and Jane Addams expressed her own "perplexment" about how Social Work was taking on the trappings of a business (Ehrenreich, 1985, pp. 82-83). With the arrival of the Great Depression and the entry of vast numbers of low paid caseworkers, radicalized by the social movements of the 1930s, professional strategy came under attack as an "atrophical manifestation of what was once the proper belief in the value of objective scientific approach" (Spano, 1982, p. 83). The Rank-and-File Movement in Social Work, the social movement of organized radicals in Social Work in the 1930s, favored a de-professionalized model of occupational organization for Social Work, one which identified Social Work, along with other salaried professionals as part of the organized labor movement (see Fisher, 1980).

For the last fifty years the bounds of the argument have remained relatively the same: the professional leadership has argued for credentialling, for developing new markets for professional service, and have asserted the compatibility of professionalization with "social reform" and "social action" (The classic formulation of this position was Porter Lee's 1929 speech, suggesting that "cause" and "function" were complementary roles for social

workers; once reforms were effected, social workers had an obligation to become technicians in the service of reform, see Lee, 1930). Radicals and some reformers have urged that social workers more strongly emphasize social action and reform strategies, and have strongly suggested that advancing the profession's status was a politically conservative strategy. Ernest Greenwood commented in his 1957 article that:

> It is no secret that social workers are not all uniformally enthusiastic about the professionalization of social work... a prevailing apprehension that social workers might have to scuttle their social action heritage as a price for achieving the public acceptance afforded a profession. Extrapolation from the sociologists' model of the professions suggests a reality basis for these fears. It suggests that the attainment of professional prestige, authority, and monopoly by social workers will undoubtedly carry disturbing implications for the social action and social reform components of social work philosophy...(Greenwood, 1957, p.55)

Typical of the leftist view of professionalism and professionalization was the critique of Social Work professionalism printed in the British radical magazine Case Con's manifesto (Bailey & Brake, 1975, p. 145):

> It is important to examine the 'professional approach'...happily accepted by social service hierarchies and workers alike. 'Professionalism' firstly implies the acquisition of a specialism-knowledge and skills not possessed by untrained workers. This isolates the social worker from the population at large. Secondly, social workers come

> to see themselves as part of an accepted specialist group on a par with doctors and lawyers. Thirdly, it encourages the introduction of businesslike career structures, where 'correct' and 'professional' behaviour (such as 'detachment' and 'controlled emotional involvement') is rewarded and advanced. Clearly such an approach is welcomed by the ruling class...

Despite this long running battle over professionalization, few studies have ever been undertaken to empirically test the proposition that increased professionalization in Social Work, particularly related to higher identification with the profession and career advancement, actually does lead to political conservatism. In the only major study of this question, Irwin Epstein (1970a, 1970b, 1970c) found no evidence to support the conservatizing effect of professional identification and career advancement per se, but found, in fact, that professionalization was a weak predictor of political orientation. On the other hand, an ideology of professionalism, rather than career advancement or professional involvement, did suggest some conservatizing effects.

The question of the effects of professionalization and upward mobility on radicals remains greatly unexplored. Epstein's empirical research was conducted in survey form at only one point in time (1968). Not only was this particular time period one in which we might anticipate more support for radical tactics and ideology than other periods, but

since there were no longituditional dimensions to the study, there are no measures of ideological change over time, as Epstein's respondents advanced in their careers. Further, as compared with in-depth qualitative studies of radicalism, Epstein's research had to rely on survey answers primarily to the use of militant 'social action' tactics in Social Work. The assessment of the subjects' responses, then, cannot inform us as to the consciousness of radical or militant social workers in providing their responses, only that there were certain correlations between survey responses and empirical determinants of status and involvement in professional Social Work activities.

Radical Professionalism in Social Work: 'True Professionalism' or a Guerilla Position?:

As we have noted, "radical professionalism" can have extremely divergent social and ideological meanings to those who occupy such roles in society. Similarly, radicals in the profession of Social Work have disagreed implicitly on the complementarity of radicalism and professionalism, and on the degree to which the traditional norms, methodologies, and paradigms of Social Work could be tools for radicals or barriers to radical political action.

Because of the link of many social reformers with the

historic origins of Social Work, the general domination of the field by political liberals throughout the twentieth century, and the idealistic principles of human betterment endorsed by most basic texts and public statements in Social Work, it is not surprising to find that many radicals identify strongly with the profession of Social Work. The most prominent Marxist social work thinker, Bertha Reynolds, argued that to be a good social worker, one had to be a radical (cited in Withorn, 1984, p. xii). As Reynolds asserts in her autobiography, An Unchartered Journey(1963), the radical social workers of the 1930s:

> were putting into practice (principles which) were not new to Social Work. It was only a new thing to take them seriously..." (Reynolds, 1963, p.173)

Reynolds enumerates five principles of radical social work: (1) Social Work serves "those in need;" should Social Work desert the poor and downtrodden, it would "become dishonest;" (2) Social Work needs to support organizing by its clients such as tenant and labor organizations; (3) Social Work should support efforts to resolve grievances by clients and organized protest groups; (4) Social Work should consciously "find its place" among other social movements of labor, civil rights, struggles for social insurance and other reforms; and (5) Social Workers should not regard themselves as privileged professionals, but as equals and

peers of their clients (Reynolds, 1963, pp. 173-74).

Reynolds' model of radical social work suggests that radicals are the true representatives of the mission and originators of Social Work; radical social work supports the poor and working class, and their movements for social reform, it remains committed to social betterment, not professional self-interest. While Marxist social workers also support revolutionary change, the daily tasks of social work do not in any way prevent such developments, rather they hopefully advance this struggle at least in small ways by raising the consciousness of client and workers. In a similar fashion, Jeffry Galper, a more recent theorist of radical social work, demurs:

> Radical social work is little more than social work that has not compromised its own commitments to human welfare. It is social work that takes seriously the dilemma of a people-serving profession in a people-denying society and tries to resolve the dilemma by finding ways for the profession to be of real service rather than accomodating itself to conventional arrangements...(Galper, 1975, p. 189)

In contrast to the above, some movements of radicals in Social Work and some theorists have implied that Social Work as methodology, as a theoretical paradigm, as a professional culture, and as a socializing institution, is a barrier to radical social change. The Case Con Manifesto of 1970, for example, challenges the core specialities of Social Work as

being elements of social control:

> One important tool of professional social work has been casework-a pseudo-science-that blames individual inadequacies for poverty and so mystifies and diverts attention from the real causes-slums, homelessness, and economic exploitation. The casework ideology forces clients to be seen as needing to be changed to fit society. Social work has now expanded to include new (and not so new) tricks, such as community work, group work, welfare rights work, etc., which, when professionalized, end up becoming the same sort of mechanism of control as traditional casework, often with the additional merit of being less expensive for the ruling class. Professionalism is a particularly dangerous development specifically because social workers look for an easy answer to many of the problems and contradictions of the job itself-i.e. being unable to solve the basic inadequacy of society through social work. It must be fought at every opportunity...(Bailey & Brake, 1975, pp. 145-46)

Unlike the view of Reynolds, Case Con implied that socialists needed to transcend the very boundaries of the discipline of Social Work to overcome its inadequacies. It was not radical social work that could change society, but social workers refusing to be merely social workers and "joining the struggle for (the) workers' state" along with their "clients," that was a radical position(p.147). This implied, in a similar fashion to the Habers,' that "our principles must come before individualism, professionalism, and careerism."(Bailey and Brake, p.147).

In an article entitled "The Acquiescence of Social Work"(1977), Richard Cloward and Frances Fox Piven also develop a critical view of the profession. Professional

training and its socialization patterns are a barrier to radicalism, not any inculcator of radical values:

> One of the most dismal aspects of this process (professional education) is that students submit in order to obtain a degree. Once employed in the field they continue to submit, for there are promotions to be won and titles to be earned. The patterns of socialization learned in the schools of social work are thus reproduced in the field. And, of course, these patterns serve the bureaucracies of the welfare state well: they ensure that employees will not challenge and question, confront and disrupt. Even worse, the arrogance and inhumanity inflicted upon many students comes to be incorporated as an essential part of their professional adaptation. The stresses generated by diminished self-esteem are solved by the model of professionalism.
>
> By emulating this model in their dealings with clients, students strive to recoup some of this pride that has been stripped away. Thus some students revel in their newly acquired facility to diagnose; they flaunt their ability to stigmatize others. How good it feels to be so expert, so superior, especially for students who have been made to feel inexpert and inferior. The ultimate sign of the student's professional coming-of-age is his(sic) capacity to emulate the jazzy language styles in which his (sic) psychiatric betters describe patients...(pp.59-60)

To Cloward and Piven, knowledge of social welfare and its institutions of domination can be socially useful and radical, only if professional models of behavior and professional categorizations are transcended, and a guerilla strategy of attacking the bureaucracy is adopted:

> Having rid ourselves of some of the obfuscations of professional doctrine, we have to begin to learn about the concrete activities of the agencies, but in an entirely different way and for

> an entirely different purpose. We have to become intimately familiar with the rules and regulations, the rituals and jargon, and with the way these elements affect the day-by-day actions of agency personnel. And we have to learn these things not to serve the agencies, but to penetrate, manipulate, defy, and expose them...
>
> In other words, we have to understand precisely how the agencies work in order to develop tactics to fight them in the interest of clients. We have to learn how to exploit whatever discretion is available to us in our jobs; how to challenge effectively the bureaucratic and professional authority of those above us; how to short-circuit the bureaucractic run-arounds through which urgent needs of people are defined away as someone else's function; how to circumvent-and even break-the rules. We have to become excruciatingly aware of the role designated for us, and of every facet of the agency's activities on which we impinge, so that we can learn to convert our jobs into weapons to defend people against the agencies...(pp.61-62)

The contradictory nature of both the tone and content of much radical thinking in Social Work (as well as other radical writings on the professions) is such that to simply classify either individuals or social movements as "radical," or even as "socialist" perhaps freezes in place a categorization which tells us very little about political ideology and radical consciousness. A clear need to study the social meanings that professional careers and training have to those who identify as "radicals" exists in order to understand the different social constructions of "radical professionalism."

The Need for Qualitative Research on Radical Ideology and Professional Careers:

As noted, a considerable amount of research was done in the 1960s on radical and militant students. One provocative study (Maidenberg & Meyer, 1970) suggested that employment as "teachers and social workers make retention of radicalism twice more likely." Since that time, most written works on radical professionals has been political anthologies by radicals themselves (e.g. Lefcourt, 1971; Agel, 1971, 1973; Gerstl and Jacobs, 1976) and occasional biographies or autobiographies. Recently a quantitative study of political opinion and ideology in the Social Work profession has been performed in replication of Epstein's 1968 research (Ressner, 1985). There remains, however, nearly a complete absence of qualitative research on radical professionals which studies the impact of careers and professionalization over time, and its effects on political ideology.

The advantages of a qualitative study, utilizing retrospectively focused interviews addressing the direct experience of active (or previously active) self-defined radicals is considerable. Most studies of political ideology have accepted a survey response at one point in time as indicative of a political orientation. However, this approach freezes political "attitude" at only one moment in time, failing to study and interpret long term adherence to

or diminuintion of radical ideology, and to understand the subtleties of ideology. This approach fails to account for the changing nature of ideology, and the changing nature of how "radicalism" is defined over long periods of time. Further, many studies have failed to separate adherence to radical ideology (e.g. Marxism, socialism) from survey responses indicating support for militant action (participation in demonstrations, strikes, sit-ins). This is a critical distinction for social science, since social action does not necessarily emanate from radical political ideology; nor does militant behavior necessarily correlate with radical political ideology.

Of course, one of the key problems for social scientists in the study of political ideology is the difficulty in locating a population of radicals who are willing to share with the researcher extremely sensitive material (historically, the opposition of radicals to research is well grounded and emerged as an issue in the late 1960s, see Sale, 1973, pp. 548; Lipset, 1976, pp. 111-113). Since many radicals are reluctant to be engaged in a research study, and many ex-radicals and radicals are difficult to "locate" from official "records," it is not surprising that little research has been done on this population.

Quantitative studies further freeze the concept of a profession. Given both the high job turnover and career movement in Social Work, for example, as well as the

possibility that radicals (as suggested in the quotations above) are more likely to change careers, research conducted through established professional channels may be inappropriate to the study of radical professionals. For example, if a researcher studies the political opinions of members of the National Association of Social Workers (N.A.S.W.), the researcher loses not only those who decline membership in an association (membership of social workers is not only voluntary, but rather low compared to professions such as medicine where there are strong internal pressures to belong to medical societies), but the researcher also loses the many social workers who over the years may move to either adjacent professions or totally divergent careers. The author asserts that rather than being irrelevant, those who leave the organized profession may prove to be as significant, if not more so, than those who affect a more "stable" career pattern.

Finally, it is suggested that most studies of professionalism and professionalization accept criteria for "professional orientation" which are both shallow and fluid in nature. Often, a person is classified as "professionally oriented" as a result of membership in an association or because they susbscribe to professional journals or attend professional conferences. As most social scientists will admit, participation in the affairs of professional associations or professional forums is often quite

opportunistic and sporadic, related to job search or career advancement at a given point in time. Rather than define adherence to professionalism or to a profession by such measures, the author proposes that the actual subjects of study be asked their own opinions as to how they regard their occupations, professional identification, and adherence to professional culture.

Site and Purposes of the Study

The author has conducted a research study of members and ex-members of the radical collective which publishes Catalyst: A Socialist Journal of the Social Services. Founded in 1976 in New York City, this journal's members clearly distinguished themselves as a radical left-wing center within Social Work:

> ...we are all dissatisfied with the traditional liberal analysis of the problems facing us and the strategies put forth to meet them. We are convinced that the field (social services) needs a new forum to provide a socialist perspective..."Why Catalyst", Catalyst, Vol. 1:1, p.2).

As of the time of this study, Catalyst is the longest consecutively published left journal in the Social Services in the United States, surpassing the publication of the leftist Social Work Today in the 1930s (published 1934-

1942).

Between 1976 and 1986, more than forty individuals were members of the Catalyst Collective. As will be described further below (see Chapters 2 and 3), most of these individuals were active in a variety of left-wing groups in the social services including the Radical Alliance of Social Service Workers (RASSW), the Bertha Capen Reynolds Society (BCRS), and the Union of Radical Human Service Workers (URHSW), as well as in Catalyst. Although Catalyst qua organization did not form until 1976, the age of the subjects (30-48) and the period of their political radicalization (see Chapter 4) suggests that this population represents a sub-set of those radicalized by the social movements of the 1960s and early 1970s, particularly the New Left, the student movement, the civil rights movement, and the women's movement.

As will be further discussed below (see Chapter 3), the author's own participation in Catalyst and his unique access to this population allowed for a three pronged research strategy: while the primary research tool was the in-depth personal interview, it was also possible to gather internal and external documents to support the interview data, and to develop a longitudional data base on the subjects' careers gathered from resumes and other records of career patterns.

The following study is organized in two parts. The first part summarizes the research, conducted on this population of radical social service workers, which sought

to test the following areas of inquiry:

(1) What patterns characterize the careers of radical social workers? What leads them to the the choice of social service work as an occupation, how do they experience the process of professional socialization, and what career experiences, in and out of Social Work, have they had?

(2) What is the relationship between professionalization, career advancement, and upward or downward mobility, and the persistence of radical political ideology? Have subjects become conservatized, radicalized or stayed politically consistent as a result of career experiences?

(3) How do these radical (or ex-radicals) mediate their political beliefs with their professional careers? Under what conditions do radicals believe their careers are complementary to their politics; and under what conditions, do they see their careers or job positions as antithetical to their political values?

(4) To what extent can differences in political/professional ideologies be accounted for by demographic factors (gender, social class, religion, ethnicity, etc.); by measures of mobility; by the nature of professional training (Social Work versus other training; casework versus community organization versus research or policy); or by the nature of specific radical ideology (e.g. Marxist, Feminist, "New Left," etc.)?

(5) To what degree can a typology of social meanings be developed to represent the different possibilities of mediating political ideology and professional career attachments?

The second part of this study will seek to analyze the relationship between social action, careers, and the commonly held goals of these radical social service workers. Of particular interest is the evaluation of post-1960s

radical social work movement in comparison with previous movements of radical social service workers:

> (1) To what degree were subjects able to implement the specific objectives of radical social workers (such as employee organizing, client organizing, and "radical practice") at their places of employment in the last two decades?
>
> (2) How does the radical social work movement of recent times compare with the movement of radical social workers in the past, particularly the Rank-and-File Movement of the 1930s/1940s? Can a series of stages of radical professionalism be developed to account for changes in the ideological nature of these movements over time?
>
> (3) To what degree can the similarities between these movements be used to develop a typology of a political economy of radical professionalism which suggests the above stages are related to the overall state of employment structure of the professions and the socio-political environment in which Social Work functions?

Notes

1. There has been a lack of empirical research in recent years on the number of "radicals" in Social Work, partly attributable, no doubt, to the uncertain political ramifications of politically polling people, and by the lack of broadly agreed upon definitions of "radical." Earlier surveys by Polansky (1953), Kadushin (1958) and Lipset and Schwartz (1966) suggested social workers were far more pro-labor, Democratic Party, or third party voters than either the public or other professions. Lipset and Schwartz note a study of French social workers found strong left-wing voting patterns, and they develop a number of theories to explain the radicalism of social workers (Lipset and Schwartz in Vollmer, 1966, pp. 302-304). Epstein's data (1969), while mostly on measures of activism, found what this author would see a suggestive figures in his measure of political party support: 7% voted for left-wing parties; only 9% for the

see a suggestive figures in his measure of political party support: 7% voted for left-wing parties; only 9% for the Republicans; and 11% (in addition to the 7% above) declined party identification, while the remaining 73% voted Democratic (Epstein, 1969, pp. 178-181). Much ancetodal evidence (see Grosser, 1976, for example) suggests a large number of S.D.S., S.N.C.C., and E.R.A.P. activists entered Social Work, particularly as community organizers. Specht (1972) characterized Social Work as so full of radicals that the profession was endangered, leaving only a training ground for organizers, activists, and reformers. Still another source of data supporting the radicalism of Social Work are surveys of faculty groups supporting student unrest in the 1960s; Sale (1973, p. 549) notes Social Work faculties were second only to Sociology in their support for students based on polls.

Of course, in the absence of complete political profiles of other professions, comparative analysis is not possible.

CHAPTER II

THE CONTEXT: RADICAL SOCIAL WORK AND *CATALYST*

Introduction: The Dilemmas of Radical History:

In order to set the context of the current study, it is important to develop a historical record which reviews the developments leading to the formation of the *Catalyst* Collective in 1976 and describes the eleven year history of the Collective (1976-1987). For a number of reasons, such a history is fraught with dilemmas.

First, as with all history, the formal, "official," record of organizations is always found lacking in detail by the social scientist. Records are "missing," controversies not apparent in written minutes, and activities and events are assumed but not stated in the formal record. It is suggested that this 'problem' does not reside in the capacities of recordkeepers or in any desire for secrecy, but in the nature of daily life which presents a rich panoply of events, only some of which are self-consciously recorded by individuals, groups or organizations for the archival creation of a "history"(see Huet, 1985, for an excellent discussion of this problem). Similarly, in studying *Catalyst*, there are many areas which are not recorded and these are often the very areas of most interest

to the sociologist. For example, since the production of a journal was an intentional "end-product" of the Collective; disputes, controversies, ambivalences or even widespread support for particular articles or other published items, are not recorded since the finished journal copy requires presentation to a public. While Catalyst's meeting minutes record a few of the disputes over manuscripts received, in general, there was no systematized fashion of recording members' opinions of manuscripts. The keeping of "minutes" itself within Catalyst provides an example of consensual recordkeeping. Early on (1977), the responsibility for developing a record of business meetings of Catalyst was assigned to one member each meeting on a rotating basis. Yet, when a participant (such as the author) reviews the past minutes, the minutes inevitably appear to minimize the political and interpersonal processes which led to decisions. Frequently, for example, the minutes record that "after an intense discussion" or "there was considerable disagreement...which ended in a vote for..." The discussions and disagreements themselves are left to historical memory since the minute-taker is concerned ultimately with recording the decision made at a meeting, not the processes or thinking that went into them.

While the above problem exists in all historical research, histories of radicals present an additional problem. Because of the historic repression of leftists in the United States and the position of marginality assigned

to the political Left in American life, by definition, the actions and influences of radicals must occur in a context of discretion and circumspection. For example, in examining the question of how 'influential' or 'significant' Catalyst as a journal was or is (see below), methodological questions run rampant. What may appear to be logical ways of examining significance, such as number of paid subscribers, becomes problematic when examining a leftist group. For example, Left journals often are not subscribed to an annual basis, but shared between friends and colleagues, "snuck" on to course syallabi by radical faculty or browsed through at radical conferences. It is then quite difficult to determine whether an 'official' readership from subscriptions reflect one-third, one-fifth or even one-tenth of an actual audience. Secondly, exactly who is being reached by the journal must be treated with caution. In reviewing a list of subscribers, the author noted the names of several deans of Social Work Schools and several prominent figures within the Social Work profession. Yet for political reasons, Catalyst has never supported a polling of its readership to determine their occupations or status, thus reducing the author's ability to totally identify the occupational or demographic characteristics of Catalyst subscribers.[1] With few exceptions (primarily faculty), most subscribers have the journal sent to their homes, not to their place of work. As importantly, when the author interviewed a group of past and

current Catalyst Collective members to create a new historical record, those interviewed suggested the impact on the field was difficult to determine precisely because many of those who purchased or read the journal were not in a political position to give feedback or to publicly mention that their ideas may have come from an article in Catalyst. Therefore, the impact of a radical group such as Catalyst must to some degree be located in the underlife of society, in the area between 'formal' and 'informal' structures, since the very influence obtained within official, "legitimate" channels in society may need to be suppressed in order to continue to maintain the existence of both the radicals and their contacts who have relatively high status and cannot offer overt support.

Finally, a history of a collective such as Catalyst operates on many levels. As will be noted, the Catalyst Collective saw publication of a journal as only one of its goals, and, at least at times, had a presence on the Left, as speakers at conferences or as participants in coalitions and demonstrations. Secondly, participants had a role as members of a collective, reviewing manuscripts and news items to include in the journal, discussing in private the strategic political roles of various articles and various format and business decisions made by the group. Thirdly, since Collective members are listed on the masthead of each published journal, they also bear official responsibility for the actual final content of each journal. These roles

may often contradict one another, as when, for example, a Catalyst member disagrees in private with the politics of a particular printed article, but has been out-voted on its inclusion. It is possible that this collective member when representing the journal in public or as an individual radical speaking at a conference or rally, actually is representing a political view considerably different from the articles published in a particular issue. Indeed, when the author raised the question as to the degree to which the printed content of the journal fully represented the individual politics of the members, he received these answers at a group discussion:

> No, it was always a problem! There was always a shortage of good manuscripts...
>
> I was never fully satisfied with most issues...
>
> Even the best issues, I can't say I liked all the articles. We picked the best of what came in. When we could, we rejected a lot of manuscripts, but even in these times, there were only a few excellent ones...

Because of the natural difficulties of radical history and the discrepancies between Catalyst members roles as official sponsors of a journal and their other activities, a variety of methodologies were employed to collect data for this chapter. The author reviewed the twenty published issues of Catalyst (as of 1986) as well as all available minutes, internal documents, and external documents.

Additionally, the author attempts to achieve more historical veracity by the use of his own recollections (as well as notes)[2]; a group interview held on June 15, 1987 with five informants who had been long term Catalyst members and agreed to a group dialogue with the author about the history of Catalyst[3]; and the various comments of the study's subjects made in reference to Catalyst during their interviews.[4]

The Pre-History of Catalyst: Radical Social Work in the 1970s:

While any attempt at a complete history of radical movements in the Social Services is beyond the scope of this study (see, however, Chapter 11), the developments which led to the founding of Catalyst in 1976 need to mentioned, particularly the contrast between radical social work in the 1960s and 1970s.

As will be commented on throughout this study, a major period of radicalism within the Social Services occurred in the 1930s. This movement, generally referred to as the Rank-and-File Movement (R.F.M.) in Social Work (Fisher, 1936; Fisher, 1980; Spano, 1982) was based in the burgeoning social service unions of the 1930s, the journal Social Work Today (published 1934-1942), the writings of leading radicals in Social Work such as Bertha Reynolds, and the organization of practitioner and discussion groups within

the more professionalized segment of the field. The impact of the McCarthy period was strong in the Social Services as elsewhere (see Reynolds, 1963, pp. 260-294; Ehrenreich, 1985, p.187), and those who had been most prominent in the Rank-and-File Movement suffered job loss, blacklisting, and red baiting in the late 1940s and 1950s. As with other areas of radicalism in the 1960s, the young social workers of the 1960s who became radical did so in almost complete ignorance of historical precedents in their own field, partly because of the ideological framework of the New Left would probably have rejected much of the direction of the RFM of the 1930s, but primarily because the conventional sources of information had completely obliterated mention of the prominent figures and movements of the 1930s (indeed, one of Catalyst's main functions, has been the development of renewed interest in the Rank-and-File Movement through its articles and its re-printing of historical documents).

While the radicalism among social workers in the 1930s bears many similarities to more recent social work radicalism (see Chapter 11), the initial gestation periods of the movements were quite different. While the young radical social workers of the 1930s were profoundly influenced by the dramatic immiseration caused by the Depression and linked this economic disaster to their own perceived status as poorly paid social workers, the young radicals of the 1960s who were social workers tended to see

themselves as 'privileged' and even as 'oppressors' of the poor, particularly the Black and other Third World groups who were a profound source of radicalization as a result of the civil rights movement, ghetto riots, and Black Power movement.

While there have been no major studies of radical social service movements in the 1960s, it appears that radicalism was greatly linked to Community Organization as a methodology in Social Work (rather than psychiatry, psychology, social casework, groupwork or other direct practice with clients) and that service to the movements of the 1960s (welfare rights organizing, anti-poverty organizing, the anti-war movement) were the key definers of what "radicalism" was. Some of the most dramatically militant activities which involved social workers certainly occurred in the 1960s: for example, social workers organizing Black and Hispanic youths for rent strikes and battles with school superintendents in the Lower East Side of New York as part of the Mobilization for Youth (M.F.Y.) were heavily red-baited by the The Daily News and the local political leaders in the 1964-65 period (see Moyhnihan, 1970, pp. 102-105). Social workers helped develop the National Welfare Rights Organization (NWRO) in 1966 and, at least some actively supported "toppling the welfare system" by flooding it with so many new applicants that it would collapse (see Piven & Cloward, 1966). In 1969, welfare rights organizers joined by radical students and young

social workers, helped disrupt the National Conference on Social Welfare (NCSW) by blocking all the doors at the convention until the conference attendees agreed to make a significant financial contribution to NWRO (Ehrenreich, 1985, p. 199).

While these activities certainly exceeded, in drama, the movements of the 1970s, those New Leftists of the 1960s who happened to work in the social services, did not prominently identify themselves as "radical social workers" nor did they display much interest in organizing social workers per se to play a major role in social change. The client groups who were organizing frequently attacked social workers as the problem, and radicals within Social Work attacked their own profession as maintaining "social control" over the poor, the deviant, and the disenfranchised (see, Ehrenreich, 1985, pp. 197-204). The community control and client rights movements suggested that professionals derived their power only by expropriating the natural rights of communities, particularly the ghetto (see Haug&Sussman, 1969, for example). The growing critique of psychological oppression, led by such prominent critics such as Thomas Szasz and R.D. Laing, suggested to radical (and many liberal) social workers that their past preoccupation with psychiatric paradigms and social casework was only of service to a ruling class seeking control over poor and minority communities.

As late as 1971, a radical role in Social Work was defined by a prominent leftist professor of Social Work, as one which involved primarily organizing of the poor or providing service to alternative movement organizations (Erlich, 1971). In Erlich's typology, social work students or practitioners could serve the 'movement' by being (1) "an alternative model-builder" i.e. serving as an organizer for community groups (2) a "part-time movement conspirator" i.e. serving with S.D.S. or other left groups utilizing organizing and leadership skills (3) a "radical media messenger," i.e. publishing radical agendas (4) a "life-style actionist" i.e. setting an example of different values by rejecting middle class life styles (5) a "new movement organizer" i.e. creating alternative organizations and (6) a "human liberationist" i.e. experimenting with communes and other alternative life-styles (Erlich, 1971, pp.239-242).

Although, radical social workers of the mid-1970s, would not necessarily reject the roles noted above, a major change in focus occurred for radicals in the professions between 1967 and 1975. By the mid-1970s, organizations of radical social workers such as the Radical Alliance of Social Service Workers (RASSW) in New York City (see below) and a growing body of radical social work literature promoted a very different view of radical social work than that which prevailed in the mid or late 1960s. The key differences can be summarized as follows:

(1) Rather than purely agents of "social control," social workers and allied fields served in a dialectical fashion to help people as well as potentially harm them. Social workers could play a role in helping people develop a leftist consciousness through direct practice (casework, groupwork, even psychotherapy) as well as through advocacy, planning, and, of course, community organizing.

(2) Rather than feel guilt at the 'privilege' of 'middle class' life, social workers were part of a 'new working class' or even the old proletariat. Rather than only focus on activities which served the poor or clients, social workers had a key role as employees of public and private agencies to organize in their own interests in unions, radical caucuses, and other worker organizations.

(3) While many radicals were, and are, attracted to employment in alternative organizations, there was a key role for radicals in 'traditional Establishment' organizations where most social workers worked. Potentially, the key institutions of the Welfare State--the welfare system, hospitals, schools, jails, nursing homes, mental hospitals--were the very key areas of oppression which radical social workers could only change by struggling within them.

The major changes listed above can be attributed to three major phenomena: (a) demographic employment changes, which led to widespread employment of young "baby boomers" in the social services, as well as in other helping professions, in the late 1960s and early 1970s (b) the entrance of Marxism into the social sciences in a significant way in the late 1960s and early 1970s; and (c) the downturn in employment resulting from the Recession of 1973, and the widely publicized "fiscal crisis of the state" in the mid-1970s.

As the "baby boom" generation aged and had to engage in full-time employment, the tremendous growth in the welfare state in the 1960s opened up a large number of employment opportunities in the social services. Welfare departments at this time, as well as many community action agencies, required a B.A. or less to secure a position. Often these jobs combined a minimal time commitment and the opportunity to work with the poor, Black and other Third World people or others designated as 'oppressed' (the mentally ill and retarded; drug addicts; street people and hippies) appealing to young idealistic radicals of the 1960s. Like their counterparts in the 1930s (see Spano, 1982) it is likely that initially, many young caseworkers and organizers saw their positions as only temporary. However, as the new occupants aged, they had <u>both</u> considerable incentives to remain in the field (particularly the vast increase in agency funded tuition for graduate Social Work education as well as accrued seniority and benefits for those who remained on leave from employment while training), <u>and</u> certain barriers to leaving the field (in addition to the fact that careers in Social Work or even Psychology takes considerably less years than, say, medicine, "baby boomers" faced, because of demographics, more competition for entry to the 'high' professions, and moreover, as years went by, would have to accumulate considerable more capital to pursue a Ph. D. or J.L.D.). While these demographic trends are merely suggestive, probably not demanding of any

radicalization (particularly without the subsequent decline in the economy), some social scientists (Lipset and Schwartz, 1966, p.302) have suggested that Social Work and other low status professions may lead to radicalism as a result of occupants choosing them as a "second choice career" rather than as their first aspiration.

The second major pre-condition for a radical social service movement which allowed social workers to view themselves as progressive social actors in their own right, was the entrance of Marxism into the social sciences, the academy, and the professions. By 1969-1970, a variety of new journals, strongly influenced by Marxism, had emerged. Some like Radical America and Socialist Revolution were aimed at the broad left public, while an array of radical professional publications emerged including The Health/PAC Bulletin, Science for the People, The Insurgent Sociologist, and The Radical Therapist. The newly emerging groups of radicals in academia (like the New University Conference; the Union of Radical Political Economists), in law (the growth of the National Lawyers Guild), in health and medicine (Health/PAC; Medical Committee for Human Rights), and in science (Science for the People) came to view themselves less as 'privileged' elements of the 'ruling class' or 'middle class' than as part of a 'new working class' oppressed by capitalist institutions along with their clients/patients, and as either capable of transforming

their professions, or at least struggling within the established professions to polarize the professional associations around the issues and recruit newly trained professionals to left-wing activism.

In contrast to the United Kingdom where a considerable body of Marxist theory entered Social Work by 1970 (as well as a major left-wing journal, Case Con), leftist theory was slower in coming to Social Work in the U.S. The radical social work writings, even of the early seventies, heavily cited literature in a variety of other disciplines: Sociology (particularly Alvin Gouldner's The Coming Crisis of Western Sociology, 1970), the health care movement (Barbara and John Ehrenreich, editors, The American Health Empire, 1971), the women's movement (Robin Morgan's Sisterhood is Powerful, 1970, included an article specifically addressed "to our sisters in social work"), economics (particularly Edwards et. al. The Capitalist System, 1972), and education (Paulo Freire's Pedagogy of the Oppressed, 1984) for example. Perhaps the strongest influence on shaping a radical political economy for social workers was the publication of Frances Fox Piven and Richard Cloward's Regulating the Poor published in 1971.[5] While a number of other articles providing a Marxist or critical perspective on Social Work were written in the early 1970s (e.g. Rein, 1970; Knickmeyer, 1972) , the key works that developed specifically socialist paradigms for radical social work practice were not published until 1975: Jeff

Galper's The Politics of Social Services and Bailey and Brake's (editors), Radical Social Work.

A key influence of Marxist thought, through academic works, as well as the increasing non-academic study of Marxism (the growth of Marxist study groups in the early 1970s) was the growing recognition by social workers that they had a valid self-interest which was not counterposed to the interests of their clients. Further, the possibility that conditions for social workers would deteriorate through 'proletarianization'--a word that began to emerge in the mid-1970s to describe worsening conditions for professional and middle strata workers--strengthened support of unionization and employee militancy as a radical goal. As Marxist and other socialist thought re-emerged, some of this literature was found to be supportive of direct service practice, for example, the works of Wilhelm Reich and the Frankfurt School. Additionally an emerging critique of Community Organization as being subject to reformist tendencies (see Rein, 1970; Galper, 1975; Bailey & Brake, 1975), led to an increased acceptance by radicals of both psychological paradigms and of social workers performing casework and groupwork as well as community organizing.

However, it is suggested that neither the growth in numbers of New Left influenced social workers nor even the influence of Marxism by itself would have had as profound an impact without the severe downturn in the economy beginning

in 1973. With the Recession of 1973, young professionals for the first time began feeling the effects of unemployment, wage freezes, benefit cutbacks, and shortened hours. As the Recession continued, budget cuts stretched from the federal government to state and local governments and particularly fell on social welfare workers and client services provided by the State. Business organs (see Business Week, September 22,1975) and both the Republican and Democratic Parties began to talk about a "capital crisis" and "the fiscal crisis of the state." In most dramatic terms, the near bankruptcy of New York City in 1975, and the political use to which it was put (layoffs of 100,000 workers; imposition of tuition at City universities; cutbacks in social services, hospitals, firehouses, etc.; forced use of municipal unions' pensions to bail out the City) exemplified the more theoretical descriptions of public spending crowding out private capital from the markets and therefore requiring a "tightening of the belt" from unions, public employees, and welfare state clients.

For social workers, the national contraction of jobs and the deterioration of working conditions as a result of federal, state, and municipal cutbacks, reinforced the view that social workers were vulnerable workers, and that their self-interest was the same as their clients. Virtually all radical social work literature from 1974 on refers to the ravaging of the welfare state by the government, harming both services to the poor, the unemployed, and working class

and social workers themselves. Further, the failure by the mid-1970s of the Democratic Party to vigorously oppose the cuts at either the national or local level led to increased bitterness even on the part of mainstream social work groups. Although, the first issue of Catalyst did not reach publication until February of 1978, the years of cutbacks and perceived bi-partisan support for them, were brought forth in the very first paragraphs of the new journal:

> ...Few people who pick up this journal will have escaped the effects of the current crisis in the social services. If you are a social service worker, you have probably observed your agency or program being whittled away, along with your job security. If you are a client of any of the social services, you may wonder how the government and big business think you can survive with what little you get. From health care to housing, and from employment to income maintenance, there has been a massive attack on all the social services.
>
> Political Crisis
>
> There have been cutbacks and crises before in the social services, but never have the leading liberal politicians who helped build the welfare state led the attack. They have made a political choice, opting for austerity in social service programs, using slogans like 'less is more,' 'life is unfair,' and proclaiming the need for more efficiency..."("Why Catalyst?,"Catalyst, 1:1, p.1)

In sum, Catalyst emerged in a context of massive cuts in the social services, which particularly struck a generation which had come of age at a time of expansion in social services. Further, Catalyst emerged in a troubled time for social workers and other state employees after four

consecutive decades of expansion in the number of state employees. And Catalyst emerged in a period of time in which a Marxist critique of the social services had begun to inform many former young New Leftists who had entered the profession, some with reluctance and others with idealism, but with little initial subscription to the theoretical precepts of Marxism.

The Formation and Initial Composition of the Catalyst Collective and the Institute for Social Service Alternatives

The origins of Catalyst, as a Collective publishing a socialist journal, and, as an attempt to develop a broader social movement of radical social workers (as exemplified by the creation of ISSA, the Institute for Social Service Alternatives, see below) must be situated in what appeared to be a particularly optimistic period for leftists in Social Work.

In New York City, a fairly large radical organization, the Radical Alliance of Social Service Workers (RASSW), was formed in 1974.[6] RASSW published a bi-monthly newsletter entitled The Alternative View, held several well attended forums and conferences, and developed a broad committee structure (including the Welfare Committee, the Economic Crisis Committee, the Mental Health Committee, a Racism Committee, a Newsletter Committee, a Student Committee). The group's ideology and activities reflected the key components

of a Left program in Social Work in the mid-1970s: antagonism towards the leadership of the profession and the liberal political leadership; encouragement of unionization and an employee identification for social workers; organizing for a massive 'fightback' against budget cuts by united groups of workers and clients; as well as developing critiques of the Welfare State, specific social policies regarded as repressive (such as workfare), opposing racism and sexism, and attempting to develop a 'radical practice' within Social Work (Alternative View, Volumes 1-3, 1974-1976).

Although some members of RASSW would later come to differ politically with the leadership and attack it from the Left, a review of RASSW's newsletters suggest a similar ambitious agenda to the early objectives of Catalyst/I.S.S.A. These groups both hoped to develop a national organization--or at least a network--of leftist social service workers (as broadly defined as possible) which would change the direction of the profession, ally it with labor, and with militant community and political groups. Importantly, the role of a journal in the social services was always viewed as adjunctive to this broader goal. For example, a year before the group emerged which would put out Catalyst , an issue of the Alternative View records the idea of a journal being suggested at its June 14, 1975 annual meeting (Vol. 2:1, Sept. 1975, p.2). At that

time, the idea was part of a list of 16 ideas which were generally aimed at building a left social service movement.

The idea of a radical journal, as one instrument in a movement to develop a larger national left among social service workers, was clearly "in the air." Its eventual implementation came about in the confluence of two developments; the efforts of several individuals actively pressing for it combined with a small body of left social workers who were looking for a locus for political activity.

In the Spring of 1976, this author had discussed the idea of a radical social service journal with noted author, Richard Cloward, who strongly endorsed the idea. With the aid of several others, letters were written to several prominent left-wing figures in the field, primarily academics, to gauge their interest and possible support. The response was an enthusiastic one. In May and June 1976, meetings were held with individuals involved in publishing Social Policy and The Insurgent Sociologist to gather facts about publishing, financing, and otherwise negotiating the business of a journal.

At the same time, a political dispute had been developing in RASSW. Primarily, opponents of RASSW's leadership objected to the heavy-handed nature of its leadership which was closely linked with Communist Party ideas and strategies. While the contours of the debate in RASSW now seem relatively obscure,[7] the Radical Alliance's Steering Committee (representing the

leadership) appears to have supported more "popular front" type coalitions with a variety of groups than the opposition, was less willing to adopt the explicit appellation 'socialist' than the opposition, and was less willing to concentrate its resources on actual workplace organizing than was suggested by the opposition. A key issue which would later separate RASSW from other radicals in social service including the Catalyst Collective was the support for "entry" into the established professional groups, particularly the National Association of Social Workers (NASW), by the former and its opposition by the latter.[8]

Some "opposition" members began to drift away from RASSW. In June of 1976, about a dozen of these people formed a study group in New York to read radical social service and Marxist literature, and to re-group to engage in other activities. At the first study group meeting (6/3/76), the idea of a journal was raised. In the Fall of 1976, a group of about ten people began to meet to develop the political and practical objectives of a left journal.

Despite the eventual presence of about eight former RASSW members in Catalyst,[9] the new formation was politically heterogenous. Although for approximately a year (1976-77), the study group and beginning Catalyst Collective had considerably overlapping memberships, many ex-RASSW activists never joined either group or joined the study

group only. Others joined the journal group rather than the study group. In fact, by early 1977, only four out of fourteen people working on the journal were ex-RASSW opposition members; three had been in RASSW, but were not tied to the opposition; and the remaining seven had never been RASSW members.

A core of about seventeen people interested in undertaking a radical journal were gathered by the summer of 1977. The group was all white (with one Arab-American), equally divided between male and female, and ranging in age from 23 to 38 (with 29 as the median age). All of the early members either had or were pursuing their Masters in Social Work (M.S.W.) and lived in the New York City area. In contrast to their later career paths, only one person was pursuing a doctoral degree in preparation for an academic career. The other members were caseworkers in hospitals, mental health settings and child welfare agencies; community organizers and planners; and students in Masters programs in Social Work. Politically, the group was heterogenous, ranging from committed Marxists to those who described themselves as political neophytes who were "open" to a socialist analysis. The key cleavage, politically, was greatly one of experience and definition; those who had been active for many years on the Left were more directive in their prescriptions for the journal and more formed in their views. This group constituted about half the group. The other half either had less political experience, and/or felt

that their ideas were not sufficiently well-formulated for them to engage in political argumentation.[10]

It is important to stress that publication of a journal was seen only as one task which the developing group would be involved in. The group, in fact, came to the name "catalyst" in the Winter 1976-77, because it believed a radical journal could help unite divergent left elements in the field, radicalize the profession, and lead to new activism. In May 1977, the Institute for Social Service Alternatives (I.S.S.A.) was established. While the establishment of ISSA as the official publisher of Catalyst was necessitated by tax and non-profit laws it was always felt that ISSA might become a future center for organizing, radical research, and sponsorship of forums and conferences. As participants recalled in the oral history meeting, "Catalyst was only the first task of ISSA..." Ironically, while ISSA has sponsored journal related events, such as fundraisers, one of the first ISSA functions unrelated to the publication Catalyst, occurs as the author writes: the co-sponsoring (with Smith College School of Social Work) of a national conference of the Bertha Reynolds Society in July 1987.

The Structure of the Catalyst Collective:

From the earliest meetings, there was clear consensus

that the publication of a journal was to be a collective endeavor. Basing itself broadly on collectively published journals such as Radical America and Socialist Review, the group never considered employing a formal hierarchical organization. Rather, all members were to be full participants in all of the journal's activities. Moreover, all the tasks of the journal, from publicity, to securing subscriptions, to reading manuscripts, to copy editing, to galley proofreading were originally done entirely by the voluntary labor of the Collective.

To this end, the collective developed a system of rotating membership on committees which perform tasks necessary for the journal's publication. The early division of tasks included an editorial committee to review manuscripts and develop other material for the first issue; a correspondence committee to answer inquiries and keep in touch with key contacts in the field including the Board of Sponsors (see below); a Publicity committee to develop brochures, advertisements, and contacts with bookstores and libraries; and a Finance Committee to raise funds and keep the financial accounts.

In order to centralize and coordinate the myriad tasks, bi-weekly business meetings were held. The meetings occurred at the homes of collective members and usually lasted from two to three hours. They were chaired on a rotating basis. Because, by early 1977, broader political issues were

already losing the floor to the concrete technical issues of publishing a journal, the Collective began to hold monthly "political retreats." Like the business meetings, they were held at members' homes, though usually in more festive fashion with food and drink. Over the years, political retreats ranged from the highly theoretical (the nature of Marxism and socialism, the role of the Democratic Party) to concrete issues in the journal (what audience should Catalyst strive to reach?) to the interpersonal (tension in the Collective; sexism by male members) to areas of people's worklives (how could the precepts of radicalism be applied to the individual's own workplaces?).

Between business meetings, political retreats, and committee and sub-committee meetings, collective members put in a tremendous amount of time. At a minimum, most members had responsibilities calling for one meeting a week, but, at times, such as when publication dates neared, these responsibilities could entail several nights a week and weekend work.

An unanticipated, but knotty structural and political issue was membership in the Collective. Initially, (1976-early 1977), the group was quite informal, and friends of members were simply invited in to join. Beginning in the Spring of 1977, the group, concerned about both the political unity of the collective and its size, developed a procedure for joining Catalyst. A potential new member was to be suggested by an incumbent member and then interviewed

by two Collective members (but not the person suggesting the new member). If the person was acceptable, she/he would join and serve a "trial period" in the group which would last three months. At that point, the group would vote on inclusion. Initially, the procedure was not seriously adhered to; the author himself recalls a Chinese lunch with a prospective member in which the most political question asked was whether the person liked Szechuan food. However, a year later, a major battle occurred over a potential new member, and she was denied membership by the collective because of a "lack of political development." Another sign of increased exclusionist tendencies was the reaction of collective members, as captured by the minutes, to one of the first potential members who was not known to any incumbent member but who had contacted the journal in response to a "call to new members" issued by the journal. While the individual was interviewed and eventually accepted, there was considerable uncertainly and ambivalence noted in the minutes.

Ironically, when the collective lost a large number of members in the 1980-81 period (see below), recruitment of membership was opened up completely with no apparent political or personal "means test." In fact, several meetings were held in recent years, in which groups of recent graduates from a local school of social work were invited to attend; those who continued to express interest,

then simply became members.

Two factors appear to be dominant in the changing membership criteria. One was political. The early group which included some members who were strongly committed to socialist theory. As the informal leaders of less strongly politically defined members, they feared too many new members without a radical history would dramatically change the complexion of the group and the journal. As will be noted below, because of the consistent struggle around the journal's identification as 'socialist,' this fear may have been well grounded. While defensive about the group's actions in retrospective, most of the group in the oral history agreed that political reasons were dominant in the selection of new members:

> Yes, ideology was of key importance then...we didn't want people who weren't at least minimally on the Left...
>
> it was a mistake, but we were being strict about who we let in then. We were trying to hold people to a high standard of political development...

While not disagreeing, a Catalyst member who has remained in the Collective for the longest period of time suggests group size and personal feelings had as much to do with the fluctuation between exclusionism and openness to new members as political views:

> I think it has to do, first, with the size of the group. In the heyday years, (we) didn't need

> new people. (It) was harder to bring new people in. I had strong feelings about new people myself. But this was partly psychological too. We all felt very close and in a small group, new people can be destabilizing...(You say) "keep it the way it is"...now later, we had a lot of turnover (in the early 1980s). Of necessity we didn't do that (exclude people) anymore. Plus the group had changed enough that there wasn't much pressure to be careful in recruiting new members...

A further difficulty emerged, however, with the all consuming schedule of activities of the Collective, and the need of many members to reduce activities due to child care obligations, increased work responsibilities, and geographic re-location. Indeed, at least overtly, the reasons for almost every departure from Catalyst was increased work pressure, family responsibilities, moving or similar issues. As early as 1977, the Collective began to experiment with an "associate member" category which would allow someone who could not undertake full committee responsibilities to at least participate in some tasks and in political retreats. With one or two exceptions, this experiment did not succeed. There was wide agreement that Catalyst had not been able to deal well with differential levels of commitment. For the most part, collective members uncertain of their commitment felt pressure to fully participate or completely depart from the collective.

In order to secure some legitimacy from the field, a decision was made to develop a Board of Sponsors. It was hoped that in addition to lending their names to the journal, the Sponsors would develop a strong commitment to

the journal, giving financial support, distributing journals in their workplaces or schools, and generally publicizing Catalyst. One concern was to secure a better racial and ethnic balance on the Board of Sponsors than was present in the Collective; this was achieved as nine of the twenty-one original Sponsors were Black or Latino. The majority of the Board turned out to be academic figures, which hadn't necessarily been the Collective's conscious intention. One problem was that the collective was reliant on its few contacts' knowledge of 'major figures' in Social Work or related fields, and these contacts were primarily professors. During the oral history, several participants noted the irony of the journal's desire to address "practice" issues of social service and to "address an audience of front line workers" given its dominant sponsorship by academics. Another issue which arose in the choosing sponsors was overtly political. Several collective members suggested at least two political office holders who had backgrounds as social workers. Several members of the Collective objected to their inclusion because it would imply support for the Democratic Party or other mainstream politics. Also rejected were several administrative figures who aroused opposition from one quarter or another. With a few notable exceptions, most of the Board of Sponsors, with the exception of giving some financial support, have remained generally inactive over the years, and primarily

serve to give new readers a frame of reference for the journal.

Funding for the journal was always a knotty problem. Collective members early on agreed to assess themselves a fee based on their monthly earnings to support the journal. One collective member who happened to be quite wealthy agreed to donate a substantial sum of money. This was believed to be only a temporary measure, necessary until the journal was published and sufficient subscribers obtained. However, the journal has never become self-sustaining. The member mentioned continued to subsidize the journal for more than six years. This money plus money from subscriptions and sales, and parties and fundraisers, barely kept the journal afloat. As will discussed below, by 1981, fiscal problems combined by energy and logistical problems prevented any semblance of a regular schedule of publication. Over the years, a variety of strategies were discussed to finance the journal, including securing foundation grants and publishing a collection of reprints from Catalyst. None of these ideas have yet come to fruition, although in 1986, the journal improved its financial picture with a major fundraising drive among 'friends' and former members of Catalyst, and with two major fundraising events.

While the committee structure and number of details to be attended to in publishing a journal have changed somewhat over the last ten years (for example, some work is now contracted out, such as maintaining mailing lists, checking

distribution problems, etc. while the increased use of computers since 1980 has saved considerable labor), the organizational structure of Catalyst has continued to be a major source of controversy.

The group (with all its changing composition) has always strongly endorsed a radical egalitarianism in its actions. In December 1977, when some members suggested that the editorial committee be listed separately in the journal (perhaps with asterisks in the masthead) in order to clearly state political responsibility by those who actually had selected the articles, many other collective members objected and the idea was scrapped. In late 1978 and early 1979, major discussions were held on some male members tendency towards a sexist division of labor in which the 'shit work' was allegedly being done disproportionately by females, while these males did the more "glamorous" editorial or political work. Most people who stayed in Catalyst generally endorse the collective nature of the process, though they have moved to lighten certain tasks.

On the other hand, most everyone interviewed by the author expressed at least frustration, if not anger, at the amount of 'detail work' involved in the journal, and the excessive amount of time spent struggling with these issues. One ex-member bitterly complained that Catalyst was not a journal, "but an ongoing psychodrama in which people acted out their desires to be radical on an interpersonal level."

In an article by departing collective member Nancy Aries (1984), a more developed argument critical of the collective structure was made. Aries argues that the collective remained wedded to a 1960s form of organization at a time when people's lives had changed. With increased family, work, and other responsibilities, it was no longer possible for most people to devote themselves completely to all the tasks of a radical collective journal. Further, the collective organization began to turn inward on itself; it presented barriers to new members, particularly those who could not commit themselves rather fully to membership. Political work in the 1980s, suggests Aries, requires new forms of organization which allows people to become differentially involved in activities, and groups which tolerate people's different levels of interest and activity.

While not all Catalyst members and ex-members agree with Aries, all ex-members of Catalyst interviewed felt that their needs, personal and political, were eventually thwarted at least to some degree, by the structure. Many ex-members initially joined Catalyst in order to be active in radical politics; yet the details of publication usually took over political activity on a daily basis. A second frustration came from those who sought more political theoretical training. One current member points out the problem humorously:

> of course I was excited to join Catalyst...to be

> accepted, me who knew so little, into this group. And I wanted to learn theory, to learn Marxism. Of course, I don't know if we ever get to do this, (laughs)...

Like political activism, political education had to take a back seat to the tasks of publishing. Most of the education function was assigned to the political retreats. But by 1979-1980, even retreats became more focused on organizational and interpersonal problems, and subsequently retreats were abandoned entirely. A third need strongly identified by collective members, was that of securing support and assistance with their own "work struggles." Several members felt overwhelmed by the increasingly thorny problems of being a radical social worker, particularly as some members moved into administrative positions. While some retreats focused on combining work and politics, and, at one point, the collective had dinner together before meetings specifically for mutual aid around work problems, the author's interviews found several people frustrated that Catalyst was not able to help them more.

A final point is the possibility that it was not only the prevalence of the 'detail work' that frustrated the many members and ex-members of Catalyst, but the very different agendas that people had. For example, some ex-members attacked the group as overly academic and theoretical; while others expressed the opposite view. It may be that the relatively small group structure which was composed of

politically heterogenous members just could not meet all members' needs. It is possible that if the group decided to accent only political activity, it might have lost those more interested in theory or in discussing their personal problems, and vice verse.

Nevertheless, it is important in assessing both the personal careers of Catalyst members (as we do in Part II) and the experience of the group as a movement attempting to implement radical politics at their workplaces (Part III), to keep in mind the ambitious agenda of the small group which created tension and ambivalence between instrumental tasks (putting out a journal); affective tasks (such as discussing work problems); and intellectual tasks (developing political theory and strategy for radical change).

Political/Professional Dilemmas of Catalyst:

Although political disputes were less common in the Collective than might be anticipated, three underlying issues which were frequently raised in Catalyst suggest some of the dilemmas of radical groups, and frame a discussion of Catalyst's history.

One issue which any organization must grapple with is its label and basis for unity. In 1976-77, one of the first tasks which consumed considerable time was the naming of the

proposed journal and the development of a "statement of purpose" for the Collective. As noted, the informal group that had gathered to "do a radical journal" was diverse, and there was considerable question as to who this group was and what audience it would seek to attract for a journal. On the one hand, some individuals sought to make the journal specifically Marxist; while at the other extreme, many individuals wanted the group and journal to be as open as possible to a social service public. At that time, those who were strongly Marxist agreed to drop any proposed label such as "Marxist" which might be seen as sectarian or exclusionist, but felt strongly that if the group were not 'socialist,' there wasn't much point to an organization separate from the mainstream of the Social Service professions. The journal's audience was conceptualized as 'left leaning social service workers' who were becoming radicalized as a result of the fiscal crisis, client struggles, and the failure of liberalism, but who had no theoretical framework to conceptually understand these developments without a socialist analysis. After many revisions in the 'statement of purpose,'there was agreement on naming the journal with the subtitle ' a <u>socialist</u> journal of the social services' even by those not completely dedicated to socialism.

In later years, however, the political label of the journal was primarily contested not around the issue of Marxism, but around the label 'socialist.' For example, in

1983, an extremely close vote to re-name the journal by removing the term 'socialist' was narrowly averted . In recent years, several discussions about the journal's name have been held in the collective, with the possibility of changing it to a 'progressive' journal of the social services being seriously considered.

To those members and ex-members who believed the very core of the Catalyst group was its political identification as socialist, attempts to change the name in recent years are a reflection of the decline of political radicalism in the journal. As one ex-member, who did two stints in Catalyst, one in the original collective and one in the early 1980s, noted:

> When I returned to the group, it certainly felt less Left...and it proves my point that the argument was now between socialist or not socialist (rather than) Marxist or socialist. We (original group) were clear that we wanted an explicitly left journal...

A collective member who has remained through the many years of change agreed that the 'new group' of members who were somewhat younger in age:

> (are) less ideologically developed (than original group)...you know, a less consistent ideology. They didn't come out of a study group or anything...(they) don't talk about politics in the same way...

For those who support a possible change in name and identity, the political times, the journal's actual content, and the difficulty the journal's name entails to career prospects are prominent. As the case was echoed by a member:

> I think (the debate) reflects two things. One was that the (journal's) content was not consistently socialist, it was anti-capitalist...at best...you know, a forum for a wide range of ideas. The label no longer reflected the content. And then there was the political times. People were worried, they didn't want to put it on their resumes, didn't want to subscribe, because socialism was a red flag...

There was widespread agreement at the oral history that during the mid- and late '70s, Collective members were less career oriented. "Issues like resumes were just not as salient at that point," stated an ex-member. Indeed, almost as a reflection of this change, the group gathered for the oral history in 1987, many now in academia, debated whether the journal could be considered 'referred' for purposes of tenure. Although this discussion was not specifically related to the title 'socialist,'and one ex-member stated harshly that "Catalyst had become a forum for assistant professors," there was widespread agreement that since the incoming manuscripts are now read blind, the journal should put in its cover that it is 'referred' so as to draw a better quality of academic writers who after all are concerned about their resumes and tenure.

The above issue raises a second closely related issue which has always concerned Catalyst--was the journal a theoretical organ, primarily academic, or was it a 'practice' journal related to the daily work and political struggles of social workers? Those gathered for the oral history strongly affirmed that the intent of Catalyst was not academic, but was to reach the 'front line worker.' Yet, as one member suggested, it was ironic that the journal group then chose a format modeled after Socialist Revolution. It was suggested, and agreed to by the others, that a format which was more lively, that had shorter articles, and was perhaps more 'newsletter' in form might have had more appeal to the average social worker. One ex-member stated "It just never occurred to us when we started the journal, that who writes articles? Academics!"

Indeed, as early as issue 2 of Catalyst, the journal advertised for more articles related 'to daily practice' and to 'struggles in the workplace.' A major frustration to both those at the oral history and most of the individuals interviewed for this study was the heavy 'academic' and 'theoretical' tone of the journal. A review of the journal's authorships by this researcher found that in the early issues of the journal (1-6), most authors were not academics. However, from issue 7 on, academically affiliated authors constituted two-thirds of authored articles, except for the three special issues (see below) which were

overwhelmingly authored by non-academics.

The collective expressed frustration that the 'average' social worker did not write articles for the journal, and this had the concomitant effect of many probably not reading the journal because of its 'denseness.' One solution to the problem might have been for collective members themselves to do more of the writing, as some journals require. In fact, both the minutes and the oral history discussion reflect that articles that were authored by collective members were among those best liked by the group. Not that collective members did not write; the majority of the "News" section, book reviews, and column material was done by members. Ten articles (out of 87 authored articles as of 1986) were written by collective members. But the minutes of Catalyst's meetings reflect that perhaps as many as ten other articles, particularly oriented towards personal experiences with organizing and direct social work practice, were promised by collective members , but evidently never written. Whether, this reflected lack of time to write for the busy collective members, discomfort with exposing one's writing and ideas to the broader collective or some other factor, is unclear.

Finally, an issue related to the journal's content and focus which has continually re-surfaced over the years has been the occupational focus of the journal. Just what are the social services? There are many definitions with some broad enough to include all health and education personnel from teachers, nurses, day care employees, hospital aides to

welfare workers and psychiatric social workers. On the other hand, the social services could be primarily a code for those who practice Social Work. The dilemma, as noted in Chapter 1, of who is a social worker haunted the journal.

A major disagreement which included a series of memoranda written by opposing sides (actually one of the few periods of the journal's history to include this type of disagreement) occurred in the Spring of 1978. Among other issues, two collective members argued strongly that "(we need) an expansion of the collective, and the focus of the journal, to include other groups than social workers." The memos argued that there was increased activity among related professions and non-professional groups which Catalyst should seek to capitalize on, and that moreover, a narrow focus on Social Work risked falling into "the narrow bounds of professionalism" and "a parochial outlook." In response, other collective members saw dangers to focusing too broadly. As a small collective which at the time had published only one journal, expansion smacked of hubris or at least over ambitiousness. Moreover, it was felt that as social workers, the collective could best organize social workers:

> We fill a vacuum in the social service field. If we try to organize elsewhere, who will take our place?...Social workers can best organize social workers: I'm afraid nurses will have to organize nurses...(internal Catalyst memo)

The resolution of the dispute was a compromise. The group decided it would focus on the concerns of non-MSWs more, with particular sensitivity to non-professionals, but it endorsed no major change in direction for membership of the collective or political action. The issue of 'human services' versus 'social work' was raised continually by a collective member, who was not an MSW social worker by training, between 1979 and 1984. This member, interviewed in 1987, still feels that the journal "always came back to conceptualizing things as Social Work." Further since so many people occupying administration, policy, planning, organizing jobs were not social workers, "we were defining out of our audience a lot of people." On the other hand, an ex-collective member who is a psychologist disagreed: "I assumed we (the collective) were a human service journal. There were articles that weren't social work. That's what kept my interest!"

Two issues should be distinguished. One issue, the journal's content, appears, despite the ex-member's dissent above, to have been very broadly oriented. The other issue, the composition of the collective and its political activities and public relations, appears to have remained heavily wedded to Social Work.

A study of Catalyst's articles and content reveal a broad range of concerns from day care, to radical education, to psychotherapy, to health care in China and Nicaragua, to

the housing movement, to organizing around sports. This author has categorized the articles in Catalyst as follows: Social Work focus only (i.e. articles strictly related only to Social Work theory or professional concerns); Social Work/Mental Health joint focus (e.g. articles on therapy or mental health under capitalism); Social Work/Social Policy joint focus (e.g. welfare reform, day care policy); and totally unrelated to specific Social Work concerns (e.g. the Nicaraguan revolution; the state of Black America). Somewhat surprisingly to the author, a considerable number of articles were not related at all to Social Work, and many others overlapped with broad mental health interests of other disciplines or with the broad policy/planning issues of concern to other disciplines as reflected in Table I:

TABLE I

A Categorization of Published Articles in Catalyst 1978-1986*

Social Work concern only	25.9%	(29 articles)
Social Work/Mental Health	20.5%	(23 articles)
Social Work/Social Policy	17.9%	(20 articles)
General articles	35.7%	(40 articles)

* includes both articles and features/book reviews, but not news items or letters.

In fact, by dividing the journal's issues into two periods; the eight issues published before 1981, and the twelve in 1981 or after, Chart II suggests an even more definite move away from purely Social Work concerns:

TABLE 2

Categorization of Articles published in Catalyst, Compared in Two time periods*

Topic	% in 1978-80	% in 1981-86
Social Work (only)	33.3%	19.7%
Social Work/Mental Health	23.5%	18.0%
Social Work/Social Policy	15.7%	19.7%
General	27.4%	42.6%

* includes both articles and features/book reviews, but not news items or letters

But while the pages of Catalyst did come to reflect a rather broad scope view of issues related to the human services, the ex-collective member is probably correct in stating that the journal felt like a Social Work journal. The vast majority of the collective's membership were always MSWs. In turn, the people they suggested as possible recruits to the collective were most often social workers from local schools of social work or agencies. The areas they often thought to publicize the journal in--the National Association of Social Work meetings, the Council on Social Work Education meetings, the Schools of Social Work, for example--were Social Work based. Nor was there any strong effort made to keep up to date with new developments or current conflicts in adjacent fields such as Psychiatry, Psychology, Urban Planning, Sociology, Education or Public Administration.

This dispute ("human service" versus "social work") is of interest for two reasons, which the author believes provides the sub-text to the argument. One is that a large number of collective members themselves (perhaps reflecting the field in general, though empirical evidence is lacking) eventually moved out of Social Work positions (see Chapters 6-8 of this study). A large number of the original Collective membership became employed in fields as diverse as Public Administration, Labor Relations, Psychology, Arts, and Carpentry. These shifts in employment almost invariably led the member to leave Catalyst (in some cases, the ex-

member failed to continue subscribing). Therefore, the move to broaden the journal's purview often accompanied the member's own shift or anticipated shift in employment. While clearly, the mobility of social service employees to fields as diverse as arts and carpentry could not have been addressed by Catalyst, some would argue that Catalyst as an organization could have done far more to accommodate those employed in adjacent fields. Of course, the counter-arguments are also strong; many other professions or occupations have their own leftist journals or groups. Whether a radical psychologist, labor organizer or public administrator would have continued to read Catalyst rather than engage in reading and activity more closely related to their new occupational identity is perhaps doubtful.

The second sub-text is the issue which has perennially faced radical social workers: engaging the "non-professional." As will be suggested in this study (see Chapter 11 in particular), the goals and ideology of radical movements in Social Work often center on concern for the exploitation of social service personnel, particularly those who occupy the lowest status and wage jobs. Paradoxically, however, there is a tendency of these same social movements to be absorbed in a professional dialogue, unrelated to the concerns of the more "proletarianized" segments of social service employment. While data is not available on Catalyst's readership, the belief by informants that the

journal's readership is heavily professionalized appears correct. What the collective could have done to engage more welfare workers, B.A. and B.S.W. and A.A. social workers or case aides/case managers is not clear. While many articles conceivably address concerns of these workers (e.g. labor organizing), the journal's 'heavy' and 'theoretical' format may not have been the most appealing to those without a strong academic bent. Moreover, the collective itself did not have much personal access to the many thousands of human service workers. It would have at a minimum, given the journal's lack of resources, required nearly a complete detachment from public relations, political involvement, and focus on the MSW professionals, to significantly have linked the journal to non-MSW social workers. Nevertheless, the segmentation within Social Work--between the highly professionalized and the predominantly public sector, unionized, less professional segments--is unfortunately reinforced by the thrust of radical professional movements.

Catalyst/ISSA History 1976-1987:

Although the issues of organizational structure and the political dilemmas of a radical social service group have remained somewhat consistent, Catalyst/ISSA, in its short history, has already gone through considerable personnel changes and variations in success, both as a journal

publisher and as part of a broader movement of radical social workers. For our purposes, the eleven year history can most conveniently be divided as follows: (1) The early years from approximately 1976-1980 in which the collective members were quite actively involved in speaking and promoting radical Social Work on the Left and within the profession, in which a 'mushrooming' of local groups appeared to be leading to a broader movement of social service workers, and in which the journal itself was growing in number of subscribers and visibility. (2) The 'crisis' period, approximately from 1981 to 1985, when a high degree of turnover in collective members and financial problems led to considerable despair as to Catalyst's viability, and when a general downturn in radical social service activism occurred and (3) The current period, which while less optimistic and active than the earliest period and one which still finds the journal struggling to publish regularly, appears to have seen the group move out of a 'crisis' atmosphere to a stabilization of membership and subscribers, and some renewed links with radical social work groups.

The Early Years 1976-1980:

In reviewing the minutes of Catalyst's early years, one is most struck by the degree to which a variety of local groups of radical social workers appeared to be growing in the late 1970s and the degree to which Catalyst collective

members were active in both promoting the journal and radical ideas on the Left.

Early in its history, the collective could see itself as part of a growing movement. In its earliest years, Catalyst's founding coincided with the formation of a radical social service group in Wisconsin, in Boston (the Union of Radical Human Service Workers), in New Haven, Conn.,in Chicago (the Chicago Alliance of Social Service Workers), and in Philadelphia (the Philadelphia Radical Human Service Workers).[11] While the collective never had the resources to keep in close contact with these groups nor apparently felt it was politically feasible to act in a coordinating role, the news of each group's emergence were stimulating and exciting to collective members. There was a strong sense that Catalyst was part of a burgeoning radicalization which would continue to expand.

The early collective was considerably more active in speaking to left audiences, and potentially 'radicalizable groups' in its first years, when compared with later years. In its first full three years (1977-79), Catalyst collective members addressed, for example: students at several major Schools of Social Work and alumni groups at a number of schools; radical social workers in RASSW, at professional conferences as varied as NASW, the American Orthopsychiatric Convention, the CSWE convention, the Association of Child Care Workers, the Family Service Association of America, the

National Conference on Social Welfare, and the Policy Training Center in Boston (which was developing classes and research material for radical human service workers); and groups of leftists through a radio presentation on N.Y.C's WBAI, through a forum at the Free Association in N.Y.C. which gave classes and presentations, at NAM (New American Movement) functions, at meetings of the Benjamin Rush Society (a radical psychology group), at meetings of the Red Apple Coalition (a group of radical publications) and through co-sponsoring a conference on "Marxism and Science" with groups such as the NY School for Marxist Education, Health/PAC, and MCHR.

Additionally, perhaps because the group was new, the Collective was continually approached by a wide variety of left-wing groups (ranging from the anarchist paper Against the Grain to the Institute for Social Therapy in N.Y. to the Line of March publishers), was able to gain some press coverage (e.g. ranging from The Daily World and In These Times to the reprinting of 'Why Catalyst?' in the National Federation of Student Social Workers newspaper), and was able to develop contacts with a diverse number of groups (unions such as the Pennsylvania Social Service Employees Union and organizations like the National Association of Black Social Workers). Indications of Catalyst being perceived as an independent politically activist left organization, was its endorsement of demonstrations (such as the Indian Point anti-nuclear rally) and requests that it

co-sponsor the game "Class Struggle."

After a long gestation period, issue I of Catalyst appeared in February 1978. The first issue reflected what would be the general format of Catalyst: a book-sized (the first issue was 112 pages) presumably quarterly journal with rather long articles interspersed with a few graphics, poetry, and advertisements for other left journals. Issue 1 began with three features: a "News Bureau" coordinated by two Catalyst members, which would continue in some form throughout the journal's history; a Book Review of a major work; and a "Notes on the Literature" feature (which continued, sporadically, over the course of the journal's history). Like future issues, Issue 1 had a short introduction to the articles (the introduction, with some exceptions, served primarily as an abstract, with the collective being reluctant to actually critique many articles). The first issue did differ from future issues in its tendency to represent more coherently the Catalyst collective's own viewpoint given the presence of the three page 'Why Catalyst?,' two articles by Collective members, three features by Collective members, and two other articles by members of the Board of Sponsors of Catalyst.[12]

Between the first issue and the delayed publication of the first completed volume of Catalyst (Volume 1 was completed at the end of 1979), subscriptions rose from less than 350 in early 1978 to more than 1,100 with an apparently

strong amount of single issue sales. At this point, growth appeared adequate, with the collective primarily expressing frustration with only the slow pace of publishing and difficulty in obtaining quality manuscripts.

Over the course of the first volume, the journal began to appear more attractive and professional due to better communication with printers/typesetters and additional photographs and graphics. A small number of letters began to appear including a debate on the nature of 'radical therapy' (see Catalyst, 1:2, 1978, pp. 90-92; Catalyst, 1:4, 1979, pp. 145-48) and the welcoming (and advice) by some social workers who were around for Social Work Today (Catalyst, 1:3, 1979, pp. 119-120; Catalyst, 1:4, 1979, pp. 148-49). Significant articles in issues 2-4 included reportage on the fiscal crisis, an early published article on gays and mental health, a review of Social Work's treatment of the women's movement, an article by a collective member on the experience of Social Work School, a photoessay about one's client's life on welfare, a bibliography on Professionals-as-Workers, and a report on the organization of a settlement house by a collective member and co-worker.

Calendar year 1980 represented the first year(and one of only two calendar years thusfar) that Catalyst was able to maintain its goal of publishing quarterly. On the one hand,the improved publication schedule made for shorter,more compact magazines (about 90 pages) with livelier

graphics and photos. Yet elements of strain in putting out so many issues were apparent: the introduction became shorter and less politically oriented with each issue; the "news" disappeared in some issues to return in issues 7 and 8 with a heavy focus on international, national, and NYC political events (rather than Social Service); and a growing number of articles were re-prints from other publications. The minutes record increased controversy over several articles as being too theoretical or abstract, and of increased political disputation in general.

Notable articles in the author's view include the publication of material on Social Work Today and the Rank-and-File Movement; two articles critical of radical social work practice and arguing for social workers' impact as employees (Webber, Catalyst, 2:2, 1980, pp.41-66; Adams & Freeman, Catalyst, 2:3, 1980, pp. 71-82) as well as a strong defense of the radical therapy position (Caspary, Catalyst, 2:3, 1980, pp. 28-37); an increased interest in collective bargaining and union issues; an article by a collective member on teaching social work; and an article on developing workplace 'stress groups.'

Despite the growing frustration of some collective members with what by mid 1980 was becoming a dropping subscription roll (from available sources it appears that after the first published volume, new subscribers did not make up the difference of subscribers who lapsed and did not

renew after Volume 1) and with what was becoming an extremely difficult financial and logistical task, the overall collective membership was greatly stable between 1976 and 1980. In these years, the journal lost only three long-term members and gained seven new members, including four who would be relatively long term. As of issue 8, twelve of the seventeen members listed in issue 1 were still in the collective, and the total number of listed members stood at 19, the highest number ever listed.

Crisis Period: 1981-1985:

By the early 1980s, a crisis which had already been somewhat apparent in rising interpersonal frustration, declining energies, and logistical problems, became more evident. During the early 1980s, ten of the remaining twelve original collective members would leave; the total number of collective members listed on the masthead would decline from nineteen in late 1980 to nine in 1983 and 1984; subscriptions would drop; and activism within the Social Service Left appeared to fall.

Generally, most Catalyst members and ex-members tend to ascribe the crisis to personal and organizational issues: interpersonal strife, exhaustion, members' increased work and family responsibilities, financial problems in the journal, and decisions that perhaps other forms of radical activity would be more useful than work on the journal. A

Catalyst member suggested the convergence of age (now closer to a mid-30s median) and internal problems:

> (It was) a combination of getting tired because (the) journal was dragging. They (members) were changing, people were getting to be 35 or 40. If you look at any political movement, you worry about people at that age. Family demands...people hitting their professional strides...Yes, and these were people influenced by the 1960s, who weren't going to make those mistakes, if you will, of drop-out ism...but it wasn't just age or mobility either. When there is no end product, it is very demoralizing. If it was an exciting period, people might have managed to pull their personal changes and that (Catalyst) together. But the journal wasn't giving us anything but aggravation...

The decline in Catalyst's success also paralleled the Reagan election:

> After Reagan's election, all of us on the Left felt so defeated that...may have contributed along with everything else to the sense of nothing happening, and it was harder to mobilize... (Catalyst member).

While this study will propose (see Part III) some more theoretical reasons for the decline in social movements in the professions, there is strong evidence that the Reagan period corresponded to the decline of organized radical social service movements. Not only was Catalyst hard pressed, but many local groups such as RASSW and URHSW folded in these years. Efforts to resurrect a new movement of social service radicals, such as the development of a

Human Service Activists Network (HSAN), which some members of the Catalyst collective were involved with, did not manage more than a few meetings.[14] Moreover, as Part III of this study touches further on, the content of 1980s radicalism was far more defensive, far less hostile to the organized profession, and less overtly socialist or militant than that of the 1970s movements.

Catalyst's prior commitment to publish two special issues with guest editors actually enabled calendar year 1981 to formally include four issues. With Special Issue 9/10 on "The State of the Black Community in Capitalist America" guest edited by June and Richard Thomas and Special Issue 12 on "Lesbian and Gay Issues in the Social Services" guest edited by Scott Wirth, Rani Eversley, and Nancy Rubin, as well as issue 11, Catalyst for the second time fulfilled its quarterly commitment. In 1982, however, only two issues were printed; in 1983, only one; and in 1984, only one. Paid subscriptions declined to between 522 to 841 (dependent on whether one counts issues given free to libraries, authors, sponsors, etc.).[15] The special issue on Gays and Lesbians was particularly successful, however, with a large number of single issue orders.

The developing format of special issues (continued in a less formal way with issue 14 which was based on presentations to a 1980 and 1981 set of conferences entitled "Human Services in a Good Society: Visions from the Left," as well as issues 9/10, 12, and issue 17/18 on "Labor and

the Human Services"co-edited by the New York and a Boston collective) was not without problems. While the special issue format allowed the New York collective to re-group while obtaining assistance from others, to some extent the format vitiated the identity of Catalyst. Issue 9/10 on The Black Community provided a Marxist class analysis of the problems of the Black community, yet the articles bore no organic connection with the social services. Nor, according to the oral history, did the issue do very well in sales despite advance press releases, special advertising, and other efforts. The Gay and Lesbian issue, on the other hand, did well, partly due to the strong efforts of the guest editors in doing advance publicity work. However, both Catalyst's minutes and the oral history meeting suggested considerable political disagreement with the issue. One article which was extremely critical of Cuba was particularly controversial. But other articles which essentially target specific clinical areas of practice with gays and lesbians or specific sub-populations (the aged, rural communities, lesbian and gay adolescents, etc.) do not appear to have either the class analysis or socialist analysis typical of Catalyst nor do most of the articles link the micro level or 'sub-population' study to broader issues of organizing or left strategies.

Beyond the special issues, Catalyst continued to present a variety of articles which touched on many

subjects. There was, for example, increased scholarship on the life and work of Bertha Reynolds (see Schwartz, 3:3, 1981, pp. 5-14; Cullen, 4:3, 1983, pp. 55-74); increased attention to new forms of organizing (see Naison, 3:3, 1981, pp. 15-22; Freudenberg et. al., 4:1, 1982, pp. 7-24; McCormick et. al., 4:2, 1982, pp. 59-72); and increased attention to how alternative agencies had fared over the years (see Morgenbesser et. al., 3:3, 1981, pp. 71-84; Sullivan, 4:2, 1982, pp. 39-58). The problems of maintaining radicalism got attention in the journal's pages through an article by Robert Rosengard (4:2, 1982, pp. 73-80), and a description of the problems in Catalyst itself in issue XVI ("To Our readers," pp. 5-6; Aries, pp. 59-68). Again the format of the journal, while generally increasing in attractiveness, was extremely erratic with one issue having no introduction (15) and some issues having news sections while others did not. The political tone and content of articles varied tremendously, particularly as to whether the article was in a clearly left tradition or a more general type of academic scholarship or Social Work practice reportage.

Catalyst actively sought new members to replace the stalwarts who had left by 1982. Between 1981 and 1985, ten new members were recruited, which when combined with sixteen other collective members whose names appeared on the masthead between issues 9 and 18 (1981-85) make for a grand total of 26 names. However, numbers can be misleading, as

many individuals stayed for only a brief time period; some in fact came to a meeting or two and were disillusioned or disinterested, but may have been listed on the masthead.[16] Of ten new recruits, only four would stay for a significant amount of time. Of the nine Collective members listed in issue 16 (1984) only two were original Collective members, four were or were to become long term members, and three were listed, but 'passing through.'

The Current Period:

While Catalyst and I.S.S.A. have not, as of this writing, returned to the high level of expectation and activism of the 1970s nor yet succeeded in putting out the journal on a quarterly schedule, there are signs that in the last year or two, the earlier crisis has receded. In the recent period, collective membership has stabilized, financing has been placed on a more secure footing, subscriptions have increased, and ties have again been established with activist organizations in social service.

While the number of collective members is not high compared to the 1970s and early 1980s, the (nine or so) active collective members have achieved some stability. Four have been part of the collective for more than three years as of mid-1987, it appears that three others have been involved for about two years.[17] One major change in the

collective's composition has been the gradual feminization of membership. Since 1985, when the last male collective member left, the group has been entirely female. Interviews with current members indicate there was no intentionality in this development. In fact, a member noted that as of this writing a male potential collective member was being considered.

In calendar year 1986, the collective members worked hard, and with some success, to stabilize the poor fiscal condition of ISSA's accounts. Fundraising activities included a major phone drive to gather commitments from sponsors, ex-collective members, and more affluent friends in the profession to help keep the journal afloat, and resulted in a good number of contributions. Additionally a major cocktail party/fundraiser held in May 1986 and a fundraising play at Henry Street Settlement House (a one women play on Lillian Wald) held in November 1986, both netted financial gains.

While the journal's formal publication record has not improved much; 1985 saw the special issue on Labor and Human Services (issue 17/18) and an additional issue (19), and 1986 only one issue (20); several completed issues are now in preparation. According to the collective member who now handles subscriptions, the next issue will be sent to nearly 800 subscribers, a major gain from a year or two ago. Recent changes and planned changes in the journal's format represent attempts to make the magazine more lively. A new

feature, "Organizing in the Human Service Community" was initiated in 1985. New issues will include a feature entitled "Notes from the Field" which will attempt to resolve some of the dilemma of 'how do we get people in the field to write?' The feature will accept short articles on social work practice, organizing or personal experiences which need not be 'academic' in format.

In recent years, the founding of a new national organization of radical social workers, the Bertha Capen Reynolds Society (founded 1985), has helped re-establish informal ties of the collective with other left activists throughout the nation. The BCRS, at least in name, includes many of the same radical social work activists who were present in the R.F.M. and in 1970s movements such as RASSW and URHSW. Whether the formal membership of the group, about 300, indicates radical activity is on the rise remains to be seen. In some areas of the country--such as Boston; the Bay Area; and Western Michigan--the BCRS has provided a vehicle to unify smaller groups of student social workers or study groups, and undertake larger public presentations, support in coalitions and demonstrations, and public statements. In other areas, including New York City, the group has had difficulty meeting consistently. While as a loose organization linking radical social social workers nationally the BCRS appears to meet a long yearned for goal of groups like Catalyst, the tone and content of BCRS

newsletters is considerably less militant, anti-professionalist, and specifically leftist than other efforts (and less so than the pages of Catalyst itself). Whether the journal can play a reciprocal role of providing theoretical leadership to members of a group like BCRS, whether all such groups will generally merge in political tone or whether groups like the journal and BCRS will go divergent ways is an open question.

Nevertheless, the developments above have strengthened the sense of belonging and optimism of collective members. A veteran collective member contrasted this period to the early 1980s:

> The group (is) now more exciting. People like (the) meetings. (The) group is more cohesive, (people) like each other. (Its) very different from the early 1980s...

In terms of the political climate, the same collective member also sees changes:

> Now (1987) we're used to this (the country's conservatism: author). We can somehow manage it better. People were in shock, now people can mobilize again. You know, Catalyst is stronger, the Bertha Reynolds Society emerges, these are strong signs of a turnaround. I mean, of course, they are also little specks compared with everything else, but still they're positive signs...

The Influence of Catalyst:

As noted at the beginning of this chapter, the measurement of influence of a radical movement is quite difficult. Measured by conventional standards of number of issues published each year and number of total subscribers, the group's influence would appear to be relatively small. As will be developed further in this study, the measure of the influence of radicalism in Social Work as a profession, is particularly difficult. As a liberal profession with a large cadre of self-consciously progressive (and frequently left or ex-left) leaders, Social Work has always been concerned about legitimation with its perceived base. While this legitimacy is usually conceptualized as securing 'client' support (the working class, the poor, Blacks and Third World people, etc.), in most periods of history such forces for potential de-stabilization are also represented within the profession by dissident segments which support these groups and are on the political Left (Wagner, 1986). Jacob Fisher's book on radical social workers in the Depression period similarly indicates both the relatively small numbers of social workers actually radicalized in these sometimes over glamorized years, and the difficulty in measuring their impact:

> Measures of the level of political consciousness, and the number of adherents each level attracted...still await development. There is some reason to believe that several hundred social workers were politically radicalized in the early thirties. It is difficult to determine the relative contribution to the process of the founding group of the Rank-and-File Movement, on the one hand, and, on the other, the broad influence of the swing to the left among liberal writers...had on the nature of society...(Fisher, 1980, p.238).

In a similar fashion, the several hundred (or perhaps thousands) of radicalized social service workers in the late 1960s through the 1980s can be suggested to have had an impact on the field, particularly related to dominant professional paradigms of practice, formulations about the professional relationship, and the left-liberal political trends within official representatives of Social Work (see Chapter 11).

One clear accomplishment of Catalyst in this light is its very ability to survive, at a time when many small voluntary collectively organized journals have failed, and exist in now its tenth year as a Left voice in the Social Services. While previous efforts at a consistent left journal in Social Work had failed, young social workers entering the field now have a mechanism to understand socialism and to put into context the frustrations of social service work:

(Catalyst member): We still get letters all the

> time. From all over, including internationally. From students, workers. They often want to do something, they want to know where we are, how can they form a group. They write to Catalyst. And knowing it is there helps these people with the frustration in their work...
>
> (former Catalyst member): Students who are on the Left, or who are beginning to think that way, and faculty, know it (Catalyst) is there. It has reasonably high visibility in schools and has had an impact in the university...
>
> (Catalyst member): Many students and ex-students have said to me 'Catalyst made it possible for me to enter the field. Otherwise I would have just given up on Social Work.' It (Catalyst) doesn't change people's minds, but it supports those who feel isolated in the profession...

At the oral history, members and ex-members noted that the journal was particularly significant in maintaining an international following, an academic following, and a local following.

Internationally, Catalyst has maintained a steady subscription list from radical social service figures and left movements throughout the world, including the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand, France, West Germany, and Latin America. Many of these people write with enthusiasm to Catalyst and seek comradely relations.

Members and ex-members interviewed also agreed that the academy was strongly influenced by the journal. Faculty members frequently assign articles from Catalyst, and certainly "left academics lean on it." Indeed, it appears that a great many subscriptions go to university libraries (in Sociology as well as Social Work and Human Service

Departments), to faculty members, and related university institutes, cultural centers, and student caucuses.[19] Interestingly, the informants viewed the academic appeal of the journal negatively because of their prime interest in influencing the working practitioner. Yet, the fact remains that the key place these practitioners are trained and where they do reading of an intellectual sort, is while in undergraduate or graduate training. Arguably, reaching the academy provides not only the time in which social service professionals may be most amenable to radicalism (see Chapter 5), but it may be that the segments of the profession most amenable to radicalism are connected to academia.[20]

At least one former member at the oral history stressed Catalyst's significance as greatly New York based. Because the collective members have always participated in conferences and events on the Left and in Social Work in N.Y.C., "people in agencies, in (the) Social Work Schools are well aware of Catalyst." The possibility of having this impact in other cities and areas was limited due to the location of the Collective in New York City.

The impact of Catalyst on Left organizing emerges as a matter of speculation, but the argument for strong influence can be made. While Catalyst developed simultaneously with the groups of left social workers organizing in the 1970s (and therefore we cannot attribute these to the journal's influence) some members felt the strong response to the

recently formed Bertha Reynolds Society represented in part an influence of Catalyst. One said, "These were people influenced by Catalyst who signed the call (for the BCRS)."

Finally, as the study itself suggests, the actions of the members and former members of the Collective need to be separated from the publication of a journal. Over the years, a considerable amount of organizing has been done by individuals who were associated with Catalyst, and, whether ironic or not, many of these individuals now occupy responsible positions in the social service institutions, the academy, and elsewhere. The evaluation of these 'radical careers' is the focus of our study.

Notes:

1. The issue of "polling" subscribers to determine their demographic, occupational, and educational characteristics has been raised in the collective, according to the minutes, many times, as long ago as 1979. For collective members who suggested this, gaining some insight into subscribers would provide important answers to questions as to the composition of Catalyst's audience. Opposition to such polling rested on the confidentiality of subscribing to a left-wing journal and/or the perspective that because of paranoia, survey returns would not be great in number due to subscribers' probable reluctance to share personal data.

As recently as December 1986, as this author was involved in this study, a member suggested that perhaps Catalyst and the author jointly poll subscribers, and the author prepared a draft questionnaire. However, upon discussion with another member, it became clear that the idea was still controversial, and had not been adopted by the collective as a whole. In the interest of preventing the research from causing any political problems, the author did not further pursue such efforts.

2. The author's personal notes are from 1976-1978 when this author was involved in the formative period of the journal

as well as notations on some meetings of the Radical Alliance of Social Service Workers (RASSW) from 1975-76, and of the Bertha Reynolds Society in 1985-1987.

3. A two and a half hour interview was held on June 15, 1987 with these informants. Selection was not aimed at 'randomness,' but did include the only collective member who has been involved continuously from 1976. The other four ex-members were selected because of their key roles in Catalyst and the temporal comprehensiveness achieved: an ex-member involved from 1976-78 and 1982-1983; an ex-member from 1976-1982; an ex-member from 1978-1984; an ex-member from 1981-1985; as well as the author (1976-1978). While the author developed an interview format focusing on the influence of Catalyst, historical changes, and key political issues, considerable open dialogue was allowed so that a variety of points could be made, and people could jog each other's memories.

4. As is described in Chapter 3, interviews with subjects were not focused on their participation in the Catalyst Collective per se. Nevertheless, in discussing their political and personal histories, many subjects (though not all) touched on their experience and feelings about the Collective. Where relevant, these impressions are utilized in this chapter.

5. The author's discussion is partly informed by a review of citations in the first twenty issues of Catalyst itself; it was felt that since the journal was, since 1978, the most consistent site of radical Social Work thought, it would be useful to determine the most cited works. The most cited work was Richard Cloward and Frances Fox Piven's Regulating the Poor (1971), cited in 16 different articles followed by James O'Connor (1973), The Fiscal Crisis of the State with thirteen cites. Next with twelve cites each were Harry Braverman's Labor and Monopoly Capital (1974) and Jeffrey Galper's The Politics of Social Services(1975). Four books or articles had seven cites including the Bailey and Brake book.

6. As with the study of all radical groups, membership information is a tricky issue as is the question of influence. RASSW, like SDS, operated greatly on the principle of participatory democracy with fairly permeable boundaries for membership. The author's notes from the annual conference of RASSW on June 14, 1975 indicate a speaker cited 125 members and a mailing list of 600. A note in the minutes of Catalyst in 1979 show RASSW had a mailing list of 1,200 at that point.

In 1974-76, which informants agree was RASSW's most successful period, a number of meetings held were extremely well attended. Perhaps the biggest was RASSW's May 22, 1976

Conference on Radical Social Work which drew about 300 people. At the oral history (footnote 3) informants agreed that RASSW was the largest group of radical social workers prior to the Bertha Reynolds Society which they had known of. But again any exact measure of members and influence would require another study.

7. The author is aware, through limited personal experience, and through a great deal of contact with several individuals who were active in the 'opposition' in 1975-76, that feelings ran quite high at this time as the two groups were locked in combat. Yet when the author asked individuals about these 'battles' in 1987, few people had much memory of the specifics. The author reviewed four available documents from 1975: "Position Paper I"(mimeo, October 18, 1975 by Arline Prigoff, Alan Lefkowitz, Mary Russak, and Rick Kramer); "Proposal for Program as Developed by the Steering Committee" (unsigned mimeo, undated), both representing the leadership of RASSW; and "Program Guidelines" (mimeo, November 22, 1975, signed by Bette Fried, Lorin Fisher, Anne Sparks, Brad Smith, Ken Byalin, Joan Ohlson, Martha 11Schwartz, Joel Blau, Chris Dykema, and Susan Blau) and "The Dilemmas of a Radical Association" (mimeo by Ken Byalin, undated), both representing the 'opposition' in RASSW.

The above documents, at least when reviewed twelve years later, appear to share a more common program for radical social workers than the two sides would probably have admitted. The major differences appear to be in the tone and emphasis which is noted in our text.

8. Beginning some time in the 1970s a major emphasis on 'entry' into the National Association of Social Workers, the major professional Social Work organization, was adopted by some left social workers, particularly those close to and/or members of the Communist Party U.S.A. Other radical social workers, particularly those who had been New Left activists, disagreed with this emphasis, and the issue was disputed as recently as July 10, 1987 at the national Bertha Bertha Society convention.

Those who suggest that radical activity be centered on NASW and other professional groups note that it is the largest center of social workers in the U.S. and compare political intervention within it to radicals needing to be involved in trade union activities to influence the working class. Other radicals have rejected the analogy of NASW with a trade union. They argue that the association represents only the most elite, self-consciously professionalized social workers tending to exclude the more working class, and Black and other Third World social workers. By becoming absorbed in professional associations, they would argue, radicals fail to emphasize close contact with trade unions in the social services and other groups which embrace a more

de-professionalized model of Social Work.

To what degree this issue was debated in 1975-76 is no longer recalled by informants, but it is likely that more members of the RASSW leadership and the older generation (post 50) members would have been active in N.A.S.W., while more of the 'opposition' and younger generation RASSW members (under 30) would have found such activity distasteful.

9. The number eight represents the eventual ex-RASSW cohort in Catalyst. However, one individual did not join Catalyst until 1979. Only the seven individuals noted in the text were involved in the study group and/or the developing collective in 1976-1977.

10. A complete demographic profile of the population of the Catalyst Collective (as opposed to the original formation) is provided in Chapter 3.

11. A series of meetings were held in 1979 between representatives of Catalyst, RASSW, UHRSW (Boston), CASSW (Chicago), PRHSW (Philadelphia), and radical New Haven social workers (no group name). The exact purposes and objectives of these meetings are not clear, although documents examined by the author discuss a "socialist human service workers group." The minutes of Catalyst (October 16, 1979) note, however, that one organizer of the meeting hoped to have the left groups "bore from within in NASW." That Catalyst was still not prepared to endorse this strategy is evident from the minutes; and apparently this was one reason for the failure of the groups to coalesce.

12. Selected articles from Catalyst--on the professional-as-worker, client organizing, and "radical practice"-- are analyzed in detail in Chapters 9 and 10 of this study.

13. Information on subscriptions had to be 'pieced together' by the author from several sources. The best information is available from 1981 and after when the journal computerized the list, and broke down subscriptions between paid and free copies to certain libraries as well as to sponsors and authors (both of whom received two free issues). The early subscription data (1978) are available through the minutes.

Unfortunately, the highpoint of subscriptions occurred during a point, 1979-1980, when the journal's mailing list was handled by a contracted out service. The author interviewed several members of the Collective and Mimi Braun, formerly of Transactions, (phone interview, June 4, 1987) to obtain the estimate of Catalyst's subscriptions. Unfortunately written documentation was unavailable.

A problematic feature (see footnote 18) is the citation of numbers which sometimes include free issues with paid

subscriptions, and sometimes do not. The minutes of Catalyst reflect a decision made in early 1980 to continue for a time sending journals to those who had not renewed after the first volume. This practice was then discontinued except for some libraries and other left journals. A further problem is that there is no good source of single copy sales, which was at times quite high.

14. Information on the Human Service Activists Network (HSAN) is primarily from the informants at the June 15, 1987 oral history. There was disagreement as to whether the group met once or twice or slightly more and over the numbers involved in it. However, there was widespread agreement that it was short-lived and generally unsuccessful in unifying the small groups of radical social workers in the early 1980s.

15. In this period, better subscription information is available. Actually listed as "active subscriptions" for each issue were:

Issue 11	620
Issue 12	694
Issue 13	586
Issue 14	608
Issue 15	575
Issue 16	522

However, for each issue, two additional columns followed. One was marked "sponsors/free subs" and the third was marked "other." The third column remains somewhat ambiguous even after an interview with the collective member who maintained the list. The third column for Issue 12 (Gay and Lesbian Issue) is marked as "special purchases," while the third column in issue 14 is marked "authors." Since measurement of the journal's impact can arguably be made to include all those who received each journal by mail, we can also arrive at higher figures by adding the three columns as follows:

Issue 11	687
Issue 12	841
Issue 13	671
Issue 14	717
Issue 15	773
Issue 16	720

16. This issue is important for the author's construction of the population to be interviewed (see Chapter 3). Apparently, at times (particularly in the 'down' period of the 1980s) an individual could have attended only a meeting or two, but be listed on Catalyst's masthead by chance of timing (the person was 'involved' at the time of printing)

or because it was felt that individual made a contribution of some sort (e.g. work, political, etc.) that should be recognized. That a few names could not be matched to any memory by people who were apparent cohort members of the Collective at the same time, however, suggests the shallowness of their participation.

17. Since the author began his study in June 1986, (see Chapter 3), the exact composition of the Collective at the time of this writing is known only anecdotally to this author. For example, a few current collective members were only involved for one year when the study was started, but as of mid-1987 seem to still be collective members.

18. Phone interview by author of the individual on June 7, 1987. In this interview, the collective member indicated the information in the text, but in response to the author's questions did state this included 'free' subscriptions. At this point it appears that only about 50 subscriptions would be free: those to authors and sponsors of the journal with authors down to only one free copy. Approximately 750 paid subscribers would appear to be a good estimate.

19. Again exact information is difficult to arrive at because of the lack of research on the subscribers. Nevertheless, by personally inspecting a mailing list of about 1,500 current and past subscribers, the author found 83 identified libraries, institutes, and cultural centers; 89 identified deans, faculty or academic administrators (i.e. the journal was mailed to them at a university address); and 22 bookstores, abstract services or publishers. Since the author could identify from personal knowledge dozens of other academics in Social Work and Sociology (who did not have the journal mailed to their business addresses) it seems reasonable to agree with the informants' conclusion that the journal had a high readership in academia.

20. While this is a broad and controversial topic, there is evidence (some noted in Wagner, 1986) that the more radical 'segments' in the Social Work profession are the academic critics who have for the last 75 years tended to regard Social Work as "too conservative." Many of the authors cited in this study who called for a left perspective were academics, and many left critics inside and outside Social Work since the Progressive Era have been linked to Sociology (Halmos, 1973, makes a similar point). When the literature on the radicalization of students is added to the broth, one can see a strong case for the academy, rather than the social service agency, being a center for radicalism.

Of course, even if this were demonstrable empirically, the proposition would be upsetting to radical social workers since Social Work is generally defined qua its practicing

nature, not as an academic pursuit. This study, particularly Chapter 8 and Conclusion of Part II, suggest an "intellectual" mediation of radicalism and professional careers is quite common on the Left and has been relatively understudied both within Social Work and the Sociology of the Professions. A further complicating problem suggested in the study is the movement over time of practicing social service professionals into other disciplines and into non-direct practice work from administration to teaching. It may be that one difficulty in developing a strong movement of radical social workers, is the subversive nature of careers in relation to individual's defining themselves as 'radical social workers' and radicals' own tendencies towards intellectual pursuits as noted in this study.

CHAPTER III:

METHODOLOGY

Introduction:

It has already been suggested that studies of radicals, particularly one such as this which seeks to focus on the development of ideology and consciousness over time, dictates a different methodology than used in many research studies. In order to gain access to a population of radicals, enlist their cooperation, and explore their attachments to careers, professionalism, political ideology, and political activism, several principles must be stated.

First, it is extremely unlikely that any researcher would gain access to such a population without being a trusted 'insider' in some fashion. As has been noted, because of the very real possibility of political repression or retaliation, most groups of radicals have been hostile to study by outside social scientists (the Catalyst collective resistance to surveying its own readers suggests how deeply this fear runs). For this reason, the author's past participation in the activities of the journal and personal knowledge of some of the subjects, while perhaps indicating possible bias to some outside observers, was the key factor which made this study possible. The author was able to gain a high degree of cooperation because of the personal trust

of subjects; yet even in this study, one subject refused participation because of political fears, and the author used a a strategic order of interviewing to ensure a maximum of cooperation (see below). As in any ethnographic study, the researcher's strong knowledge and sensitivity towards the population studied was a key advantage which must be weighed against any possibility of subjectivity.

Secondly, the author's unique access to this population allowed for a particularly rich research methodology in which retrospective accounts of careers could be tested for some degree of consistency. As has been suggested, because populations of radicals have not been well studied and 'official' records are not usually available on the changes in their views over time or even in their occupational positions, the researcher relied on in-depth interviews in combination with supporting documents such as resumes to construct biographies of the subjects studied. While interview data is always subject to contingent circumstance (the subject's response being a product of a particular time, place, and interaction between interviewer and subject), in this study, the researcher had several checks on the consistency of the personal accounts given. These included the author's personal recollections of subjects' political and occupational careers, documents available to the author which had been generated by subjects (written articles, memoranda, statements in the minutes), and even a tape recording of a meeting held nine years ago in which

some subjects' gave accounts of their political histories. While this research study did not generate a need for complete verification of the 'accuracy' of all past events or the attitudes expressed by subjects, the following examples suggest the unique interplay of interview data with documents and other 'objective' criteria:

> -Subjects' descriptions of how they "became politically radical" were remarkably similar for those subjects who were interviewed for this study and in the Catalyst Collective in February 1978 when a tape recording was made of their political histories. One subject described his radicalization in virtually the same terms, citing the reading of the very same article.
>
> -Subjects who had written articles, book reviews, or news items for the journal (nearly half the subjects interviewed) were asked to comment on past political perspectives and how these had changed or remained the same. Many expressed the same views, but others carefully distinguished their present beliefs from earlier opinions.
>
> -Some subjects freely provided their own documentary evidence of their lives. One subject, for example, read to this author his application material to Social Work School, a log of every book he had read for twenty years which included his comments on his political opinions, his family tree, and some of his recent personal writings.
>
> -In reviewing the minutes of the past eleven years of the Collective, many subjects' accounts of how they felt about the Collective itself, about politics, and social service careers, were extremely consistent. In other cases, the subjects' views were not available through such documents or their views differed considerably.

The strong intellectual knowledge and emotional self-consciousness and awareness of these subjects, as well as

their enthusiastic participation in the study, made possible a highly dialogical process of interviewing. Highly literate and verbal, the subjects were often as expert in the topics at hand as the author; some subjects would quote Marx, Gramsc (Bertha) Reynolds, Lenin, and (Richard) Cloward and (Lloyd) Ohlin. Highly self-reflective, the subjects would often cite psychological reasons for personal and political changes which were extremely intimate and sensitive including their own psychotherapy, past interpersonal relationships, or theories about their families of origin. Often, subjects turned to the researcher for his opinion about past events, ruminated about the theoretical possibility of being a radical in the professions or asked the interviewer what other subjects had said in their interviews.[2] Because of the tremendous interest and self-awareness about the topics on the part of the subjects, the usual 'expert-interviewer' dyad was broken down to a tremendous degree. Rather, the material generated in this study can be seen as joint theory production between the author and the subjects as they explored what seemed to be an extremely complex set of dynamics raised by individual careers in radical politics and professional employment. Indeed, as many of the quotations in this study indicate, the interpretation of the data often occurred within the interview as the author asked the subject to analyze and interpret their own comments or to reflect on what meaning past events might have for them. Some subjects indicated

they were constantly wrestling with the subjects at hand (radicalism and occupational mobility, for example) and that they welcomed the chance to talk about it; others expressed high levels of guilt and anxiety with which they wished to come to terms; and others "hadn't thought about these issues for a long time."

Finally, the issue of confidentiality and subject protection must be addressed in this study. To protect confidentiality, names in this study are fictitious; additionally workplaces, educational institutions, geographic locations, etc. are not identified. Nevertheless, subjects were apprised by the author that since the research population is not a large one and that a considerable amount of personal information would be solicited, the possibility of identification from the research study was not impossible. Interestingly, only one person, after giving nearly six months of thought to the issue, decided not to participate in the study for this reason. The other subjects readily agreed to participate. Although the author noted that extremely personal material could be kept 'off the record,' no one interviewed was uncomfortable with taping and the transcripts of interviews include a large amount of material which is quite sensitive. To the extent possible, the author has tried not only to protect identities, but to exclude material which is so highly personal as to be compromising (this was, of course, easier to do where such

sensitive material is of a family or personal nature, rather than sensitive material about political activity or worklife, which is at the core of this study's interest).

Construction of a Research Population:

The researcher began this study in the late Spring of 1986 with an attempt to inventory the relevant population for study, those individuals who had been part of the Catalyst Collective. By reviewing the mastheads of the nineteen published journals as of that date, the researcher identified forty-two names. By contacting several informants, the author found that, indeed, the journal's masthead was the best, albeit, an imperfect way of identifying Catalyst Collective members. Like other radical groups, recordkeeping was imperfect, and no documentary method of indicating an individual's joining or departing the collective exists other than the printing of their names in the journal. However, as indicated in Chapter 2, many individuals had their names listed on the masthead simply as a result of coming to a meeting or two, and having done a minimal amount of work on a particular issue. Because the author was concerned that the research population reflect those clearly attached to radicalism and the social service professions, as reflected in their participation in Catalyst, a decision was made to limit the research study to those who participated in the collective for more than a

brief period. While any decision to limit the population would be somewhat arbitrary, a two year minimum amount of participation appeared a reasonable cut-off. Eleven names appeared in only one issue of the journal, and seven others appeared in only two or three. Indeed, when informants, including those who had ostensibly served with these individuals, had little or no recollection of these people, it reinforced the decision to eliminate these people from the study. Further, two years was a clean cutoff; from analyzing the listing on the masthead, the population is divided between twenty-four people who were involved for considerably more than two years in the collective, and those eighteen who were excluded, who at most were listed for a year and usually much less.

Importantly, it should be noted the research population included twenty ex-members at the time of the study, and only four current Catalyst collective members due to the smaller size and newer membership of the 1986 collective as described in Chapter 2. The researcher was aware that such a population would reflect less the current composition of the collective than its past membership, but this was felt to be consistent with the purposes of the study as noted in Chapter 1. Because of our interest in the long term problem of maintenance of political radicalism and the effect of careers over time, it was felt to be preferable to exclude those whose attachment to both radicalism and the workforce was so recent as to possibly not reflect the study's

purposes.

The author then listed the remaining twenty-four names and located current addresses and phone numbers for them. In most cases, this information was easily available through phone books or through informants in the population.

Individuals were contacted and interviews arranged between June 1986 and February 1987. Because of the sensitivity of a study of radicals, the author used a strategic ordering of those interviewed, similar to strategies employed in organizing. The author contacted first those subjects who were best known to the author and were judged to be most likely to cooperate. This decision was reinforced since as the study went on, participants less known to the author or less certain of their desire to participate, often did ask who and how many others had already participated. By developing the interviews in such an order, most subjects were comfortable with the study, and twenty-three of the twenty-four subjects agreed to participate. The one non-participant has consistently refused participation in studies of leftists, and apologetically refused to be interviewed due to concerns about confidentiality.

The Interview Process:

Subjects expressed a combination of excitement, guilt and anxiety about the study. On the one hand, subjects were clearly interested and involved in the study. Most subjects, after receiving the author's phone call and having the purposes of the study explained, agreed to schedule interviews within a week of the initial call. Moreover, many subjects wanted to continue on after several sittings or many hours of interviewing. One subject attended the oral history (see Chapter 2) two days after giving birth to a child, insisting this was not a problem, and another subject, in New York City for a day for a relative's wedding, invited the author to the relative's house to conduct an interview prior to the wedding.

Anxiety and guilt often marked the very first comments of the subjects upon being contacted, often expressed in their own queries about whether they were sufficiently radical (see Haber and Haber, in Long, 1969, p. 290, for a similar observation about guilt and anxiety of radical professionals even in 1967):

> You mean there's still radicals left in the professions?...
>
> We haven't all become yuppies?....
>
> I don't know how active or radical I've been in my life lately...

Once contacted, interviews were arranged which were

conducted in the subjects homes, in their offices, at the author's home and even at a lake in the country. In the interest of comfort and convenience, the interviews were often accompanied by time for chatting over dinner or lunch. All interviews were tape recorded and transcriptions completed afterwards. Interviews ranged from two and one half hours to as long as six hours, and were performed in one to three sittings depending on distance and time availability to the subject. As noted, many subjects wished to continue the dialogues, and some interviews were lengthier than necessary (e.g. six hours). In only one or two cases, where geography or severe time constraints were an issue were interviews somewhat rushed (the optimal interview length seemed to be three to three and a half hours).

Demographic Profile of the Population:

Because the author was interested in noting key differences in political orientation, career trends, and professional attachment by the most obvious social stratification variables, each subject was asked at the beginning at the interview to identify his or her racial/ethnic group, age, religious background, social class of parents, and place of birth. The data collected in this manner is profiled below, as well as that of the one non-participant:

Table 3: Demographic Profile of Research Population

	Participants	Non-Participant	Total
Gender:			
Male	10	0	10
Female	13	1	14
Age:			
30-35 yrs.	7	0	7
36-40 yrs.	9	0	9
41-50 yrs.	7	1	8
Place of Birth:			
N.Y.C Area	11	1	12
Other Northeast	3	0	3
Midwest	6	0	6
South	1	0	1
West	2	0	2
Religion:			
Jewish	13	1	14
Roman Catholic	7	0	7
Protestant	3	0	3
Ethnicity:			
Irish	1	0	1
German-Irish	1	0	1
Italian-Irish	1	0	1
Polish	1	0	1
"Yankee"	2	0	2
Jewish	13	1	14
Ukrainian-Native American	1	0	1
Mexican-American	1	0	1
Norwegian-Latin American	1	0	1
Arab-American	1	0	1

Social Class of Families of Origin:			
Business& Managerial	2	0	2
Professional	10	1	11
Storekeepers/Farmers	6	0	6
Working Class	5	0	5

As is clearly indicated by the table above, the research population provides us with a group of 'baby boomers' (age range 30 to 48) heterogenous in terms of gender and social class of origin, but heavily overrepresented in Jews and New Yorkers. While this research population is not verifiably a random sample of radicals in the professions, the trends seem consistent with studies of the student movement, the New Left, and the radicals in the professions. Among the many studies noting the large number of Jews in the student movement and New Left are Astin(1968), H.Astin(1969), Clarke and Egan(1971), Everson (1970), Flacks and Neugarten (1966), Gamson et. al.(1967), Gelineau(1964), Haan et. al.(1968), Mankoff(1970), Meyer(1971), Porter(1971), Smith et. al.(1970), Solomon (1964), Sommers (1965), Useem (1970), and Watts et. al. (1969).

The overrepresentation of children of professional families in the research population is also consistent with most survey research (H.Astin, 1969; Braungart(1969); Doress(1968); Flacks(1967); Gelineau(1964); Geller(1972);

Gurin (1971); Liebert 1971); Lyonns (1965); Mankoff (1970); Meyer (1971); Miller (1970); Smith et. al. (1970); Sommers (1965); Watts et. al. (1969); Westby (1970); and Wood (1971). While many studies also found that large urban areas correlated with radicalism (Astin, 1968; H. Astin, 1969; Flacks, 1967; Gelineau, 1964; Mankoff, 1970; Paulus, 1967; Solomon, 1964; Useem, 1970), the location of the Catalyst Collective in New York City obviously greatly accounts for the regional breakdown. Despite some idiosyncrasies, it is suggested that studies of major groupings of radical professionals from the 1960s on would probably reveal similar demographic characteristics to this study. For example, groups like Health/PAC, The Radical Therapist, Science for People, New University Conference, the Union of Radical Political Economists, or the Medical Committee for Human Rights were nearly exclusively White, included a disproportionate number of Jews, of New Yorkers, and children of professional families of origins.[3]

The relevance of the demographic characteristics of the population are noted throughout the study. Some variables, such as geography or ethnicity, produced neither significant associations nor was it felt that the population was varied enough to be able to generalize from. On the other hand, significant gender, social class, religious, and age associations with types of radical orientations and occupational trends were highly salient and will be noted,

despite the difficulty of generalizing from such a small population.

Subjects' Resumes, Longitudinal and Other Quantitative Data:

Although the key methodology employed in this study was the in-depth interview, the author also developed a number of methods to present data in a quantitative fashion in the chapters that follow. While it was felt that the small size of this population of radicals prevented a conventional quantitative methodology, the author found, as the study progressed, that the wealth of data collected was often best presented in statistical charts. More importantly, few studies have been undertaken on radicals-in-the-professions and little data has been collected of a longitudinal nature on the careers of radicals. Therefore, in the interest of further research in this area, and possible generalizability to future studies, the author developed a data base on the subjects' careers.

Subjects were asked to bring a current resume to their interviews. The resumes were requested initially as a tool for the in-depth interviews (see below) to aid in tracing occupational, educational, and career progression. For example, the resume served as a reminder to subjects of dates of job changes and career changes, helping the interviewer question subjects on their political or

professional orientations at the time. Both before and during the interviews, the author asked subjects to clarify and correct the resume information; it was not assumed that a professional resume was 'accurate' in any sense, and indeed, most subjects noted alterations in dates, job duties, and other facts which were listed on their resumes.

The resumes and the educational/occupational data collected during the interviews allowed the author to develop considerable longitudinal data on the 'radical career.' Subjects jobs, including titles and actual responsibilities, educational endeavors, and other information was taken from resumes and interview information and coded for each year: e.g. Jan. 1970, subject a caseworker for welfare; January 1971, subject unemployed, etc. The volume of information collected is illustrated by the number of job positions held by the subjects in the last ten years alone (1976-1986): 109. In addition to providing the data for the following career measures presented in this study, the collection of longitudinal data was a major assistance in understanding the personal and political changes between 1965 and 1986 in these radicals' lives. Much of this material is presented in Part III of this study, where personal longitudinal data is integrated with an historical analysis of radicalism in the professions.

Longitudinal career data is presented in Chapter 7 of this study. Because some of these statistical measures were

developed in innovative and unique ways from either resumes and/or the interview information, the reader is directed to the chapter for the methodology used in constructing each measure.

Finally, in addition to the use of demographic data and occupational data, the reader will note that several types of interview generated data are quantified in chapters that follow. Again, the author felt that the development of these measures were useful for presentation and for further studies of radicals. In Chapter 4, on the nature of "becoming radical," the author has presented material gleaned from interviews on the time period when subjects were 'radicalized,' their ages, the situs of their 'radicalization' (e.g. college, high school, etc.), the nature of the process (e.g. an intellectual process, activist process, etc.), and the type of ideology subscribed to (e.g. Marxist, Feminist, etc.). In Chapter 7, the exploration of subjects' careers over the last two decades stimulated the author to develop several measures to capture the experience of subjects with social service (and other professional) careers: these include measures of high tension felt in employment; measures of "negative career events" (firings, forced quits, etc.); and measures of idealism felt upon entry to social service careers ("missionary zeal"). The reader is again directed to the these chapters for definition of these terms.

The In-Depth Interview:

Following the collection of demographic data and a review/correction of the subjects' resumes, the author conducted an in-depth interview with subjects. The interviews were structured around open ended questions, designed to maximize a range of responses which could then be analyzed and interpreted. The interviews were conceptualized as having two parts; although often there was no formal break in the conversations to alert the subjects to any division in the interview. The first part of the interview, which was usually two-thirds of the total interview, was loosely constructed as a biographical interview in which the questions raised in paragraph (1) on p. 37 were asked as follows:

> -How did subjects come to be 'politically radical?' At what point did they come to define themselves as radical? What factors led to radicalization? What organizations did they participate in? How did they define themselves when 'radicalized?'
>
> -What led the subjects to a career in the Social Services? What social factors led them to this choice--family, political beliefs, normative career goals (salary, mobility), etc.? Did subjects feel the Social Services was a political choice?
>
> -How did the subject experience socialization into a profession, in particular, the experience of education? Did they find such experience to be complementary with political goals or contradictory? At the end of graduate training, did subjects believe they could mediate the goals

of radical politics and professional careers?

-What career experiences did these subjects have, and are they currently having? Did they experience their work as rewarding, as providing autonomy, or as oppressive? What meanings were ascribed to social service positions in terms of radical politics i.e. were the positions complementary to radicalism or antagonistic to them? Why did subjects change jobs or careers? Were these political, psychological or normative reasons? How do current jobs reflect political and occupational values? What would the subject like to do in their jobs if they could? What positions do subjects anticipate entering into in the future?

The second part of the interview was conceptualized as the more analytical section, in which subjects were asked to describe their current orientations towards their work, the social service professions, professionalism, and radicalism in the professions. It was felt that the subject matter of interest in (2)-(5), p. 37 could best be addressed by analyzing the subjects' attitudes towards professionalism and radicalism, and comparing these ideological patterns with the biographical data collected. To this end, subjects were asked the following:

-Did they identify strongly with their profession (e.g. Social Work, Psychology, Labor Relations, etc.)? Why so? If not, why not?

-Did the subject subscribe to the major professional paradigms in the Social Services in their work; (e.g. psychoanalytic thought, behavioral theory, systems theory, community organizing theory, etc.)?

-Does the subject believe that there is such a thing as "radical social work?" (or in some cases, where subjects had changed careers, radical business, union work, etc.)? If so, what would it consist of? Could the subject provide examples of

radical social work?

-Subjects were provided with examples of criticism of the professions as reflecting elitism, dominance over clients, and conservativism. How did the subject respond in this period to the debates of the 1960s about professionalism? Do they believe that professionalism is conservative, that credentials are elitist or that there is a radical professionalism?

-What does the subject think of the major professional organizations in their field (e.g. professional associations, schools, etc.)? Have they been active in professional affairs? Why or why not?

-What is the subject's view of the general thrust of the professional leadership? Is it conservative or radical or liberal?

-Has the subject's politics changed at all over the years? If so, how? How would the subject now define him/her self politically?

-How active is the subject in radical political activities? In what activities is the subject active? If activity has decreased or increased, why so?

While essentially the first part of the interview was framed as biographical and the second as analytical/opinion oriented, in practice, this distinction broke down. First of all, subjects were extremely interested in talking about their careers and backgrounds. The areas of inquiry in the first part of the interview not only took far more time than the interviewer had expected, but was extremely fruitful in developing a wealth of material on the 'radical career.' Moreover, the interviewer's intention of testing the career/occupational orientation of the subject against

their political values was immediately clear to subjects. As a result, the nature of their discourse on educational training and careers, often reflected and presaged their responses to questions in the second part of the interview, and frequently anticipated further questions. As the interviewer gained more experience, he could begin to identify three patterns of discourse, as the subjects elaborated their biographies and described their attitudes towards professionalism:

> -A Non-Problematic Discourse: Despite repeated questions and probes of the interviewer which essentially attempted to 'make problematic' the mediation of radicalism and professionalism, the subject presented a biography which reflected little or no contradiction between radicalism and professionalism.
>
> -A Highly Problematic, Anxiety-Ridden Discourse: Among those subjects who were radical, but troubled by their level of activism, by their careers or by the difficulty in integrating careers and radicalism, the questions raised anxiety, and the subjects sought political, sociological and psychological explanations for events which focused on the "contradictions" of their lives.
>
> -A Defensive Posture: Among a small number of subjects who no longer defined themselves as politically radical or who were skeptical about significant elements of radical ideology, a high degree of intellectual control and rationalization was found. Usually, the subject sought to re-define radical politics as having been time-bound and a product of a past life, which the subject had come to out grow or mature away from. Unlike the subjects who were highly anxious, they established a more aggressive stance in explaining their actions.

Further, it was frequently evident from the terminology

utilized by the subject as well as the tone used throughout the interview, whether the subject was identified with the profession or was in some sense an "outsider." In discussing their jobs, for example, several subjects used a highly professionalized jargon which was consistent with a particular disciplinary rhetoric (e.g. Social Work). For example, one subject recounts a job as follows:

> This was a great experience. We did a lot of advocacy work with the children. We were able to, in spite of the agency, empower them...we used the need for the kids to have self-determination...

The use of phraseology such as "advocacy," "empowerment," and "self-determination" above are clear professional code words linking the subject to Social Work; it was then not surprising to learn when the subject was asked the questions in the second part of the interview to find that the subject strongly identified with the Social Work profession. On the other hand, some subjects early on in their interviews, rather clearly established radical politics as contradicting the daily work of social service professionalism:

> So here I found myself in this agency. And as a Marxist, the situation felt like a set-up. All of this suffering, but you have no tools to really help people. Its like the Myth of Sisyphus, constantly putting on band-aids...

Because of the clear importance of language and tone, the interviewer took notes as the subject spoke to later

question him or her about such statements, and to see if such statements were consistent with the subject's later responses. Further, in the interpretation of the data, particularly in relation to Chapter 8 which develops a typology of social meanings of professionalism for radicals, the overall tone and language of the discourse was extremely important in the author's development of categories.

Since so much of this study was based on responses to interview questions (captured in about 80 hours of taped interviews) as well as interpretation of responses, several examples of interviewing techniques will be provided. In spite of the generally high degree of self-awareness of the subjects, all interview questions are subject to misunderstanding, failure of memory or pat answers. Generally, the interviewer relied on four types of interview techniques: (a) probing and prompting questions which followed an 'open ended' question (b) supportive remarks to minimize anxiety, guilt, and defensiveness (c) verbal interpretation of remarks and (d) sharing of personal examples or theoretical material with which was familiar in order to stimulate discussion.

A frequent need was to follow broad questions with a series of probes so that the subject remained "on track" in order to both complete a chronology and respond to the focus of political/career issues. For example, in answering an open-ended question such as "how did you become radical?"

subjects usually went into accounts which were probably familiar to them and which were often told as if 'obvious.' Yet, of course, no account is obvious to the researcher. For example, the interviewer followed up with one subject as follows when she described her politicization:

> What was the thrust of this (alternative) paper that you worked on?
>
> So by 1972, you considered yourself...what? A socialist, a feminist...did you define yourself?
>
> Did the women's movement have an impact at that point?
>
> And so when you came to New York, did you get involved in political activities?

As is evident, the probing process required not only intensive 'active listening' on the part of the interviewer, but a strong knowledge of a variety of socio-political events and the years in which they occurred since it was often necessary to jog memories by providing dates for events as various as the split in S.D.S., the rise of the women's movement, the Watergate scandal, the Nicaraguan Revolution, the year certain books were published, etc.

Frequently, the subjects' accounts were laced with such self-criticism or guilt that the interviewer felt it was important to help support the individual. It is important to remember as well that these subjects were frequently involved in extremely stressful, even life-and-death decision making at work, as well as upholding themselves to

extremely high ideals and standards. Often subjects spent a great deal of time blaming themselves:

> Subject: I just kept getting burned out in these jobs. I don't know why, but I guess I just couldn't hack it in social work...
>
> Interviewer: These jobs you described, like working with burn victims, where you've described the doctors throwing up when they saw patients, these are really difficult jobs for anyone, I can sure understand (your) leaving...

The interviewer had to pay extremely close attention to the subject's dialogue which frequently skipped to different topics and also treated as 'known' events and subjective feelings which are not necessarily obvious. In reviewing one interview transcript, the author notes numerous attempts at interpretation which were presented to the subject:

> So it sounds like (graduate) school was a pretty exciting time for you...?
>
> Then ultimately you seem to be saying that this job was extremely frustrating...?
>
> You've talked about altruism a lot. Where did this come from, can you explain it more...?
>
> When you say you wanted to be a social worker, it sounds like you were clear that you wanted to be a counselor or therapist? Was that the case or did you just have a general idea of what social work was...?
>
> So you're very critical of private practice then from the way you're talking about it...?

Finally, the author had to use a wide variety of

examples, both personal and theoretical, to help subjects clarify their views. This was particularly true when the subjects' career trajectory moved away from the social services, and the interview format required adjustment. For example, with a subject who had moved into labor union work, the interviewer had to help the subject develop the contours of the debate around labor relations work:

> Interviewer: In social work, there used to be this discussion of radical practice. Do you think that in labor union work, there is a radical practice...?
>
> Subject: I'm not sure I know what you mean...
>
> Interviewer: Well, some people would see a strong role for radicals in the trade union movement. For example, the traditional Marxist view that the working class is the vanguard for change and radicals need to work within these structures to help the working class gain class consciousness. On the other hand, some New Left or post-New Left critiques such as the Critical Legal theorists or Stanley Aronowitz' <u>False Promises</u> have been extremely critical of contract unionism. Perhaps the union structure and collective bargaining are themselves instruments of domination?....

As the above suggests, the tremendous range in both the order of careers and events (i.e. there were few if any linear careers or orderly processes of radicalization or professional socialization), and the number of fields embarked upon, often presented the need to alter questions, probe further, and develop different ways to frame the discussion.

Problems and Limitations:

It should be obvious that completely orderly and 'scientific' procedures are always limited by the 'in flight' nature of reality and the tremendous variance in how language and tone can be interpreted. The author will raise several issues, among a potentially endless number, which suggest the limitations of any study.

First, time constraints and lack of available space always leaves areas of inquiry untouched, and result in incomplete information. To some degree, any documentary account which selects from hours of interviewing is arbitrary in its presentation. To give one example, the current study is framed around the issues of political radicalism and career experience. Yet many subjects noted the effects of personal relationships on activism, radicalism, and career objectives. Topics such as the influence of families, and significant others, are not developed in any but a cursory fashion in the body of the study. Even the key areas of our inquiry, such as jobs held by the subjects, could not be dealt with equally in the interviews. When a subject had held many jobs, it was often necessary to focus on what the subject considered the most important and critical ones. Where a subject clearly identified a particular experience or job as significant, the author stayed with this topic, in the belief that

subjects, who were highly committed to the interview process, were the best judges of relevance.

Secondly, definitional questions are not always resolved even at the conclusion of a study. For example, this study is focused on political radicalism and social service professionalism. But a definition of "social service" as an occupation is extremely ambiguous. One of the key findings in the study relates to just how broad the career patterns in the social services are, even in this small group, and even in a group dominated by training in social work.[4] At what point a subject could be considered to have "left the social services" is greatly subjective, and the author's attempt to deal with this issue is noted in Chapter 7. As professions struggle with their claims over a host of job titles, and official statistics are themselves ambiguous about social service workers, this issue can't be cleanly and definitely resolved.[5]

Finally, researcher bias and similarity between researcher and subject, while narrowing the social distance between interviewer and interviewee, creates many common understandings which can never be totally controlled for. For example, subjects mentioned the names of hundreds of agencies, institutions, and organizations, many of which were known to the author. An interviewer not located in New York, familiar with the social services, with labor unions, or with certain left organizations may have been disadvantaged, but may also have been able to ask more

'objective' questions about some data which the author may have assumed as "known." Further, the author took an extremely sympathetic view of these social service workers struggling with the issues of politics and worklife, while this view might not be shared by other social scientists.

Organization of the Data:

Data collected from the first part of the interviews (as well as quantitative data from resumes, demographic questions, etc.) are presented in a more or less chronological form in Part II of this study: the process of radicalization, career choice, professional socialization, and career experience of the subjects. In Chapter 8, an attempt is made to interpret the data from the second part of the interviews, as well as drawing upon the tone and language utilized throughout the interview, to develop a typology of ways in which radical political ideology and professional careers are mediated and understood by the subjects. Additionally, conclusions are drawn from the experience of the subjects as individuals which are noted to be relevant to the study of professions and to political sociology.

Because of the richness of data available from the interviews (particularly the first part in which subjects described at length their occupational and political

experience) and the fact that Part II had focused somewhat exclusively on the subjects as individuals confronting careers and the job market, Part III returns to the Catalyst collective's jointly held vision of radical action. By analyzing its goals as part of a social movement, the individual actions of the subjects at their workplaces and in the professions over the years are analyzed as part of a socio-historical process. To what extent was the research population successful in applying the precepts of 'radical social work' to their lives? By reviewing social action as distinct from individual's ideological orientation, the author notes the divergence (and sometimes confusion) between these two variables. Considerable changes in activism among individuals and in the nature of radical professionalism as a collective orientation have occurred in the twenty year period reviewed; but these are different theoretical issues than those which emerge from considering individual attachment to political ideology and professional identification.

Notes:

1. The author did not utilize certain internal documents, such as the tape recorded meeting held on 2-24-78 in which a number of subjects took part in a session in which they described how they became radical, directly in the study. It was felt that utilization of such internal records, which were not meant for publication would be inappropriate, and the material was used only for the benefit of the researcher. The author distinguishes this data from printed articles or memoranda which were written with full awareness

of an audience.

2. In the interest of protecting the confidentiality of the other subjects and not exerting undue researcher influence on the subjects' responses, these questions were not responded to during the course of the interviews. In some cases, the trends and research conclusions being drawn by the author were shared in a general way with the subject at the conclusion of the interview.

3. Although it is well documented (see Keniston, 1973, p.x; Lipset, 1976, p. 83) that the early demographic characterizations of the student movement and New Left (children of professionals, Jewish, from liberal and left parents) changed dramatically when the movement "dispersed" in the late 1960s and 1970s, no such evidence exists for the radicals in the professions. A study of radical physicians, including the Medical Committee for Human Rights (MCHR) by Resnick (see Gerstl and Jacobs, 1976) and a study of radical teachers in the New University Conference (NUC) by Pincus and Ehrlich (1987) suggests a similar social class and racial composition as noted in the text.

The similarity of demographic characteristics of radicals in the professions with the "earlier" demographic profile of New Left activists may be a function of class mobility (white, children of professionals advancing in occupations and centering their activities in the professions) and/or a function of greater political longevity and commitment to left politics (e.g. the possibility that radicalism among some elements of youth radicalized in the 1960s was shortlived). Without considerable research beyond the scope of this study (as was conducted in the 1960s on students and new leftists) these questions cannot be resolved definitively.

4. See Chapters 6 and 7 for the tremendous variety of types of positions and different careers which this population have held over the time period studied. In reference to professional training, as Chapter 5 indicates, 21 out of the 23 subjects interviewed obtained a Masters degree in Social Work ((M.S.W.) at some point, though one had a prior degree in Psychology, and a large number went on to obtain other degrees.

5. The author refers here both to the tendency of various professions to claim large numbers of adherents and to problems in the collection of occupational statistics.

In regards to the first point, it is common for the profession of Social Work, for example, in its professional literature to cite those with an M.S.W. as being "part of the profession" though they may have come to secure other degrees, work and identify as a labor leader, a grass roots organizer, a personnel director, or in numerous other work

roles. Presumably, Psychology, Education, Business, Labor Relations, and dozens of other fields would endeavor to claim those trained in their professional schools, and even those whose roles and functions relate to other disciplines.

In relation to statistics, the Bureau of Labor Statistics collects very poor data on social workers, who have historically been combined in a category entitled "social, cultural, and religious workers" including priests, recreation counselors, and museum employees as well as a vast array of different levels of social workers. See Siegal (1986) and discussion beginning in Chapter 1 of this study on the problems of defining and counting social service workers.

PART II: POLITICAL IDEOLOGY AND SOCIAL SERVICE CAREERS: THE MORAL CAREERS OF RADICALS

CHAPTER IV:

BECOMING RADICAL

In order to analyze the interaction of political ideology and professional careers, considerable data was collected on how the subjects studied came to "be radical," through retrospective accounts of this process. Additionally throughout the study, subjects were asked to describe their political beliefs. The following chapter provides a brief analysis of the process of radicalization and the major ideologies which subjects defined themselves by. Although the author has chosen an inclusive definition of "radicalism" based on the subjects' self-identifications as "radical social service workers" and as participants in the Catalyst Collective, the term "radical" will be limited to subjects' identification with a left-wing ideology, unless otherwise noted.

A. Family Backgrounds:

Generally, the family backgrounds of this research population appear to reflect previous studies of radicals done in the 1960s and 1970s: most of these subjects came from liberal Democratic families who were at least mildly in favor of civil rights, labor, and social benefit programs

(see Flacks, 1967; Keniston, 1969). At least fifteen subjects describe their parents as liberal, with four others classifying their families as "moderates" or "apolitical,"but generally Democratic Party voters. Of the remainder, one person described herself as a "red diaper baby," a daughter of Communist Party members (for a period in their lives), and three people came from conservative families.

Although most subjects spent considerable time in the interviews speculating on the influence of their family-of-origin on their later political identification, none of the individuals came to political radicalism as a simple reflection of their family's views. Typically, for those from liberal families, there were key moments and incidents of discovering family hypocrisy and failings. Naomi, for example, from a Jewish professional, liberal family, described a close relationship with her mother who did considerable volunteer work and believed in the welfare state. However, when Naomi was an adolescent, she:

> really couldn't understand her(mother). In my school, all these mothers were helping with the marches in Selma and elsewhere..I couldn't understand why she had no interest in this...the others did...

Similarly, Barbara, from a white, working class family who were strong Democrats, found that interracial dating in high school revealed her parents strong latent opposition to integration:

> Boy, was that an uproar...if I wanted to find out how my parents really felt about Blacks that was the way..and it triggered something in my mind,that something was wrong, wrong with them, wrong with my town, the way people treated the poor, the way people were persecuted for the color of their skin...

Even among the four people (in addition to the "red diaper baby") who could trace some past experience with the Left far back into their parents' lives, this was a hidden strand, which was not talked about or was even repudiated. As Richard, from a Jewish professional family, recalls:

> Well, now, years later, I can see my family as part of a Jewish Left subculture...my grandfather was a socialist...but this was never talked about in my family...its taken me years and years to unearth the hidden strains...

Ultimately, there is little evidence that the specific politics of this population's families of origins had a major impact on the ideologies of their children, although clearly they were influential in providing some of the early value clusters of their children, and, like the families of the radicals studied by Keniston and others, they often imparted idealistic and egalitarian principles. The only major cleavage between those originating from liberal families and from more conservative ones, is the clarity the latter have on the exact time of their radicalization and the degree to which radical politics has meant a more significant rupture in their lives. For example, Agnes,

whose family is conservative, and whose radicalization is recent (the 1980s), the dramatic nature of the change is apparent:

> It wasn't just becoming political..it changed my whole life, my whole world view, how I relate to people, to my job, my family...and its kind of scary...not only my family, but most of my friends are apolitical or conservative or liberal...I think because of this I stay away from labels, like socialist or Marxist, it's kind of threatening...

B. The Time and Setting of Radicalization:

In a population such as this, which ranges in age from 30 to 48 and whose connection with Catalyst begins at different years, it is not surprising to find a wide variation in the ages at which individuals 'became radical,' in the years in which they became radical, and in the influences upon subjects which they define as radicalizing them (see Table I for the time periods, ages, and settings of the subjects' radicalization).

At one extreme is Alan, who at age 13, watched a TV ad for a small socialist party (which had "equal time" airing) and promptly subscribed to their newspaper, becoming a self identified Marxist as a teenager. At the other end of the spectrum is Agnes who was 33 and a graduate student in social work when she heard a prominent radical address a class and was profoundly influenced by the speech.

However, neither Alan nor Agnes are typical. Fourteen

of the twenty-three people interviewed identified their radicalization as occurring during the 1966-1971 period when the social movements of civil rights, anti-Vietnam War protests, the New Left, and the student movement were at their height. For these subjects, the "cutting edge" issues were clear: the War, the draft, Black Power, Community Control, Welfare Rights, etc. One major difference between the "60s radicals" and those who were radicalized later (about a third of the population) is a general tendency among the former to have adopted a more clearly articulated ideological worldview than those who came to radicalism later. Howard, upon arriving at a college known for its protests in the late 1960s, recalls:

> I began going to SDS meetings...out of curiosity, at first, it was real exciting. But soon it became important to know exactly where you stood...I mean the Weathermen people were yelling about 'white skin privilege,' the Progressive Labor (Party) people about the worker-student alliance, and so forth...I knew I had to read Marx and Lenin and everyone, so I could identify what the heck was going on...where I stood...

Court, who also graduated from a college known as a hotbed of radicalism in 1966, came to a clear political identification:

> No, I was opposed to the sectarian factions, thought they were assholes, adventurists, stupid...I was in the at large SDS chapter...we were the praxis people...but in the anti-Hayden faction...I remember we read Lenin in 1967 and this was a crucial influence on me...

By contrast, many other subjects identify joining the Catalyst Collective as a first affirmation of specifically leftist politics. Rita, who joined Catalyst in 1977, remarked early in her interview that she "was always political...always humanistic." However, when the author asked her to review the years prior to 1977, Rita notes she did not identify herself as a leftist during this earlier period. Rather when she started Social Work School, a fellow student who was in already in Catalyst, told Rita "your thinking is like a Marxist." Rita was a reluctant joiner:

> My experience always started with myself and moved out...I hadn't hung out with political people...certainly never called myself a socialist or socialist-feminist...not until I was in Catalyst anyway...though I instinctively was one...there was this hitch with joining (Catalyst)....I associated groups like this with collectivism...I had never been in a group like this and it felt like it might be oppressive, I was really resistant at first...

Rosa, who is currently in her early 30s and went to college in the mid-1970s, had a similar experience. While in college, she had a boyfriend in a radical group, but she felt that"they sat around and it was alot of rhetoric. I was struggling with what does this have to do with everyday living?" Several years later, upon moving to New York and becoming a social worker in a ghetto community, Rosa felt interested when she heard about the journal: "For me, it was

hard to live in NYC and not be radical...and be a social worker...the contradictions were so obvious." Yet joining the Collective was a difficult decision, and her identification was more clearly as a feminist than as a socialist and more non-ideological than ideological:

> People would get involved in ideological arguments (in the collective)...to me, since I wasn't exactly sure what my views were anyway, I didn't know if I wanted to have discussions where we went around and talked politics...I felt "what am I going to say?," I'm getting out of here...

Of course, the discussion of "radicalization" raises the definitional question of people's self-consciousness and self-definition. An interesting example of this looseness occurs in the very different interpretations of similar political events and attitudes expressed by Mitch and Richard, both of whom are the same age and attended college at the same time. Both Mitch and Richard describe themselves as "followers" at college, trailing along during the many campus demonstrations, but trying to avoid arrest or any potential trouble to their careers. Nor were they interested in the organized Left. Yet Mitch, in response to questioning, notes that he became identified with the New Left and considered himself a "radical." Richard, in describing the same series of events, is more critical:" I wasn't a joiner nor an activist nor radical. I was too individualistic at this time." Richard considers himself to have not been a radical at that time, at least in part, it

seems, because of a more rigorous definition of radical ideology linked to Marxism, a perspective he would later come to. Retrospectively, he views his political orientation as more mainstream:"Yeh, I think I still supported McGovern in 1972!" Richard declares; separating his later viewpoint about the two capitalist parties from his earlier views.

The differential definitions of radical political ideology and different paths to self-definition will be examined below in terms of the distinction between activist/theoretical orientations, and between Marxist, Feminist, and New Left ideologies.

C. Activist versus Intellectual Orientations:

When asked to describe how they "first became radical,"subjects differed considerably in stressing a single event, a series of readings, a milieu of activism or a combination of events. While these distinctions should not be overly dichotomized, the manner of radicalization, which I have divided into intellectual, simultaneous intellectual/activist, and activist, have important ramifications for political ideology and for how subjects came to identify as professionals.

Very few of those interviewed (four) identified a purely intellectual conversion to radicalism. For these subjects, a particular article, book, speech or class

provided the "intellectual framework" for a developing belief system which had previously been present in only an inchoate form. James replied immediately to the question of how he became radical as follows:

> Yes, I remember exactly. It was in 1970 and I read an article in Monthly Review...it was on debt and the economy, I think, I can't remember the whole article now, but it made things click in my head, the way no liberal analysis had..after this I started reading everything I could get my hands on...on economics, political economy, the Left...

Like James, Alan and Richard, also Jewish males now in their late 30s/early 40s, identified reading as the key influence on their radicalization. Agnes, as noted above, was profoundly influenced by a speech in graduate school, and represents a very different background (Catholic female).

Far more typical of the population were the ten people interviewed who describe a completely activist orientation toward politics. What is most interesting in separating them not only from the purely intellectual conversions above, but from those who combined an intellectual/activist process, is their pride in not being terribly concerned with reading and political theory. This theme appears in the discussions with four subjects quoted below who were radicalized at very different times:

> (Joseph, the early 60s): I remember I was in one of the first major demonstrations against the

> bomb...I was proud to be part of it...I wasn't sophisticated, but I knew it was immoral...I've never been (an) intellectual...in fact I've always had problems with this...my politics always came from not having read, whatever, but really out of what I believe is morally correct...
>
> (Ann, mid to late 60s): But I must say (that) I'm not an intellectual in terms of politics. I really don't remember what I read...its just a strong sense of social justice that I had, people should be treated right. And I always wanted to help people my whole life, that's all I wanted...
>
> (Renee, mid to late 60s):...I always felt I wasn't an intellectual...radical politics didn't mean reading to me or engaging in some sort of intellectual pursuit, being political was <u>doing</u> things, not thinking about ideology...
>
> (Josie, late 70s): I don't know...how I came to it (politics)...it wasn't intellectual, but from my gut...the way I judge anything is whether its against my principles and whether I feel comfortable with what's going on...

In fact, an intellectual conversion to Left political ideology appears almost stigmatized, as James explains, "part of me has always (been) ashamed that it was an intellectual conversion." While the importance of activism and de-emphasis on theory certainly characterized at least parts of the New Left, an almost equal number of <u>Catalyst</u> members interviewed came to radicalism through a combination of strong engagement with a social movement and reading (either in study groups or in the classroom or through independent reading stimulated by their political interests). And contrary to characterizations of the 1960s as dominated by "mindless activism," this group (eight of the nine) is more consistently composed of those

radicalized in the late 1960s/early 1970s than the other cohorts (see Table 5). In addition to Howard, quoted above, the quotes below suggest a strong interaction between social movements and theoretical reading:

> Bea (radicalized in senior yr. of high school, the late 60s): I got very involved with (a radical film collective)...all of a sudden I was organizing steelworkers around anti-war issues, around labor stuff, new chapters of women's liberation groups, taking films everywhere and organizing people...there were also political study groups and I started reading everything...took a course in an alternative school, I think it was called "Anarchism" or something...
>
> Jacqueline (radicalized as a VISTA worker after college, circa 1970): Yeh we were organizing Latinos around community issues, the grape boycott, everything...participated in trying to organize a union for VISTA workers...I met this guy, he was in or around the CP (Communist Party) and I started going to a study group...used to read everything that came into alternate press...I really got a political education...
>
> Sam (radicalized while working at City job, circa 1970): There was so much happening at the time, we went to all the demonstrations, active with the union, and there were a lot of city employees who were on the Left...they started reaching out to me, and they got me to join a few study groups. Yeh I read everything in those years, but I was ready for it, I was really disillusioned with liberalism by this time...

While the distinctions should not be overdrawn (since most of the "activists" did eventually come to theoretical reading or thinking at a later time) the discourses above point to interesting cleavages. Those who cite intellectual

conversions or a combination of involvement with social movements with study are more likely to be male, radicalized in the 1966-1971 period, and be strongly influenced by Marxism than the purely activist radicals (see Table II). Further, as will be discussed, the activist orientation is closely allied with the "missionary zeal" towards social service which allowed some of the subjects to strongly identify with Social Work at different points in their careers. In a similar vein, even future occupational interests can be related to this split; the activists are more likely to be administrators today, and those who combined activist/intellectual orientations are more likely to be in "movement" or "movement like" services (e.g. labor unions). Academics, or those who are heading in that direction, tend to have a combination of activist/intellectual orientations.

4. Ideological Orientations of the Subjects:

Identifying the dominant ideological orientations of the research population as individuals turned out to be a far more difficult task than envisioned by the author. This, in spite of the fact, that all of those interviewed were collective members of a socialist organization for at least two years, and that interviewees were being encouraged to reflect retrospectively about their views (holding the present harmless in a sense). Nearly all those interviewed

questioned the relevancy of "labels." Typical of the many comments were Bea's:

> I don't know what I am. I've never been comfortable with any of these labels....I suppose my thinking is more socialist-feminist at this point...although I still don't completely know. I've never been sure what it means to be a socialist...I get involved in politics...but not heavily into political distinctions...I judge political events by actions rather than (the) theoretical...

At times, it was difficult for the interviewer to determine whether these comments reflected genuine unclarity, discomfort with Left "sectarianism" which certainly characterized the subjects, uncertainty about the interviewer's judgements or a discomfort reflective of the journal's own battle over political labels (see Chapter 2). For some people, ideological stances came out by a process of elimination in which the individual ruminated until arriving at something comfortable:

> (Jacqueline): My politics have gotten more certain. Though I don't like the label of socialist (pause) I'm not a social democrat (pause) we need a revolution (pause)..but I'm not comfortable with Communist or Marxist, because (I'm) not sure what alternative structure (I) would like to see, what would work in the US (pause) (I'm) skeptical of the 'heavy lefties'(pause) they may just re-create a bureaucracy (pause) yet I'm suspicious of those anti-Soviet people (pause) I feel more committed to the fact that the system doesn't work...you know the stages of the collapse of capitalism. It becomes clearer that Marx made a lot of sense...

The fact that the author had to spend considerable time

inferring ideology from the lengthy dialogues with most subjects (this is not to suggest there weren't people, about six to eight, who easily self-labelled themselves), should suggest the fluidity and "in flight" nature of ideology. Any classification is subject to interpretation and re-interpretation by the interviewer and interviewee, and is time and place bound. In fact, since it is one of the key points of this study is to view "radicalism" not as a frozen category, but as a dynamic, ever changing orientation, with a heavy dependence on attachment to particular social movements, the author shares in many ways the subjects' reluctance to classify themselves. Nevertheless, political identification is quite possible through a close content analysis of the interviews and is important in understanding the interaction of ideology and careers for purposes of this study.

Organizationally, the subjects were not strong "joiners" of classically defined political parties. Only two subjects, Alan and Howard, were ever members of Marxist-Leninist parties, with the latter for only a year. Two other subjects, James and Court, were associated for a considerable amount of time with the New American Movement(NAM), with one (James) moving relatively briefly into the merged Democratic Socialists of America (DSA) in the early 1980s. Two subjects, Joseph and George, were part of a brief effort at "pre-party formation" in the mid-1970s,

the National Interim Committee for a Mass Party of the People (NIC/PAC). All those so involved were males, five of six were Jewish, and five of six are now in their forties (average age of these people is 42 compared to 36 for the whole population). As for the two-party system, only one person, George, displayed any involvement in the major parties (local activism in the Democratic Party), although two people mentioned support for individual candidates in campaigns. Again, perhaps because the median age of the population is only 36, there is less involvement than expected in 1960s groups like Students for Democratic Society (SDS), with only six people mentioning this. A number of subjects note that SDS was not present at their campus or had split apart already when they became politically active. A few people, like Richard and Jacqueline, knew of SDS, but felt it was "elitist" or "condescending" and never joined.

There is a slightly greater attachment to movement groups of the 1970s and 1980s which are less centralized and formalized in membership and commitment: several subjects were (or are) involved in women's organizations (like CARASA), Central American and other solidarity groups (like CISPES), anti-nuclear organizations, student groups, study groups of various sorts, gay and lesbian organizations, labor support groups, and religious Left projects.

Generally, however, the subjects had a low level of affiliation except for the radicals-in-the-professions

movement. In addition to Catalyst, a third of the population was involved in RASSW, several in the 1960's Social Workers Action for Welfare Rights (SWAWR), several in the newly formed radical Bertha C. Reynolds Society (BCRS), one in radical planning groups (the Urban Underground, the Planners Network), several in New England left social service groups (such as URHSW, the Union of Radical Human Service Workers, and CBHN, the Coalition for Basic Human Needs), and two in radical psychologist groups (such as SPSSI, the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues). The strong involvement of this group with radical professional movements, and relatively low level of involvement with extra-professional radical groups suggests the nature of the radicals-in-the-professions groups, as a social movement in its own right.

In an effort to assess the ideological orientations of subjects, interviewees' self definitions and labels and reported past memberships were analyzed as well as inferences made from the statements on other subjects of the interview. Despite the reluctance to self-label and the imprecision of such labels, both Marxism and Feminism were overwhelmingly influential ideologies for the majority of the research population. Among those influenced by Marxism (thirteen), there was considerable questioning and ruminating about various aspects of what the subjects saw as Marxist precepts: the working class as agency for change;

the question of the vanguard party; the ultimate collapse of capitalism, etc. However, interestingly there was no contemporary movement away from a general identification with Marxism, despite specific questions. One subject, Monica, who at 30 was the youngest person interviewed, expressed a movement from Feminism to Marxism:

> Interviewer: Would you say your politics have changed at all since you began to identify as a radical?
>
> Monica: No, they haven't...except I used to say I was a Feminist (pause) now I'm more of a Marxist (pause) I used to see issues more of patriarchal control, now (I) see economics and money as kinda the bottom line...and, of course, this incorporates sexual oppression as well...

Sam, in a series of ruminations also generally returns to a Marxist view:

> Interviewer: What do you think now of what you were studying (in Left study groups)?
>
> Sam: Definitely there was truth in it. I became an anti-capitalist certainly and I'm a socialist (pause) I'm not sure if I'm a Marxist or Leninist anymore (pause) I don't know whether capitalism will destroy itself without a revolutionary vanguard, but I'm not really involved with that (pause) I would like to think that change would occur peacefully (pause) but probably not...I still have the Leninist leanings...

Those heavily influenced by Marxism, even with the addition of Feminist influences (about three quarters of the thirteen add "Marxist-Feminist" or suggest strong Feminist leanings) tend to be more male than the other orientations,

and tend to be over 35.

Feminism appeared to be the other major theoretical orientation of the population from self-labelling. At least thirteen subjects would be defined this way (about eight overlapping with Marxism). Feminism tended to provide a theoretical framework for the younger members of the population (under 35) many of whom joined Catalyst after its inception. For example:

> (Josie, age 32): I guess I got political when I went to college..I got very involved in women's issues. I took some very militant women's rights courses...it was more of a personal thing...at 15 I wasn't very affected by reading Feminist stuff, but at 19 I was...I began to label my problems and what I saw as part of sexism...
>
> (Brenda, age 34): Interviewer: How did you identify at this time, politically? (in college)
>
> Brenda: I always considered myself a Feminist (pause) it came early on (pause) I guess a reaction to the traditional structure...I read Feminist literature...took a lot of women's studies courses...

Like Marxism, there is little or no attrition from this basic belief system, although specific tenets of past political perspectives were sometimes questioned. Like many subjects, Barbara, referring to her Marxism and Feminism, sees it as a life long commitment:

> (My politics) are not just something I think and feel. I live it. I don't know how to live another way. Its weird!...I can't understand how other people can become 'non-political.' Sure I get tired and want to take time or go away for a year. But I can't ever see saying 'that was a phase in

my life' or 'those were my political days'...

However, as suggested earlier, despite the adaptation of Feminist theory by some of men in the population and some of the older women, Feminism as an all embracing theoretical construct is held by far more women than men and more by the younger subjects than the older ones.

A third major influence on the population was the New Left. In contrast to Marxism and Feminism, the precepts of the New Left, at least currently, appear more indeterminate or subjective than Marxism or Feminism (even with the many variants of the latter theories). Indeed no one identified as a "New Leftist." However, the subjects in their beliefs in the poor and minorities (also students and other parts of the 'periphery') being a vanguard for change; in decentralized authority and local control; and in participatory democracy and skepticism about Leninist parties (to name but a few ideas) reflect the New Left movements of the 1960s (see Sale, 1974, pp. 3-11 for a good description of the contributions of the New Left). Those who were profoundly influenced by the New Left include nearly two-thirds of the population studied (fifteen), and, of course, the New Left was the movement from which 'radical professionals' as a movement arose.

What makes New Left ideology difficult to analyze in the 1980s is its superordination on the one hand by Marxism and Feminism, and, on the other hand, a detachment from past

radicalism by some former New Leftists. This tendency is present in the population studied. For example, when the fifteen people who were active and influenced by the New Left are analyzed with regard to current ideology, only four people remain who were not more clearly identified with Marxism or Feminism. Six subjects adhere to Marxist-Feminist views, four to Marxism and one to Feminism. Interestingly, the remaining four people are currently the least self-consciously "on the Left" in this population. The four includes George, who was the only person interviewed to clearly repudiate his past politics and <u>did not</u> identify as a radical; Mitch, who describes himself as primarily a "left liberal" throughout his adult life; and Joseph and Ann, whose orientations are vague but suggest they are a little more "conservative" now.

Since a detailed study of Marxist, Feminist or New Left ideology <u>per se</u> is beyond the scope of this study, and, as the author suggests exploring the experience of this cohort of radical social service workers (whether Marxist or Feminist or left-liberal) as a social movement, the key point of the above discussion was to note that <u>specific</u> ideology is certainly <u>one variable</u> in both the mediation of professionalism and radicalism on an individual level, and in its construction as a social movement. As will be explored, those subjects who have had a strong socialization to Marxism will have a relatively more difficult time

identifying with Social Work and Human Services professions or in finding the two movements to be complementary (radicalism and human services); those with more of a Feminist socialization will experience somewhat less tension. Further, the Marxist orientation toward the working class as the vanguard for social change has provided more support to the professional-as-worker strategy for radical social workers and other professionals, and to an educational role vis a vis clients and students. The Feminist and New Left perspectives, while not counterposed to the above, find their influences more in orientations toward "radical practice" in the human service professions: i.e. the use of therapy and other direct practice techniques to raise consciousness on the part of clients and of community organizing techniques to organize clients for community and personal empowerment. Further, to the extent the ideologies can be separated, emphasis on different client populations (the working class, the poor, women, etc.) for social services and political organizing would be suggested by these ideologies.

TABLE 4:

TIME, AGE, AND SETTINGS OF RADICALIZATION:

A. Time period of Radicalization:

Years	Subjects
1950s	1
1966-69	10
1970-72	4
1974-75	3
1978-79	3
1983-84	2

B. Age of Subjects at Time of Radicalization:

Age	Subjects	
Under 20 yrs. old	7	
21-24 yrs.	8	
25-29 yrs.	5	
Over 30	3	(high=33)

C. Setting of Radicalization:

Place	Subjects
Jr. High School	2
High School	3
College	6
Graduate School	5
Social Service Employment	5
pre-grad school	(1)
post-grad school	(4)
Other Employment	2
pre-grad school	(2)

TABLE 5:

TYPE OF RADICALIZATION OF SUBJECTS:

Type	Number of Subjects
Intellectual only	4
Intellectual/Activist	9
Activist	10

Gender and Manner of Radicalization

	Male	Female
Intellectual only	3	1
Intellectual/Activist	4	5
Activist	3	7

Time Period and Type of Radicalization

	pre-1966	1966-71	post-1974
Intellectual only	1	1	2
Intellectual/Activist	_	8	1
Activist	_	5	5

Relationship of Influential Ideologies and the Type of Radicalization(*)

	Marxist	Feminist	New Left
Intellectual only	3	2	1
Intellectual/Activist	8	5	7
Activist	2	5	5

(*): Since these ideological influences are not mutually exclusive, the totals across exceed the number of people in each category. Because many of the activists display less influence of ideology in general than the intellectual/activists, this explains the total of twelve(for ten people) in the third column across as

opposed to twenty (for nine people) for the intellectual/activists.

Chapter V:

Occupational Choice and Professional Socialization: A Radical Profession?

One of the key areas of interest of this study is the association between radical political ideology and the choice of a social service career and occupational training and socialization. Most research conducted on radicals in the 1960s found a strong link between majoring in social science and humanities and political radicalism (Auger, et. al., 1969; Feldman and Newcomb, 1969; Gamson et. al., 1967; Geller, 1972; Haan, 1969; Heist, 1965; Liebert, 1971; Mankoff, 1970; Solomon, 1964; Sommers, 1965). The evidence of strong radicalism among social workers could suggest a self-selection process in which career choice is reflective of prior socialization (see Lipset, 1976, p.82 on studies of career choice). On the other hand, it is possible that professional training itself has a radicalizing influence. Both these views would suggest that the social service professions can be viewed in some sense as "a radical profession" by new initiates. On the other hand, Social Service work has often been criticized by leftists themselves as merely a "bandaid" approach to social problems (see Withorn, 1984) and professionalization has been seen as having a conservatizing influence (on Social Work School, see, for example, Pearson in Bailey & Brake, (1975), pp. 13-

45; Cloward and Piven (1977); Monchek, (1979).

The following chapter explores through the analysis of subjects' retrospective accounts how subjects came to choose a career in the social services and how they experienced their initial training in Social Work, Psychology or other human service professions. In addition to providing valuable empirical data in its own right, this material can assist us in suggesting important changes over time in the careers of these radicals.

A. Career Choice: Missionary Zeal and Upward Mobility:

In analyzing the responses to the interviewer's questions about what led subjects to choosing Social Service work, two major discourses can be identified: a discourse about the "mission" of Social Work or counseling or Psychology, often interwoven with a political mission; and a discourse about upward mobility in which female subjects and working class subjects, in particular, describe this career choice as a natural choice to achieve a paid career and social status. For a few subjects, entering professional social service work was an attempt to re-gain some mobility and professional attachment having in the 1960s or early 1970s rejected other more prestigious professions or occupations.

The author found that the idealistic "missionary zeal" which has characterized at least some periods in the history

of Social Work and at least substantial number of new recruits to Human Service work, was apparent among the vast majority of the research population. Typical of the comments were:

> (Rosalind): One becomes a social worker to do good (pause) it's a way of serving, it's a way of understanding the human condition and acting on it and changing it and I needed to do that, you know...
>
> (Interviewer): So this was the case in college?...
>
> (Rosalind): No, it goes back to what I described when I was nine years old (pause) understanding that this (poverty) was wrong, thought of it as being evil that people should suffer this way...I was going to be a good person when I grew up and I was going to help people.
>
> (Bea):...and I thought that if I wanted to change the world, which, of course, I wanted to do, that I would have to be a social worker!
>
> (Richard): I always felt, ironically, that through Psychology I could do that (change the system) I could help educate or change people in some way (pause) I wasn't about to storm barricades or even be an organizer at that point (so) through therapy and education in a general sense (that) would be my role...
>
> (Ann):(In high school)I wanted to save the world...I thought about the Peace Corps. That was the ideal world. But (failing that) I could work with children and help save the world...

Analyzing whether this "save the world" orientation is "political" is complex, raising the interlocking issues of humanitarianism and political action; the historical tie between women's caretaking role and human services (the strongest "missionary" orientation was among women);

religious overtones to the "mission" (notably almost all the Roman Catholics in the population are this group); upward mobility goals (all subjects from working class backgrounds compared to professional, business, and small shopkeeper families displayed strong zeal; while only half of those from professional/business families do); and family socialization roles (notably a number of these subjects who were from professional families had parents who were psychiatrists, psychologists or social workers).

In an attempt to explore this complex dynamic, the author analyzes the self-consciousness of the "missionaries" as well as contrasts these subjects to those who displayed less "missionary zeal" or who found the social service professions more problematic.

Six of the fourteen people describing their choice as a "mission" were not self-consciously leftist upon making the choice of careers, primarily in their early twenties. For these subjects, Human Services was a value choice, a means of "doing good" and getting paid which involved people and not material concerns or profit:

> (Rita): I always had a sense of honesty and fairness...and people would tell me their problems (laughs) sometimes I feel like I was a social worker from (the) time I was five...and then when I worked there (as a low level executive in training in a department store) it hit me, this wasn't productive work...if you have to spend all this time in a job, it should be meaningful to you...and I began to have strong feelings about things that operated for profit (pause) I didn't like the way the women were treated (at the

department store)...

(Brenda): I think my career and my beliefs stem from my Catholic background, some of the values that are implicit in there, although certainly (you) run into a lot of contradictions...but still the right to work, the equality of all people, civil rights, there all in there...

Among the six subjects, the predominant identifiable ideology (if any) at the time of their career choice of social service Work was Feminism. In the process of professionalization, however, many of these individuals would come to Marxist or socialist perspectives.

Interestingly, what was considered the problematic nature of Social Work/Human Service for a few subjects at this point, would strike at a later point in the careers of these "missionaries":

(Richard, on his first job in an agency): I was naive, I thought you could make all these changes in a poverty area...I looked out and began to feel I was set up, the system was awful, I felt duped (pause) There was really so little I could do...

(Rosalind, on becoming a leftist in graduate school): I didn't experience the tensions between social change and social control that, you know, social work has...until graduate school and then my Marxist, intellectual friends in the straight disciplines all made me feel shitty...they didn't approve of my being a social worker...

The eight people who identified themselves as leftist upon embarking on professional training and who displayed a "missionary zeal" about social service work echo many of the same themes as subjects above. However, they differ in

selecting Community Organization as a particular way to get paid for "doing radical work" rather than being attracted to counseling (seven of these eight majored in Community Organization, while five of the other six were in social casework or psychology). Further these subjects were all strongly influenced by the New Left; while there is some influence of Marxism and Feminism, for the most part, these ideological attachments would develop with more coherence after subjects actually entered Social Service work.

Jacqueline, for example, had worked as a VISTA volunteer and on an alternative paper prior to deciding on a career in Social Work. She wanted to earn more money and have a "more meaningful job" than her secretarial position afforded. While she considered other professions, the possibility of organizing attracted her:

> (I) thought there would be some way of combining my political beliefs with a job...figured I could do community organizing that I'd get paid for, instead of earning $25 a week like I did working (as non-degreed organizer)...I had this image of Social Work trying to meet people's needs and educate people too (pause) like the Black Panther Party was doing...

For Joseph, the decision to go to Social Work School was overtly political, and helped him overcome difficulties with school and career which he attributes to psychological issues. Earlier in his life, Joseph had dropped out of college, spent much of the 1960s as a street worker with

gangs and then as an owner of a small building rehab business. Becoming "political" around 1970 influenced him to enroll in a program which combined completing his undergraduate degree with a Masters in Social Work:

> My decision was totally wrapped up with my politics (pause) it helped me get the credential and become a professional...I knew exactly what I wanted to do: organize the white working class. No one else was doing it at that time. This goal kept me there (in school) and helped me overcome my inferiority complex...

A number of individuals identified their choice of majors as a critical barometer of their politics; associating community organization with radicalism, and social casework or groupwork or psychology with conservatism:

> (Renee):I got to school still not knowing what I would do...and then at Orientation, there was this faculty member talking about Community Organization (Pause) It sounded exciting (and) they were talking the language I had come to understand from my involvement in (organizing as a student in an Hispanic community).You know,they talked about the 'power structure,' 'the power structure,' you have to research the power structure. It sounded activist and militant and the casework people were boring. I switched to being Community Organizing (major)...

In contrast to the "missionaries," at least four people, saw their own entry into the professions as problematic. This group included some of those most socialized to Marxism through prior affiliation with

leftist parties. Further, for three of these individuals who are now in their forties and had worked in various welfare departments, their own occupational experience made them question how "radical" the goals of Social Work could be:

> (James):I saw my job (at welfare) as social control more than anything else, I guess...and Community Organization, this wasn't real at welfare...you discovered it meant being little more than a spy, telling (management) what clients were thinking so they could do something about it.
>
> (Alan): I knew zip about social work. I figured it was the same stuff that we did in welfare with big words...I had no conception that this was political,(but) I thought at a minimum, this was a way out of the welfare department which I hated...
>
> (Interviewer): Did you consider community organizing?
>
> (Alan): No, it never impressed me. It seemed to be only about a very narrow type of reformist politics that I had laughed at (previously)...

Court questions the basic precept of many of the "missionary" activists in suggesting strong limits to political compatibility between work in capitalist society and radical politics:

> A lot of people get burned out because they expect too much!...I never felt that my jobs would be anything but screwed up in a political sense...It depends what you're hoping for. Naturally if your image of yourself is that you're going to get paid a fair salary for undermining (the)capitalist society, then you're doomed to disappointment. I always thought that people who imagined that were just misinformed.

Mitch recognized in going into Social Work that it was

not the most radical choice, but he felt it was complementary with his politics, which he describes as "left-liberal:"

> I was aware of the critique of Social Work. I was aware that by choosing Social Work (I) was making a choice to go in a less radical direction...But I felt it was appropriate to me...I wasn't going to turn myself into a heavy radical and I didn't approach life with a Marxist analysis, revolution wasn't imminent...and unless you went to Social Work (School) to be a political organizer (pause) but, in that case, why bother getting a Masters degree in Social Work?...

When subjects who sought to combine leftist political views with careers in the Human Services (particularly community organization) are compared with others interviewed, the time bounded nature of this association is clear. All eight of these subjects entered graduate school between 1972 and 1975, having been strongly influenced by the New Left and the influences of anti-poverty, VISTA, and welfare rights organizing. The remaining subjects entered the professions with a less explicit political orientation and were <u>then</u> socialized into radical politics; or were radical upon entering the professions, but viewed the professions with more cynicism or as more problematical for a radical.

Both empirical studies of social workers (see Stamm, 1969, pp. 34-45) and literature in the Sociology of Work and Occupations (see Etzioni, 1969; Toren, 1971), would suggest that Social Work and other Human Service professions have

historically provided a bounded upward mobility for women excluded from higher status professions and business, as well as upward mobility for males from working class and minority families (the latter being particularly true since the 1960s). Indeed, considerable support for th[illegible] is suggested in this population. Overwhelmingly, the female subjects felt limited to what Etzioni classified as the "semi-professions." Jacqueline, upon saving some money to go to school, felt her choice to be Social Work or Library School; Rosalind began college, having come from a working class background, with nursing, teaching or social work as her career possibilities; Monica felt her choice was between Special Education and Social Work; and Agnes initially went to college to be a nurse, but upon deciding that she didn't have the "mechanical hands-on" skills to do nursing decided to try human service work. For Rita, who worked in retail; Rosalind, as a hotel clerk; Agnes, as a unit clerk in a hospital; and Brenda, as a child care worker, there is a strong sense of achievement in having earned degrees in Social Work or related fields.

The opportunity for mobility is significant as well for men from the lower social economic classes. Joseph, whose parents were garment workers and who had trouble in college, speaks with great esteem for the social workers who first hired him as a non-professional. When he was admitted back to college in a joint program with a M.S. in Social Work, he

says,"I was in tears when they admitted me. (I) couldn't believe (that) someone believed in me, and would offer me this opportunity." Sam, from a farm family, was able to take advantage of what had been a generous tuition reimbursement program in the public sector in the 1960s to go to graduate schools:

> I had no money saved up after three years in New York City. But the welfare scholarships were available to go to Social Work School. At full salary. I didn't think I would even get in (to Social Work School),(it) was almost a lark, but I was accepted...and I don't know, I was very vague about what Social Work even was...

A large number of subjects combined the "missionary zeal" discussed above with the practical virtues of mobility and career achievement. While this will be discussed in greater length in this study, the point to be made here is not that these factors are in any way mutually exclusive. Rather, upward mobility as a <u>prime motivation</u>, rather than in combination with political zeal, appears to characterize people like Sam and George, who entered the human services prior to the late 1960s, and those like Rosa and Agnes who entered the professions in the late 1970s or the 1980s. This would again buttress the suggestion that the simultaneous quest for paid radical work in a "radical profession" was historically bounded. The conflicts that appear for subjects once in paid employment (see Chapters 6-8) also suggests that the mediation between mobility goals and political and

idealistic motivations are most possible at the early stages of a career.

A slightly different type of mobility is illustrated by a number of subjects who had rejected the mobility drives of their family and deferred other careers at an earlier point in their lives. This was particularly the case with James, Court, and Alan, all of whom had a strong history of Marxist involvement, graduation from elite schools, and deferral of other careers. James, from a very comfortable professional family, left Law School after a year, a fact he attributes to rebellion against his family and a choice which he felt was conducive to the times (late 60s). Court, who attended the same Ivy League School as James, and is from a family of professors, was a pre-law student, but decided not to pursue law school. Alan had graduated from an elite school and spent three years in a doctoral program in Philosophy before dropping out. All three found themselves in welfare departments (where it was easy to obtain a position with a B.A. in the late 1960s) and all became somewhat reluctant social workers and graduate students. These men were all influenced by wives and friends to go back to school. However, they note in retrospect that it was "probably inevitable" that they would return to professional status. Indeed, Alan went on to obtain a Ph.D., and Court and James are presently completing their doctorates.

To different degrees, two others, Mitch and Howard, came to Social Work careers in a similar way. Mitch had

attended an elite school and taken a job after school with plans to become a lawyer. At this job, he was more influenced toward Social Work. But since Mitch was independently wealthy, the lack of prestige and income in Social Work was not as salient an issue for him as for the others, and his acceptance at an Ivy League graduate school in Social Work represented a partial recovery of mobility. Howard, from a more working class family, attended an Ivy league School, first as pre-law and then with the goal of getting an academic Ph.D. For a variety of personal and political reasons, Howard decided to forego both careers and took a job in a facility for the mentally retarded which led him to later enter Social Work. When asked why he chose an Ivy League graduate School of Social Work, he suggests the idea of status recovery:

> Well, it's a good question. I guess I knew its reputation and prestige and wanted that at some level. I had after all declined admission to (another Ivy League school in History) two years before, and, my mother, I don't think ever forgave me. I guess I was trying to recover some prestige in a lower status profession...

While any occupational choice involves complex motivations, "missionary" zeal and the desire for upward mobility were combined for most subjects at the point of choosing human service careers. Differing balances of idealism with career goals suggest three possible orientations: pure "missionaries," whose 'save the world'

orientation is pre-political, and often combined with strong career aspirations; political missionaries, who are self-consciously leftists upon choosing the human services, usually majoring in community organization (combining the goal of radical politics with paid work);and careerists,some of whom are also leftists, but whose primary attraction to the social services is career mobility, often arriving fortuitously in the professions through the availability of scholarships and employment benefits such as leaves of absence.

B. Professional Training:

Within the literature of the sociology of work and occupations, the definition of what constitutes a "profession" has generally been linked to the socialization process in higher education where initiates are presumably invested with certain professional norms and acculturated into a unique subculture distinguishing professionals from others (see Parsons, 1951; Merton, 1957, Goode, 1960). These norms are hardly radical, but in Merton's terms "neutral, objective, disinterested...values inherent in the scientific process" (Merton, 1949). Yet when professional training is addressed as an aspect of liberal arts education, theorists have suggested that certain social factors such as freedom from occupational commitment, the aggregation of large

numbers of "roleless" youth, and the influence of a liberal to left faculty is conducive to the development of radical student movements (Lipset, 1976). Some studies have indicated that the period of professional training can indeed be a period of significant radicalization (see Maxmen, 1971 on physicians; Todres, 1978, on social work students). Because of these conflicting views, the author analyzed the population's experience with professional training to discover if indeed these radicals were socialized to professional norms and ideology in school and whether radicals adopted the same norms and values of professionalism which have been considered politically conservative in nature.

This author examines the retrospective accounts of subjects of their first socialization experience to the Human Service professions, primarily in Schools of Social Work.[1] Subjects were questioned at some length about their experience of graduate school, not only of classes and field training, but about professional school as a transmitter of values and culture; i.e. what school was like as a social and political experience for them.

Significantly, graduate professional education had an almost universally politicizing effect. While at graduate school, those subjects who had not identified as leftists at earlier points began to identify themselves as such. For many subjects who had already defined themselves as

politically leftist, graduate school provided the possibility of increased political activism, theoretical education, and commitment. Secondly, while some subjects were critical of their education and certain values and norms imparted, professional socialization appears to have primarily resulted in greater commitment to both Social Service professionalism and radicalism. The author will note that the possibility of mediating these two ideologies appeared greatest for radicals upon completing professional training i.e. increasing the "missionary zeal" which was described above.

Institutions such as Schools of Social Work or other graduate institutions were not in themselves viewed as terribly hospitable to radical political ideology. Not surprisingly, most schools of Social Work, provided an environment in which liberal values and political orientations were taught and inculcated. Rather than being simple products of professional socialization and inculcation of norms, subjects defined their political ideologies and professional roles in opposition to prevailing school culture. As studies of student activism would suggest, they were aided in this process by the availability of a limited number of radical role models (including professors), by the time for intellectual activity and availability of theoretical reading which were politically radical, and by the presence on campus of large aggregates of students which provided opportunities for the

existence of oppositional student subcultures.

Radical professors and fellow students were clearly the most important influences on those who came to define themselves as leftist in professional schools. George, for example, came to a School of Social Work in the mid-1960s, with an interest in groupwork he had gained from years of camp experience, but he had not defined himself politically. George remembers his school as not very political in his years; "it was before relevancy" he quips. However, a well known radical professor who taught a required course was influential. It was the very beginning of welfare rights organizing, and the professor urged the class to become involved in the upcoming demonstrations for welfare recipients:

> It was very exciting. Before I knew it, I was getting arrested, blocking the doors of the welfare center...Somehow came to feel...naively I guess...that we were in the midst of this revolution...but it was greatly (professor) who was active in the school, not too many others...

For Richard, who enrolled in a Masters program in Psychology in the early 1970s, an intellectual perspective was particularly important for him to find a place in the field. While in college, he was very influenced by a professor who was critical of mainstream Psychology and was influenced by Thomas Szasz and gestalt therapy perspectives. However, Richard did not define himself as a radical or leftist. In graduate school, a course on "Critical Theory"

which critiqued the social sciences and psychology, was a key influence in leading him to Marxism:

> I had been troubled with Psychology, it was too positivistic, too individualist, it didn't take into account enough of the social and political context of things, but I really had no intellectual framework...then this course put it into perspective...to arrive at a Marxist perspective. I needed that and to read everything I could. I needed justifications and reasons for everything and finally I began to get it...

But Richard's developing Marxist viewpoint had little reinforcement from others in his program:

> I was a deviant within academic Psychology...this was a very unpopular position there. I questioned everything...particularly traditional research and quantitative methodology and this was not appreciated.

Brenda, who entered Social Work School in the late 1970s, with strong missionary idealism, but not identified with leftist politics, found her own education extremely conservative:

> Oh, it was difficult! The politics were real conservative, psychoanalytic orientation that I struggled with the whole time I was there. The majority of the teachers just looked at the intrapsychic...and I found it kind of blaming-the-victim stuff...maybe it was my Feminism, but I found myself always arguing against the Freudian stuff...it seemed like all you were doing was sitting down and chatting with people on a weekly basis and if they didn't show up, then it was classified as resistance...

Brenda began to feel strongly that this curriculum and atmosphere was not what she went into Social Work for. She began to become active with some other students in school politics and met two professors who were known as radicals. Eventually they developed a seminar which focused on how "Social Work maintains the system." Brenda defined her developing radical view of Social Work in opposition to many of her classmates:

> It was only a small number of us. Most people at (college) were not particularly concerned with this (politics of social work)...they were clinically oriented...I chose to hang out with different students, not the majority of them who wanted a degree so they could hang out a shingle...(they) were not particularly interested in being an agent of change, which was one of the reasons I went into Social Work School to begin with...

Agnes, who came to Social Work School in the early 1980s, and was not particularly political or missionary, found that radicalism allowed her to overcome an feelings of extreme alienation and frustration she had felt in her first year of school:

> I had figured I had to go to grad school to really learn it...to do social work. Wrong! (Laughs)...the first year was awful...I don't know why maybe my expectations were too high...but the classes weren't good...I was confused (pause) I thought 'what is this?' 'What are these people doing?' They don't listen. This stuff is not what the real world is about. It lacked reality. And I didn't like the people...

Later that year, Agnes took a course with a radical professor, and heard the speech of another noted radical social worker. Not only did the course lead her to discover "there was something other than a liberal or conservative view" about the world, but it led her to develop in her second year a study group of radical caseworkers. Interestingly, the conversion to a radical ideology made Social Work as a professional choice seem less conflictual to her:

> Interviewer: So how did this politicization effect how you felt about graduating...becoming a social worker?
>
> Agnes: It made me feel better! At least I was more focused and I had more knowledge of what I was looking for. And it lowered my expectations of what I was looking for in graduate school...With this political and economic way of viewing things, then, a reality set in not only to grad school, but to the field itself, for me, the only way I could work in this field would be from this framework (radical) because the rest of it is useless..

Of course, student status also allows the opportunity to interact with campuswide events and movements, not restricting one to only social service professors and students. For Rosalind, who entered a Ph.d. program in Social Work and Psychology in the mid-1970s with a missionary zeal and counter-cultural influences, but had not yet identified as a leftist, a campus strike of graduate assistants led her to a leftist ideology:

> There I was all of a sudden stopping trucks, writing the Teamsters Union, working out strategies for mass arrests...I was on the bargaining committee, a picket captain, a steward...I made friends throughout the University...and all the radicals were there. The Union became a magnet for the radicals. And they liked my spunk and commitment (though) they knew I was naive, but (they) felt I had potential. The older people adopted me, I met the C.P.(Communist Party), the SP(Socialist Party), the SWP (Socialist Workers Party), the Anarchists...

Rather than this activity being consistent with her own school, Rosalind remembers social work faculty crossing the picket line:

> Now here I was, I just started. And (name of famous community organizing) professor is crossing my line! So I learned quickly about the contradictions. Here I was learning first hand about organizing and right and wrong while the some of my Social Work peers are crossing picket lines into classes...

For those who came to professional school already identified as politically leftist, the time spent in school was characterized by an increase in radical activism, in a deepening commitment to study and integration of radical politics, and a beginning commitment to extend radical politics to the social service professions. For some subjects, the activities within the school;classes, field work internships, student government, union strikes;provided a maelstrom of activity in which to engage:

(Bea): I was active politically from day one of

school! All my friends were too. We were active organizing things on campus, involved in the union's strike, (we) wrote articles for the school paper. I had been involved off campus in the 'Wages for Housework' campaign and we extended that argument to say the school should pay us for field work...There were several study groups...my first year placement was great! A wonderful politicizing experience. The supervisors were (well known labor organizer, and a left activist)..I learned all about the labor movement..it was a hotbed of activity...

(Renee): Whatever concerns I had about going into Social Work School were dispelled...the semester began with a big strike (by college employees)...of course I marched on the picket line...and in the first three weeks of the semester or so, I got to know all the radicals in the school, students and faculty. So, of course, I took a lot of courses with (radical professor), and I got active in student government, always attacking the dean and the School on various issues...

(Barbara):It was a great experience! First of all, I was fortunate in my field placement. Here I was in this multi-ethnic community doing housing organizing..with a staff organized as a collective...with a Marxist as my supervisor...it was a wonderful exposure...I hated my classes, but this led me to get more active. Became head of student government and fought tooth and nail,it was a daily struggle...and that's why I liked school. I got involved, of course, with RASSW...I was going 20 hours a day...

(Joseph): School was great...I guess I became one of the 'politically hip' people. We organized a grievance committee, you know, around people being counseled out of school...it was a great thing, it was a real thorn in (dean's) side...we were very provocative, challenging the School on everything...my field placement was great. Trained by feminist organizer...we made the community center a real community run program...wrote the by-laws so that it would be consumer controlled...

For others, the period of graduate training led to increased political activity and commitment, but not in the

school environment itself. In fact, it was quite commonly during professional school that subjects joined groups of radicals-in-the-professions such as RASSW, URHSW, and Health/PAC and Catalyst:

> (Ann): Marxism really came alive to me at this point. In Social Work School, for the first time in my life, I felt I had to join a political organization...I couldn't do social work without doing political work at the same time...You couldn't help people adjust to the system, you had to do something to change the system that made them the way they were...I got heavily involved in RASSW. I felt people's problems weren't individual...You really have to do something about that. There's no way in casework to do this, not casework by itself...
>
> (Howard): When I found out about RASSW and then the study groups, it was very liberating experience. I didn't quite know what to make of being in social work. And I felt very alienated at school. And then came all the writings around then...the fiscal crisis particularly...this was real important because all of a sudden social workers and other state workers could have an important impact, we were on a cutting edge of a crisis in capitalism...
>
> (Naomi): In school, I associated politics with being a social worker or someone in social welfare...it was very important to be involved in URHSW, in the radical study groups at that time...trying to figure out what our role should be as workers, students, socialists...

While there are many factors related to the high degree of radical activity subjects engaged in during professional training; notably the relative youth of subjects (most were in their twenties) along with limited family and work obligations; the findings are salient for several reasons.

First, several of the subjects who were young and already politically identified with the Left, became more active during graduate school than in the years immediately prior. For example, Howard, Barbara, and Jacqueline, all radicalized in the late 60s, had been less active and organizationally involved in the years prior to school (the early 1970s), then while attending school. It appears that the aggregation of a community (students, faculty, etc.), the stimulus of intellectual learning, and, perhaps, the need to reconcile professional training led subjects to stronger political involvement.

Secondly, the relationship between professional school and radicalization holds steady for those subjects who attended graduate schools whether in the 1960s, 1970s, or 1980s. Finally the findings of increased radicalization appear significant in that, as noted above, a considerable amount of literature on professionalization stresses its conservatizing nature, rather than its radicalizing potential. The finding that political radicalism is strengthened by professional socialization in this population leads us to analyze whether the subjects were equally as socialized into professional norms as radical identifications.

The increased commitment to radical political ideologies and activism during professional training leads us to explore the question of whether subjects felt professional norms, paradigms, and ideology were consistent

with their socialization into radical subcultures. It is conceivable theoretically that radical professionals could reject professional norms altogether (as suggested by the "negative class consciousness" of the Ehrenreichs or the prescriptions of the Habers) or could experience tremendous tension, a "role strain" in Mertonian terms, between the two sets of norms (professional and ideological). On the other hand, radical professionals could accept professional roles either by re-interpreting them or by selecting certain aspects of professional culture and rejecting others in order to find an occupational orientation and ideological view that incorporates both sets of norms.

Our study indicates that subjects' interpretation of professional training, and their attitudes towards the Human Service professions upon completion of training correspond consistently to the latter orientation. There is little evidence that subjects rejected professional norms, paradigms, and roles at this time, and, in fact, the identification of the subjects with a radical tradition of Social Services or Social Work reached its high point at this juncture. With the exception of several individuals (whose orientations will be discussed below), the "missionary zeal" noted earlier reached its high point with professional training, and most of the population expressed optimism about being "radical social workers," "radical therapists," or "radical organizers," upon the

completion of professional training.

Subjects performed extremely well in professional school. Virtually all of the subjects praised the training they received in at least some aspects of their education. This positive view of professional knowledge and skills was particularly apparent among the twelve subjects who had education in counseling:

> (Ann, discussing her internship in a mental health clinic):I thought it was great...it was life's dream!...It was very clinical, the experts of the world in child psychiatry were there...you got to see everybody...learned play therapy, family therapy, groupwork...
>
> (Mitch, describing his internship): Yes, it was a very traditional setting, a psychiatric clinic in a hospital. But I loved it. I had a stupendous supervisor. And all these other students were complaining about their placements...Its very ironic, I guess, here I was attacking the school for supporting certain traditions and I was working in a fairly traditional environment and enjoying it...
>
> (Monica, describing her internship): I wanted to do clinical work, but with a poor population where I could also do systems work, be an advocate. When I asked for this, my advisor looked at me, and said 'Why do you want to do that?"But they gave it to me...and I was thrilled!...worked with children and adolescents, learned a lot about individual and family therapy, but also did a lot of concrete services...it was at this point that I had this wonderful realization that you could incorporate clinical work and advocacy and even organizing...

Interestingly, even some of those who had viewed a Social Work career as problematic came to adopt the skill claims and basic paradigms of the profession:

Court: Yeh I had had a lot skepticism about Social Work as a profession...had absorbed some of the critique of Social Work as an agency of social control..."

Interviewer: So what made you finally go to school?

Court: Oh initially I was resistant, it took years of convincing, particularly from my wife who was more of a social worker than me. Also I thought well this is advantageous from a career standpoint, maybe I'll learn something, if I do that's nice, if not, well that has a practical value (the degree)...

Interviewer: Did you feel that you learned?

Court: Absolutely! I learned a great deal about psychodynamics!...I developed a sense of skill, I learned I was good at what I did and there was a lot to know about child welfare...complex and demanding work which requires professional skill...sure I resisted and still do the elitist connotations of professionalism, but I began to accept it in so far as professionalism is a skill, a craft, a responsibility...there's nothing wrong with craft...

Alan, as described above hardly a "missionary," developed a similar respect for psychodynamic skill and for the possibility of using the therapy for radical goals:

Once I got to School...I discovered that psychotherapy was part of Social Work and I liked this...I began to read Wilhelm Reich and follow the Radical Therapist. I was intrigued by it and generally persuaded by it...discovered I could do therapy. This gave me a context, because prior to this I had no idea what I was doing there (in school)...I finally felt that this was a way to combine my political beliefs with my career. In this sense I was upbeat. I had a little of the world changer ethos so that I was a little more enthusiastic about what could be done than I later became through experience.

Subjects commented on the irony of their socialization to the profession; Mitch's comments are typical:"I fought professional socialization all the way...and, of course, it was happening anyway!" However, the author rejects the view that this was an unconscious or pre-determined process. Following Garfinkel's view that social actors are not "judgemental dopes," but define and re-define themselves in contexts self-consciously (see Heritage, 1984), we can describe in a very clear terms the self-consciousness of radical counselors as to how they came to terms with the professionalization process.

The radical counselors were hostile to what they saw as the dominant view of counseling among their peers in school: a private practice model of clinical work which focused on middle and upper class people so that young social workers or psychologists could increase their income and achieve status through the psychotherapy market. These people were characterized as "therapoid narcissicists" by Court:

> I have no patience with these people. They're just into status and they claim to be so big and skilled and yet they have a lot less skill than a good social worker in an agency...they operate in a really narrow realm of neurotic problems. While my social work practice and others in child welfare is composed of life and death decisions...

Brenda's comments on her peers and professors similarly reflect this view:

> My commitment was towards a mental health component, but definitely working with poor and working class people...I had no desire before or during Social Work School to work with middle class or upper middle class neurotics who were paying on a regular basis.(I) thought it was distasteful when I heard people in Social Work School talk about wanting to set up a private practice as soon as they graduated...

In addition to a commitment to agency based practice as opposed to a private, entrepreunerial practice, and a commitment to working with poor, working class, and oppressed populations (rather than "middle class" or "upper class" people), the radical counselors shared another set of norms. Subjects opposed the narrow definitions of clinical work as being a 45 minute interview, and believed good counseling involved case advocacy for clients, provision of concrete services, development of groups (both therapeutic and self-help), and community organizing as well. The narrow specialization of clinical work bothered the subjects who adopted a "generalist" approach to Social Work.[2] The commitment to use all possible means to help clients, but particularly social action, was critical to the self-definition of these subjects:

> (Rita): I had trouble in school because of my big mouth, arguing with students and faculty who talked about clients in a de-personalized, clinical way...you know, the attraction for me was the many different ways you could help a client by intervening as a social worker. Being a generalist means knowing casework, groupwork, administration, and how to organize with clients...and then you can work in whatever situation the clients find themselves in and what they need, not what <u>you</u> need. Politically to me, that also felt right...

(Rosa): "I guess I liked school because I was out of the mainstream...most people were strictly clinical!...and those friends were into ego psychology and object relations. I remember being outraged! How could they think this way!...

Interviewer: So although you were a caseworker, you felt...not a clinician...?

Rosa: Yes, I felt there had to be a social action component to Social Work. I thought you had to integrate social change into your work or it wasn't good Social Work...

This the orientation to the poor, to agency practice, and to a generalist model of Social Work placed the radical counselors in a long tradition of Social Work practice dating to the Settlement House Movement rather than representing any deviant subculture within the profession.

For those subjects who majored in Community Organization or received their first professional training in other than Social Work schools, the complementarity of radical and professional norms was a more complex issue. The vast majority of Community Organizing students felt that organizing itself <u>was being radical</u>, particularly when this method (community organizing) was combined with a commitment to the poor, the working class, Blacks and other Third World people or other oppressed populations (women, gays and lesbians, the aged, the handicapped):

(Bea):I had no idea at first that there was such a thing as organizing jobs and that I could continue my interest in it. And in school, there were all these clinical types, but here I could extend my political interests and be paid for it by being an

> organizer...as that became clear I was very happy to have been thrust, somewhat by chance, into Community Organization and have nothing to do with the rest of the school...I felt very unconnected with most of the school...
>
> (Josie): I had a negative, stereotypical impression of Social Work in school, and I still do...
>
> (Interviewer): And then about what you were learning?
>
> (Josie): Oh no.Listen, community organizing...we had a real thing...we were the political people, we were the most militant, most vocal and to some extent we had this superior thing (laughs)...it was C.O., its political orientation that interested and intrigued me, not that feely, sort of touchy, feely stuff...
>
> (Barbara): I was very critical of the school. I gave this speech at graduation. A critique of the profession. The basic thing I was saying (pause) was the training of the profession had become so clinical that we had forgotten a piece of our tradition, of social action...and then I also talked about them ignoring issues of race, sex, class...

And so a majority of the community organizers, like the counselors, defined their professional norms in opposition to what they saw a dominant clinical paradigm involving work with middle class individuals behind the closed doors of the therapy office.

A minority of community organization majors and the few subjects who were not in Social Work, found professionalization and radical values to be problematic for two reasons: one, was the tendency of more intellectually, academically oriented subjects to look at training more critically and to therefore become removed from a radical

tradition in the social services (either in community organization or counseling); secondly, and closely related, was the fact that these subjects were cut off from any one professional paradigm and feared, even prior to graduating, that there was no place for them in the employment market:

> (Richard, in a Psychology M.S. program): My interests were at odds with Psychology...both practically and academically. (I) had a hard time receiving legitimation, one reflects the other. There is no Marxist tradition in Psychology. I was at odds with testing, with stats, with psychometrics, and experimental designs...I had this oddball theoretical perspective and I was marginalized...it put me in a hole...the seeds were already sown...(that) I would never get into a mainstream (Ph.D.) program...
>
> (Jacqueline, C.O. student in Social Work School):I was very disappointed with C.O...I mean they seemed to be fabricating a theory out of nothing...and then my placements really had nothing to do with community organizing...we ended up doing casework and groupwork with these schizophrenic clients. When I said this doesn't seem like C.O., the school said that's all we have now...I just clung to a fantasy that there still was real C.O. going on, somewhere, someplace, but, of course, the school was out of touch with it...
>
> (Martin, C.O. Student in Social Work School with an interest in research): I didn't enjoy most of my classes very much...I guess I was judging the field by academic criteria (interest in Psychology research) which I suppose isn't fair because its (Social Work) a practice field...I was frankly pessimistic about student agitation and saw it as the work of the loyal opposition...So, this is another version of the difficulty I've had integrating my career ambitions with my political interests and loyalties.

The close link between critical perspectives on professional training and the prospective position in the

job market is illustrated by Howard and Naomi:

> (Howard, C.O. student in Social Work School): I couldn't find a place for myself within Social Work...Part of it, yes, was that I mostly identified with the professors (names) that were most radical and critical of the field itself. But also remember that when I moved to C.O., there really was no C.O. anymore at (college). It was administrative stuff. C.O. was this jelly type thing you couldn't get your hands on, it was attractive, but not there. And, of course, I knew there were no C.O. jobs left anyway...
>
> (Naomi, student in Ph.D. program in Social Policy): It was a conflict (school). I didn't fit into any of the functional areas of the school, you know, retardation, aging, alcoholism, whatever...I didn't fit in. I had no professional identification. And I just kept going along and it was Ok, I did my research on teenage pregnancy and so forth...but I knew I'd be in trouble later. I mean professionally...in the sense of being an academic. And I was right. It was highly problematic. I wasn't considered a social worker, not a hard core academic, neither fish nor fowl.

Although the perspective of the subjects quoted above; including the problematic nature of "fitting into" an occupational area in the social service professions, the difficulty uncritically accepting certain professional paradigms, and ultimately the problem of identifying with a profession at all; would come to characterize many individuals in this population later on in their careers, at the time of professional training, most subjects felt that radical politics and the norms and values of the profession were complementary. Indeed, the radical counselors and community organizers were following in an historic

tradition.

While many subjects felt they were defining their ideology and principles of professional practice in opposition to dominant norms of their particular graduate school or to the majority of students in school at the time, the values and norms of agency based practice committed to poor people with an emphasis on advocacy, activism, and community organization reflects a historic tradition in the Social Work profession dating back to the Settlement House movement of Jane Addams and Lillian Wald. While the professionalization project of Social Work has led to an increased status quest with a particular desire to expand services to new markets (including the rich in some cases) and to promote specialized and more highly psychiatric types of services, most textbooks, faculty, and colleges in Social Work support in the abstract the key principles enunciated: service to the poor, social action, agency-based practice, etc. Again as Reynolds noted, what was different about such radicalism is that it treated seriously these high abstract principles (see Bucher and Strauss, 1961, on the broad abstractions of professions which present a "fictional unity" to the public).

Like the Rank-and-File Movement of the post-1936 period,[3] the subjects at the time of professional socialization absorbed the values and norms of social service as taught in its most idealistic form. The group did

not challenge the basic precepts of social casework nor the techniques of casework, groupwork or community organization. Nor did they reject the elements of a professional relationship which some from the 1960s have sometimes challenged as "professional dominance" (Freidson, 1972). However, the subjects rejected as narrow and elitist, aspects of professional rhetoric and training which were not consistent with an "original mission" of Social Work as conceived of by radicals. Rosalind describes it as "reclaiming social work for us as radicals, going back to its progressive roots." Rita stated "I identify with the Social Work of the 1930s, not today. I identify strongly with the values I perceive Social Work to have or at least once stood for."

If the radical professionalism of this population is seen as reflecting a historic tradition in social service and a return to the true ideals of the service ethic as noted by Ross in Chapter 1, it is not surprising to find that those few subjects not in Social Work School found the task of mediating their radical beliefs more difficult. As Richard notes, a radical tradition does not exist to the same degree in Psychology as in Social Work nor are professional norms so clearly related to service to the poor or client primacy over other interests (such as research and institutional loyalty). Further, those like Martin and Naomi, whose interests centered on research, and those like Howard and Jacqueline, who received more training in

administration principles than in community organizing, similarly lacked a historic tradition to fall back on. Moreover, neither administration nor research provide for obvious clients and clear service commitments to the poor or oppressed, though they obviously could be used in their interests.

C. Summary:

This chapter, in analyzing how subjects came to choose social service Work as a career goal and their experience of professional training, sought to explore the question of whether radicals in the social services anticipated being able to be paid to perform "radical work" through their professional careers or suffered considerable tension or "role strain."

In analyzing the initial choice of social service work, we suggest a high degree of idealism ("missionary zeal") characterizes such a choice and that the majority of subjects hoped to combine upward mobility with "changing the world." However, it was suggested that for many subjects, this is a pre-political consciousness, not tied to specific leftist political ideologies. Those who hoped to combine specifically left political agendas with a social service career primarily entered community organizing within the Social Work profession, and seem to cluster in a specific

time period. Other radicals enter the profession with a skepticism about the profession and without an expectation of sanction for performing radical work.

In analyzing the experience of subjects in professional training, our interest was in evaluating the dichotomous perspectives of the sociological literature:there is much literature on the radicalization of students, but there is also a body of theory which suggests professional socialization is conservatizing. For these subjects, professional school had a radicalizing effect; while in professional training, those subjects who had not identified as radicals came to identify themselves as such, and those who already identified as leftist increased their activities, theoretical study, and commitment. It is suggested that the existence of a large peer culture at professional school with a normative acceptance of intellectual thought and dissent as well as time to participate is critical to supporting this radicalization as well as the influence of radical faculty. This is suggested as more significant than the overall political ideology of the particular school which may not be at all radical.

Finally, we were interested in the degree to which subjects came to define themselves as human service professionals with similar values, norms, and paradigms to their colleagues in the field, particularly in light of their radicalism. With several exceptions, most subjects were able to mediate the professional norms and ideology of

Social Service professionalism with their radicalism by aligning with a particular historic tradition in Social Work: service to the poor and oppressed; commitment to agencies rather than to entrepreneurship and financial gain; and commitment to a concept of Social Work which stressed social advocacy, community organizing, and social action. Many subjects saw these values as oppositional to the culture of their institutions; but as a review of Social Work history would suggest they hardly represent a deviant or anti-professional position within Social Work. A small number of subjects found their radicalism became more problematic during professional training, both because they lacked the paradigmatic attachment to Social Work practice areas with easy access to the radical tradition and also felt isolated from the perspective occupational market. In general, however, the "missionary zeal" which characterized the majority of this population in choosing social service work dramatically increased during professional training, as well as optimism about achieving both professional employment goals and radical activism, minimizing the experience of "role strain" or conflict.

Notes:

1. The author was primarily interested in how radicals came to be initially socialized to the social service professions. Therefore, prior professional training in other disciplines by three subjects (James and Sam in a year each of Law School, and Alan's three years in Philosophy) are excluded. Additionally, subsequent educational training, except as discussed in later chapters, will not be analyzed

in depth. See Table 6 for a listing of the relevant degrees and educational experience of this population.

2. "Generalist" social work practice is now a term used to describe curriculum in many Schools of Social Work. Beginning in the early 1970s, a minority of graduate schools went from the traditional method divisions of Casework, Groupwork, and Community Organization to teaching "generalist" practice. Depending on one's definition of 'generalist practice,' it has arguably been central to Social Work since the 1890s settlement house worker or is relatively new. In either case, the assumption of generalist practice is that methodology or technique of Social Work is subordinated to client problem, so that dependent on client problem, the social worker might use individual casework, groupwork, organizing, or different interventions within the methods such as advocacy, providing concrete services, planning, etc. Hence, social workers in this view need to capable of providing a multiplicity of services rather than be defined as a pure clinician, groupworker, planner, etc.

3. It should be noted that the writings of Rank-and-File Movement leaders, including Bertha Reynolds, which related to a theoretical constructions of "radical social work" primarily occurred <u>after</u> 1935. This is important because as Spano (1982) has shown, the ideology of the early Rank-and-File Movement (pre- 1936) was profoundly anti-professional, and , at best, cynical about the profession. Importantly, when the RFM was primarily a leftist organizing and propaganda center, there was little interest in the theory of radical social work practice. Only in the post 1936 period when the RFM and <u>Social Work Today</u> journal began to make peace with the profession was it possible for professional Left Social Work theoreticians to really emerge. The implications of these events for this study will be further considered in Chapter 11.

TABLE 6: PROFESSIONAL TRAINING OF SUBJECTS

A. First Professional School Experience:

Discipline	Number
Human Services(Social Work, Social Policy, Psychology, Joint Programs)	20
Others (Law 2, Philosophy 1)	3

B. Type of First Human Service Graduate Degree

Social Work School (Masters)	19
Psychology (Masters)	2
Social Work/Psych (Ph.D. program)	1
Social Policy (Ph.D. program)	1

C. Subsequent Educational Degrees

Masters	
Labor Studies	1
Public Administration	1
Doctoral	
Social Work	2*
Social Work&Psych	2*
Social Policy	1*
Sociology	2*
Psychology	1
Education	1

(* indicates in progress degrees at the time of the study; DSWs both in progress; one SW&Psych; one Social Policy; and one in Sociology).

D. Age Upon Entering Professional Education in Human Services

age 22-25	14
age 26-30	5
age 30-32	4

E. Method Major of Subjects who attended M.S. programs in Social Work

Direct Treatment(Casework, Groupwork)	12
Community Organization	8

CHAPTER VI:

CAREER TRENDS: CASE STUDIES

Introduction:

A considerable amount amount of data was collected in this study on the early to middle careers of radicals. Subjects were particularly interested in talking about and making sense of their own career trajectories, and, together with the interviewer, engaged in lengthy discussion, seeking to provide explanations for complex career paths. The author collected data about over 150 different job positions; moreover, subjects provided examples of dozens of case studies ranging from individual clients treated to community groups organized. Because the data is so rich and varied, the material is divided into several areas for analysis. In this chapter, the author, in describing briefly the subjects' experiences with work, questions the ability of resumes or other objective measures to "capture" the experience of work, and suggests the tremendously rich and complex nature of the occupational experience by presenting four case studies of careers. In Chapter 7, these divergent case studies provide the basis for the development of empirical measures collected by the author which summarizes the the tensions and pain, and the success and mobility achieved by subjects over the years. Chapter 8 will build on this data to analyze how, after a period of years in the job

market (a minimum of three and a maximum of twenty-one years after the first professional degree), subjects now regard the possibilities of mediating radical ideology and professional work and values. In Part III (Chapters 9-11) the author will analyze how subjects attempted to put into practice various political strategies either at their workplaces or in professional forums.

A. Images of Success:

Subjects were interviewed during a six month period in 1986-87, at a juncture which found most of the individuals approximately ten to fifteen years into a "career"(3-21 years after first professional degree). A description of the population's occupational positions, professional credentials, and accomplishments provides a portrait of success and diversity. While the societal image of those obtaining a degree in Social Work might conjure up welfare workers or other low paid and low status positions, data on the profession indicates substantial movement into positions of administration, supervision, private practice psychotherapy, as well as mobility into other fields such as Business, Health Care Administration, Education, etc. (see NASW, 1985; interestingly, only 57.1% of NASW members are in 'direct service' positions as compared with administration, supervision, education, consultation, research or policy development; these statistics underrate mobility somewhat

because many social workers who move out of traditional social service settings do not retain membership in N.A.S.W.). While the mobility of this population appears to indicate that our subjects also occupy fairly high positions within the health, education, and welfare apparatus in the U.S., it is of interest for this study to determine whether these subjects perceive themselves as successful or satisfied or mobile, and whether radicals have different career patterns and objectives than other social service workers.

If job positions and accomplishments are treated as "social facts," indeed, the population presents an impressive picture. The twenty-three individuals interviewed include: several high level administrators in state and city government who control considerable funds and supervise large staffs; an official of a moderately sized labor union; several faculty members who have significant accomplishments in research, publication, and applied practice for their youthful age; a moderately high level business executive; and several social service administrators and organizers who have become locally prominent. Educationally, the group includes six Ph.d.s, five doctoral candidates, and two winners of exclusive post-doctoral fellowships.

From a more activist, political orientation, the population would appear to have achieved some success as well. A number of subjects, in addition to two still

employed by labor unions, have led major union organizing campaigns or been involved in major union elections. Several subjects, in earlier roles as directors of local neighborhood coalitions or settlements, have been involved in community organizing and local political struggles which have received notice in the Left press and/or the mainstream media. One subject is fundraiser for Left causes. Several subjects have played important roles in pioneering efforts in the battered women's movement, the homeless movement, and the housing movement. Many subjects, including a large number who are not currently academics or engaged in pursuing an academic career, have made significant contributions to literature and theory either in organs of the Left or in professional publications.

However, a review of resumes or a list of accomplishments freezes a conception of success based on a series of achievements at work. Self-consciously, professionals develop written documents or public accountings which seek to convince employers, educational institutions, and professional associations and colleagues of a linear progression into their current status. It is not only the case that job tensions, periods of unemployment, and loss of jobs through quitting and firing are naturally minimized, but that the very sequence of jobs is presented so as to appear rational and intentional. Indeed, as a self-conscious group of individuals, subjects consistently felt that their career patterns were not at all fully captured by

written resumes or 'objective' measures, but required lengthy explanations. The entire concept of a career, is perhaps a social construct of social scientists and the professional culture. Barbara pointed out in response to a question about her career:

> I don't know. It's not like I feel I have this career (her emphasis)...you know, like a career that's moving along...I just ended up doing different things.

Significantly, what may appear to the public or sociologist as "success," fails to capture the underlying tensions and problems of work life and professional "careers."

B. Worlds of Pain:

Underlying the record of accomplishment of these subjects which one might glean from their resumes or a quick description of their occupational positions, is a sense of pain, guilt, ambivalence, and tension which is noticeable as most subjects describe their careers. While there are some jobs or periods at a job which were discussed with pleasure, nostalgia or pride, there were many more jobs and specific incidents or occasions which brought up pain. Moreover, for some subjects, the entire experience of "straight" jobs in the "Establishment" as mused about by 1960s radicals (see Chapter 1), was one marked by a struggle for survival,

sometimes successful, and sometimes just unbearable, in which one swallowed deep, held one's nose, and then went to work. A comment by Rosalind captures the radicals' dilemma:

> Let's face it, the job structure is not conducive to being a radical...these institutions are frustrating and discouraging, so that at best, maybe you have to decide to do something different and keep moving around...

Thus one of the key areas of interest for this study, was to what degree do social service workers feel the kind of tension alluded to above? What are the sources of such tension? And what different patterns of coping exist for those who find the occupational structure to be hostile to their values or political ideology or even their psychological well being?

In order to introduce these broad social psychological/political questions without losing the quality of these subjective experiences of worklife, the author will present several case studies indicating the divergent experiences of careers (1) Court, who perceives Social Service work as non-conflictual both psychologically and politically and states that he felt no major tensions in his jobs (2) Ann, who found a great deal of job related tension upon entering Social Service work; she explains this tension in psychological terms and resolved it by departing the Social Services (3) Barbara, who experienced a great deal of tension in her jobs in Social Service, primarily attributing

tension in her jobs in Social Service, primarily attributing this to the political structure of work rather than to personal failings or her specific work sites. The tension was resolved in Barbara's case, also by departing the field, but in a very different direction than Ann's change and (4) Renee, who experienced a great deal of tension in particular job positions; attributes this primarily to the social structure, and through job change and mobility within the Social Services has escaped much of the prior tension.

C. Court: The Lack of Tension with Social Service Work:

Court, a 42 year old subject, who is one of the few subjects still engaged in direct social work practice (counseling), provides an interesting case study. He is one of the small number of people interviewed who stated they "liked all their jobs" and who felt little tension between paid social service and either political values or psychological needs. Court's job positions were hardly prestigious. After graduating from college, he took a job in a welfare department, which he left for a while in the late 1960s to be a writer. He returned and worked for five years for the department. After leaving to go to graduate school for purposes of mobility (see Chapter 5), he returned to work at a different division of the same public agency. In recent years, Court has enrolled in a Doctoral program in Social Work, but has continued to work in direct practice;

for the last three years functioning as a medical social worker in a hospital emergency room.

The author was particularly struck by Court's positive comments about fulfillment in his work. These work settings, a welfare department and a hospital emergency room, are considered to be among the most difficult in the profession, and many radicals interviewed had expressed a great deal of tension and stress about their worklives. In response to repeated questions, Court noted his enjoyment of work with children, the contact with co-workers at the welfare department, his active union participation in the welfare workers union, but primarily his enjoyment of case advocacy and struggling in bureaucracies. Recently, at the hospital where Court works, a private home care agency failed to follow up on their agreement to speedily assist a medically ill out-patient:

> I enjoy being able to yell at them! I can give these people a really hard time for failing to live up to this..I know this is petty enjoyment, but you know...they deserve this treatment. I like bureaucratic battles, and , if you lose, OK, you're no worse off, but sometimes you win...I recently had the case of this battered women. She was in an abusive situation and was pregnant. She had a sister who was a Jehovah's Witness and was encouraging her to keep this baby and stay with the guy. We did quite a lot of counseling. The client eventually did get an abortion, and broke with her sister. She called the other day and now has her own apartment. And we're trying to arrange for day care. These are small victories...

Part of Court's comfort with his work seems to stem from a political position which early on distinguished him from New Left politics, from Community Organization practice, and from those who felt that freedom from bureaucratic rules and institutions should be a goal of the Left. Court never felt the "missionary zeal" towards Social Work, but as noted in Chapter 5 felt it was not possible to be paid to do 'radical work.' He notes retrospectively:

> Even before I was political in a very clear sense...I always felt that society is not set up to fulfill our expectations. It was anti-human and I expected work to be screwed up. So I never felt that I should be (pause) personally responsible (pause) and wear myself out being guilty about the failures of society (pause) I guess I believe in a very direct day-to-day cynicism about dealing with bureaucracies.

Court came to define his political ideology while at a welfare department when the New Left and civil libertarian groups were frequently attacking such work as "social control." While Court states that he originally came to Social Work with some of this view himself, he began to find himself on the "other side" of the issues while working as a child protective worker. On one side was the need for the State to protect abused children from their parents; but on the other side were the "local poverty lawyers who saw themselves as Davids fighting the Goliaths of the bureaucracy." A turning point came from a particularly dramatic case of sexual abuse Court was involved with in

1971:

> You know the civil libertarian argument was only superficially radical and critical. They really based their ideology on the 'sanctity of the family.' Well, of course, Feminism by then was around questioning that...this sexual abuse case with the 12 yr.old forced to pose for porno, this was of course a particular instance of exploitation by the family. Where previously I had criticized (the) child protective agency for its participation in the oppressiveness of the society, I now concluded that oppressiveness pervaded all social institutions. The family had no more <u>a priori</u> claim to legitimacy than the authority of the State--both could be destructive or serve humanistic ends...

Court appears to feel less guilt than other subjects about the types of authority that social workers wield, such as removing children from their natural parents and reporting child abuse cases. He also rejects as utopian and ill thought out the notion that decentralized, de-bureaucratized small agencies are more conducive to good work and radical politics, as many other subjects and radicals in Social Work have suggested (see, for example, Wineman, 1984):

> Oh no, I'm a great believer in bureaucracy! I think that you can appeal to the Weberian sense of an ethical spirit in a bureaucracy. You can say 'no, the reason you are supposed to such and such for a client, is you're <u>supposed</u> to, and you're supposed to by these criteria, if you don't do it, its because you're a bad bureaucrat and you're not living by what you claim to be living by!' And its amazing what you can accomplish with this...Now these small agencies and the C.O. people, that's all personalistic, petty politics...little fiefdoms...yes, social workers think they are getting out of the bureaucracy, but its worse

> there's no union, no formal rules, no criteria. You're at the mercy of whosoever in charge...real autonomy comes from being buffered by others in a system such as I'm in. The autonomy that comes from having no power, no formal structure, that's pseudo-autonomy...

In the interview with Court, the other feature which distinguished him (and some of the others who experienced less job tension) was his self-labelled class and status security. Early in the interview, in response to questioning about family background, he noted of his parents, who were both professors and from old Yankee/Dutch/Irish lineage:

> They didn't have this sense of the struggle for upward mobility behind them. Many, many people...knowing implicitly or explicitly that your relatives fairly recently came over, were outcasts, had to learn English, worked as industrial workers, rose in status in whatever way they did...status...we never had any question that we had a right to be here (pause) in some small way our ancestors had founded the place...

This became of interest later in the interview, for Court, unlike many subjects interviewed appeared less concerned about upward mobility. He stayed in a welfare department in a "line" level social work job for many years. In his early thirties, as a result of the urging of his wife and the availability of free tuition, he did go on to gain his Masters degree, and even then returned to the public welfare department. Further, while Court subsequently enrolled in a doctoral program, this was some time ago, and Court appears unpressured about completing his degree. In

response to questions, he states that he may want to teach or do research one day, but he's not sure. He enjoys Social Work as a field and as a career. When asked whether he has had ambitions to be an administrator or to be a faculty member, Court is ambivalent, suggesting interest, but not the clear ambitions that characterized others:

> Interviewer: You stayed at Welfare so long...did you not want to move into a higher position for political reasons?
>
> Court:...But for me it wasn't important. I enjoy direct practice work more and I had sufficient money...I don't need to be consuming that much, and I've lived in modest circumstances. I suppose if someone offered me something real good, maybe I'd take it...
>
> Interviewer: It seems as if mobility isn't as important to you...?
>
> Court: No, it isn't. It goes back to the family issues...we were secure, old middle class. Less worry about where you fell in society. No, honestly mobility isn't a big concern, which is not to suggest I wouldn't like to earn a lot more....

As we shall return to later, Court exhibits several characteristics of those few subjects who felt little tension around careers in Social Service work. He is not a missionary nor historically tied to the New Left or Community Organizing, but feels that there are strong limitations to the possibility of "paid radical work." He is from a professional family and is Protestant, both demographic characteristics which show low associations

with high job tension. He also has less desire for upward mobility than other subjects which may account for his feeling less tension.

D. Job Tension and its Interpretations:

Ann, Barbara, and Renee's experiences in social service positions, described in the vignettes below, are far more typical of this research population's experience with work: high tension and struggles around remaining in the profession. However, significant differences in interpretation of tension are revealed in the vignettes, as well as how each individual attempted to resolve these tensions.

E. Ann: Job Tension as 'Burnout'; Psychological Interpretations:

Ann, a 34 year old Jewish female from a working class family, entered Social Work with a strong missionary zeal (see Chapter 5) highly influenced by New Left ideology. Ann was only 23 upon entering a Masters program in Social Work, having spent one year as a day care teacher. As also noted in Chapter 5, Ann "loved graduate school," feeling her field placements were terrific, and classes excellent. Almost immediately upon graduation, Ann found that her work problems had begun.

After her "wonderful experience" in a clinical placement in a psychiatric hospital while in school, Ann hoped to continue this type of work. However, the job market was" terrible for social workers" at that time and the only job she could get was in a municipal hospital as a medical social worker in a pediatric unit. While Ann describes the department and her co-workers as "fine," she found the work intensely depressing, overwhelming, and unrelenting:

> What could be more depressing than a big city hospital pediatrics in-patient unit? (I) went from a wonderful environment of stimulation to doing entirely child abuse and neglect...the services we had were limited, it was just me for 70 beds, and these were all multi-problem families, you only could work with the worst cases, abandoned, burned, dying kids. I can't imagine a more depressing place. The cases were unmitigated and ... My first case was a 3 year old girl, she eventually died from a fire her brother set, the burn cases are the worst. The doctors often throw up going into the rooms of burn cases. I was also making life and death decisions on whether kids would go home or not...and doing half the work of (child protective agency) because they were incompetent...finally I found myself starting to get hardened and that's why I left, that disturbed me, when I started to feel like I would get cynical and detached...

After more than a year at the job, Ann obtained another job at a community mental health clinic. Ann was pleased because mental health was the area she had wanted to work in. However, even before she started, she heard it "was a terrible agency." Ann took the job anyway as she was desperate to get out of the hospital but found that "agency politics" were indeed awful. The administrator who hired her

was fired only a week after Ann was hired. She had trouble even being assigned cases, apparently because her role had not been made clear with the new administrators. Ann further noted that other clinicians weren't doing their jobs, including failing to show up for appointments with clients. However, when she protested this, she was firmly rebuffed. After three months she was fired. She doesn't now recall the exact reasons, but knows that her complaints about incompetent staff and lack of work made her superiors angry and defensive.

Once again on the job market, Ann describes herself as "really burnt out." She poured over newspaper ads, but would eliminate most jobs as being "too depressing." "In retrospect, now I know I was just burnt out. Then I felt mostly, no, I didn't want to work with the retarded or the elderly or chronic schizophrenic, I needed the right job." Eventually a job in an art school came up and Ann, who had been pursuing art as an avocation, described it "as an answer to my dreams." Ann describes leaving social service jobs at this point as not self-conscious:

> I guess I was also desperate to get out of Social Work (pause) although I never made a conscious decision. I wanted to be in something that was healing...To be an artist at the time seemed great (pause) to work with beauty and people who worked with beauty as counterposed to seeing every type of human suffering, sadness, pain, every terrible thing you see in Social Work...

However, to some degree the problems Ann had experienced in Social Work followed her into the art school position where she had a great deal of difficulty with her superior, a college administrator. The administrator was hypercritical of her work ("if you did a job 99% right, he'd criticize the 1%") and also "set her up to take the blame" for projects that didn't go well. Ann eventually was laid off from this job, and after another period of unemployment began doing free-lance publishing work. A year later she took a job with a publishing house where she is currently an associate director of marketing. Ann feels she has done extremely well at this position.

Ann's interpretations of the job tensions experienced are primarily situational and psychological. Several times in the interview, she noted that if she could have gotten a Social Work job like her field placement, "she would still be in Social Work now." After she left the art school, she considered Social Work jobs again and believes if she had gotten one of two jobs she had applied for, that "sounded great," she would have remained in the field. The other factors, besides the 'depressing' nature of the hospital and mental health clinic, highlighted by Ann are psychological; her failure for many years to be able to act in an organizationally sophisticated manner and her own conflicts about mobility.

Ann feels she was very naive and idealistic in her earlier positions and feels she has greatly succeeded in her

publishing career by being able to get along with her superiors, and co-workers:

> I worked very hard at this when I got the job (pause) I mean after having so many negative experiences (I) felt this was my last ditch chance to see if I could survive in an organizational structure, because maybe I couldn't!... Maybe I was just too ethical(pause) values and beliefs, I didn't want to compromise, didn't want to kowtow or kiss ass. But I realized (I) would not survive. (And) realized (my) friends knew how to 'play the game' and (I) had to learn that skill. Now it doesn't bother me much...

The other psychological theme raised by Ann was her discomfort, as a 'red diaper baby' from a working class Jewish family, with success. Early in the interview, when describing her parents, she said:

> I have this confusion about mobility. A role confusion. Because of these values that I have, but these values about achieving success in the world and how you mix these two together is hard...Now there is a lot of resentment (from parents) about my being successful. I feel a lot of conflict about it. In some ways (it's) more comfortable for me to be not successful...

Interestingly, Ann seems to have resolved some of the tension (at least momentarily), by viewing her prior problems in adjustment to organizations as her own psychological problems. In a sense, she has rejected her working class roots for upward mobility, in a kind of tension which Sennett and Cobb described in The Hidden Injuries of Class (1973):

> I'm privileged I guess to fly all over the place and to stay in the best hotels in every city. I felt like an impostor for a long time. This whole working class background kind of thing.(pause) What was I doing here? I'm only now getting comfortable with the role of (pause) sort of successful business women...I've really changed. I've become very worldly...I used to keep thinking 'what am I doing here?'...

While Ann's experience of social service positions as extremely difficult and leading to "burnout," as well as her discomfort with changing social class and status positions, is perhaps more typical of this population than Court, in other ways, she is as atypical as Court. While it is extremely difficult to determine retrospectively which came first; her primarily psychological interpretation of her career in Social Service, her growing comfort with a career in publishing or her detachment from radical politics (see Chapter 8), they are intimately bound. Because she feels she has grown and matured and has been able to adjust to corporate/organizational life, a social-political analysis of the problems of social service work such as the journal Catalyst might offer no longer appears relevant to Ann. Her discussion of her occupational experiences is entirely one of psychological coping with the normative demands of work in this society.

F. Barbara: 'Burnout' as Interpreted Politically:

While Barbara, a 36 yr. Roman Catholic working class subject, shares similarities with Ann, in relation to social class and status, in suffering tensions in Social Service work, and in eventually leaving what would traditionally be considered the social service field (she currently is a fundraiser and administrator of a Left Foundation), there are considerable contrasts between the two which are of interest to the study.

While Barbara came to the field with the "missionary zeal" described in Chapters 5 and enjoyed Social Work School, as a Community Organizing student who was extremely active in both school politics and outside activities, she appears to have been much more aware of the possible "contradictions" of the profession than Ann was. During graduate school, she had joined a study group focused on developing 'alternatives' to traditional social service agencies. The group was highly critical of the existing social services, the clinical orientation of the field, and the social inequalities underlying provision of services. The group included many social workers who were having difficulties with their work. The group's basic question, Barbara notes, "was how could we as political people exist in this profession?" As Barbara graduated, she describes herself as already "confused" about how one would do radical

work in the social services.

A professor who liked Barbara suggested her to a prominent Settlement House which had the idea of doing a 'customer evaluation' of its services. The position and idea certainly "sounded interesting," recalls Barbara, for here was a well known, progressive agency, wanting to see if its clients were getting the services they needed. Barbara served at this position (program planner) for two and a half years, but notes an increasingly alienation. First, Barbara found that the very way the evaluation was set up belied the agency's intent:

> You know, you bring in this kid right out of school and tell her to evaluate your program, boy, this is a set-up! The program managers felt threatened, of course. So I worked with getting them involved, to make it participatory...But as soon as there were problems, forget it. I had no power. My supervisor stopped even supervising me. There really was no backing from the top. So ultimately, it was untenable. I took the program evaluation seriously, the agency didn't...

At the time, Barbara was growing increasingly active politically, not only with Catalyst, but also with a variety of feminist organizations and Marxist study groups. She found herself in an untenable middle level role with no reference group or base to feel comfortable with at work. The agency began to cut benefits, and challenges to management's actions were raised by staff. Barbara began meeting with the project directors who were planning actions at the agency. But she was not only ineligible for a union

bargaining unit (the possibility of bringing in a union was being considered), but was not even a part of the middle management group. Barbara recalls:

> I was very unhappy. I had no base (pause) I guess I was most closely aligned with the project directors (pause) some were very good and progressive, but still ultimately they were not my peers and I had no staff to relate to (pause) so I felt very alienated...

Barbara then secured a position as a researcher with a non-profit organization, actually having met the Director at a women's study group. Part of Barbara's frustration over the year and a half she was at this job was personal; she came to dislike the Director who she had previously liked as she found her acquaintance's style as a Director was abusive in that she maltreated other staff members (though not Barbara). But Barbara also views her problems more structurally and politically. First, as personnel became angry about conditions, Barbara was limited in what she could do both because of her staff position and her politics:

> A small group of staff began to meet, hoping to form a pre-union core...it never panned out. And here it was again, those of us who weren't management and yet weren't line staff...the same position as (previous agency).Of course we met secretly anyway, but it was rough, not viewed as 'labor' by secretaries or as management by the Directors...And then because the Director knew my politics she began to just dismiss me (pause) I would always raise the ethical questions or the more progressive beliefs, and I think she began to just say 'Oh, Barbara, she's a socialist and

> that's why she saying that'...there was no respect due me just as an employee...

Moreover, a major difference between both Ann and Court's accounts and Barbara's surfaces in how Barbara views work. Both Court and Ann were trained as caseworkers and saw politics either as implicitly embedded in the work somewhat indirectly (Court) or apparently didn't evaluate job positions on this basis (Ann). Barbara felt that her work had to have a political impact:

> Yeh, I produced some good pieces of work (at research agency)...but it had no impact...oh some small things were done...So I felt like I was doing work which had no impact and except for two people I was close to, what I was doing wasn't appreciated, not by the organization, not by society. These reports could end up in the files somewhere. One of the major issues was I'm doing this work, but I'm not making a difference in the world...(author emphasis)
>
> Interviewer: It strikes me that politics are difficult to divorce from your worklife for you...its important to maintain politics in the work...
>
> Barbara: Yes, absolutely. It's very frustrating, depressing for me not to. I just couldn't do that (pause) make the kind of separation even though certain jobs demanded that (laughs) I couldn't quite do that, it either made me unhappy or at every chance I would try to present what I felt was the most progressive, politically correct positions (pause) given the realities. I don't mean to say I was waving a red flag, but I had to make the job politically relevant...

Barbara's move out of the traditional Social Service field came as a result of being able to develop job

positions for herself which were politically relevant and combined her skills in organizing and administration and fundraising outside the "Establishment." After five years in the two social service agencies, she quit to develop a women's resource center which a number of radical women in her study group had been exploring. Barbara's reacted ecstatically to her new position as a project director for this center:

> When I got this (women's project), it was the first time in my life (pause) I was so excited, I couldn't believe it...a new lease on life and I thought what did I do to deserve this?

While the Women's Resource Center did not materialize, eight months later, Barbara got another position with a Left Foundation. This type of solution to work tension, doing "movement work," is one way in which some subjects have resolved their work struggles. While stressing that the job is not without its problems, Barbara concludes:

> Yes, (it's) definitely my best job...its the one job where I'm best able to be a whole person, minute to minute, (pause) and still do political work outside my job which is political (pause) It's a job where I can be a Marxist, a feminist, a lesbian...its there and its not hidden, its respected...

Barbara's experience of job tension was political and structural rather than purely situational, and her solution was movement work away from "mainstream" organizations. Barbara's perceptions of "Establishment" work is shared by

many subjects, yet few have been able to find as satisfactory a solution as Barbara has (at least for the moment. Two further points should be noted: First, subjects like Barbara, who have taken 'movement' jobs, have increased their political activism over the years while most subjects' activism has decreased in recent years. Secondly, the type of job Barbara holds extracts a high price. As Barbara notes, she makes relatively little money and feels that she may have "locked herself into" certain limited job prospects. In this sense, Barbara has taken the opposite route from Ann, opting for lower mobility and increasing political involvement rather than the upward mobility into the business world which Ann has achieved.

G. Renee: Job Tension as Resolved by Movement within the Social Services; Finding a Radical Job Shelter:

Renee, a 36 year old Jewish subject from a professional family, also experienced a great deal of job tension. However, her "career" suggests a resolution to the contradictions of the workplace by having successfully (for the time being, for such a quest is always contingent) achieved job positions within the social services in which she feels she is able to be a radical, practice professionally, and meet her mobility and status needs. Following Elliot Freidson's (1985) description of job positions as "occupational labor market

shelters,"[1] we might describe this goal, which Renee shares with most of this research population, as a quest for a "radical labor market shelter" in which the normative occupational needs for income, security, and status are met as well as social space for "radical practice." As Renee puts it:

> Some of us want it all, professional mobility and radicalism,(pause) a job should be politically relevant, fun, interesting, challenging, pay money and have a really fancy title..those are my contradictions. I want to be a good Marxist and put that into practice and have a lot of status and big salary. Its contradictory, I guess, but...

For Renee, coming even close to such a goal took considerable time. Renee went straight to Social Work School after graduating from college, embracing the "missionary zeal" of Social Work. However, she had a mixed experience with Social Work School; a brief, but unfulfilling involvement in Community Organization; and at least enough contact with radicals in the field who were extremely critical of the profession to somewhat temper her zeal by graduation. Upon graduating she took a job as a social worker in a foster care agency which she describes as "awful." It was a conservative, Catholic agency in which it was against agency rules to provide birth control information to the teenage girls:

> I hated it, it was awful. I didn't fit in. I wrestled the whole time I was there with quitting

> and I finally did, though I was warned never to quit that first job before a year. I don't know, I probably would have gotten fired...

Renee obtained a position as a medical social worker which she stayed at for over three years. At first, this was a very positive experience. She had a protective and compassionate supervisor; enjoyed being in a large, relatively liberal and cosmopolitan hospital setting; and enjoyed the work with patients. Over the years, however, the job changed. The hospital's Social Service Department was adding new duties and placing new pressures on staff, increasing caseload size and routinizing aspects of the work. Renee was assigned to a new supervisor who was extremely close to management and not supportive of her. During this time, Renee was an active participant in a union organizing drive at the hospital which was ultimately unsuccessful. Particularly as the union activity died down, the work seemed more alienating. At the same time, Renee had had a longstanding interest in teaching in a Social Work School, particularly in the areas of history and policy. When she learned of a school that offered a program that seemed to meet her needs, she decided to leave the hospital:

> I felt badly burned out at (hospital). I was depressed. The stress was high. And there were a lot of ways in which the change from (old head of Social Service Dept.) to (new head) made it much harder...there was some leeway, freedom in my practice, but it wasn't creative otherwise. There was a lot of pressure, (I) wasn't real happy with what I was doing...My idea was to get a doctorate

> to be a social work teacher. I thought I could be more radical as a teacher than a practitioner...I guess I felt frustrated...

After Renee completed her course work, she sought out positions to work in while writing her dissertation. Two "awful" job experiences ensued. In the first job, as a social worker at a home health care agency, she felt good about the clients and co-workers and again proceeded to do union organizing. Her social work practice was then called into question and she was fired after a short time, allegedly for not completing her recording (charts on patients required by the agency). Renee believes that she was fired for organizing, and an unfair labor practice charge was filed with the NLRB (which was ultimately dismissed). After some time out of work, Renee secured a similar job with a public health agency in a rural community. Here she felt isolated as the only social worker on staff in an agency which was extremely conservative politically and socially. When on one occasion, she defended clients on welfare, she had a dispute with most of the staff. While Renee continued to like the work with clients, after her probationary period was up, she was summarily fired "for not fitting in." This reason was never explained, but Renee attributes it to her 'hippie' sort of dress, "New York" style, and liberal values. "They never got a chance to see my radicalism. I certainly didn't share it. My liberalism was too much for them!" Renee states.

Interestingly, though Renee stopped working on her Social Work doctorate shortly afterward, she never considered leaving the profession (certainly with two consecutive firings, many would have). Renee did not interpret her work problems as being related to her career choice:

> Well, first of all these two agencies were not social work agencies, they were nursing and public health. So I could still very much identify with Social Work. In fact, it probably reinforced my desire to work with social workers, who are more liberal, to work in NYC, and in a different type of setting. But I don't why I never considered leaving...my life is identified with Social Work, it's part of who I am...it feels like it would be cognitive dissonance or something to thinking about changing this...

After leaving the rural community, Renee found a social work job with an agency serving battered women. Suddenly, Renee felt like she was doing the type of work she loved. It was good social work and good politics:

> I leaped at the opportunity to work with battered women. I would have earned a hell of lot more anyplace else with eight years of social work experience already, but I didn't care. I was motivated by politics, by the fact that work with battered women is movement like, it has a political flavor. You know in that kind of work you have to have mutuality, you talk about empowering the women. Of course, there isn't this blaming-the-victim stuff because the principle of the work is that the women are victims...I also loved the job and got to use my skills and do treatment and therapy, particularly with working class women. My values, some of which come from Social Work and most of which come from radical politics, I could use all of this at (agency for

battered women)...

After a year and a half, funding for Renee's position was cut, and she was extremely upset about losing the job. She interviewed unsuccessfully for other jobs with battered women, when by chance a job was offered to her involving work with the homeless. The position which Renee is still employed in (about three and a half years later) involves counseling mentally ill homeless women, developing and running a program for them, supervising student interns and staff, and teaching at a university affiliated with the project. Renee has found the job tremendously rewarding:

> I was very lucky. This again put me on the cutting edge of something new--work with the homeless--and also the cutting edge of where radicals were. It was an innovative program and it was practice with the surplus population, the poorest of the poor, the most irrelevant to the needs of capitalism. Moreover I also was going to to have power to design a new program. It meant this job had some real potential to implement my radical thinking...

Renee describes radicalism as being brought in subtly, through the "backdoor," since the program aspires to be innovative, hostile to traditional mental health services, and is meant to "empower" clients. Renee and the staff have used groups such as a "current events" group to politicize the women around housing issues, and have helped the tenants in a hotel for formerly homeless women to take over the running of the tenants council from management.

Much of this is not formally sanctioned by her administrators:

> When I talk of it as a radical job, I don't mean the bosses are radical. But what I do is acceptable to them as long as you use their terms..I may have to change the words around a little bit...phrased differently...there is sanction for empowering people, for innovative experiments...

Renee feels that her career in Social Work has become more radical "paradoxically at a time when the country, and even the field have become more conservative." Renee attributes this to her being able to work with populations which are "oppressed" (battered women, homeless women), which attract radicals and innovative social workers, and to the fact that as her experience, skills and credentials have increased she has had an expanded job choice. The author asked if there was a conscious decision in recent years to seek radical work:

> No. But I guess there is self-selection. You know if you're fired from enough conservative agencies, you figure out, you don't want to work in conservative agencies. For the first time in (year), I started refusing jobs that were offered me. I guess I never had that luxury before...I was looking for a job that was freer and where I (could) do more interesting stuff. I don't know if I articulated it in my head as 'I want to do radical work.'I don't remember. But even if it is articulated as wanting freedom, creativity, interesting and innovative stuff to do, then that's pretty conscious, I think, because it speaks of radical instincts behind these words...

Renee's career illustrates some of the same tensions that marked Ann and Barbara's careers, but with a resolution that at the moment allows her, after many different jobs, to feel she is doing radical work within the social services, while not suffering in terms of day-to-day misery or even low status or income. The aspects of what "movement like" work (with the homeless, battered women) consists of and what it shares with actual "movement work" like Barbara's, will be returned to in this study.

Summary:

A considerable amount of data was collected on subjects' careers which have spanned between three and twenty-one years after their first professional degrees at the time of this study. The subjects have achieved, for individuals in their thirties and forties, a significant amount of success in the employment market when measured in "objective" terms. However, the mere listing of their achievements "freezes" a resume-like concept of a "career" which is insufficient to understand actual social experience. For most subjects, worklife and mobility within the occupational structure was experienced with pain and tension and with a large number of setbacks.

Four case studies were analyzed by the author, both to introduce more fluidity into sociological accounts of

careers, and to suggest alternative interpretations of worklife. Court reflected the small number of this population who experienced little tension with work; his lack of "missionary zeal" about "changing the world" through his work, dissociation with the New Left, and a class/ethnic status which was secure, seemed to relate to Court's experience. The studies of Ann, Barbara, and Renee reflected the more typical pattern of this population who came to the social services with "missionary zeal," New Left influences, and who then experienced considerable tension at work. Ann, who experienced her work as difficult psychologically, and interpreted her failings as psychological and situational, left the field and eventually moved into a publishing career. Barbara, who experienced her job tensions in more macro level positions (planner, researcher) and interpreted the problems more politically, also left the social services, but to "movement" work, and is now employed by a Left foundation. Renee's experience illustrates the complex and differential nature of job experiences; while some jobs were experienced as oppressive and even led to her being fired, Renee did not interpret these events primarily in a psychological manner nor did she interpret them as reflecting on the field of Social Work. With job changing and increased accumulation of professional skills and credentials, she was eventually able to locate herself in two occupational positions which were "movement like." The author suggests that Barbara and Renee's quest can be

characterized as a search for a "radical labor market shelter." The relevance of the case studies to the career trends of the entire research population, and to developing measures of employment experience will be explored in the next chapter.

Note:

1. Elliot Freidson's recent work on "occupational labor market shelters" restores some dynamism to the concept of occupations by considering them as "opportunity points" for individuals and groups. Professional identification and adherence to a particular occupational group is not to be simply reduced to social class or status stratifications, but is a self-conscious process whereby individuals use occupational identifications and job positions to bargain in the labor market, not only economically, but in relation to autonomy, skill claims, prestige, and job control. Drawing on these concepts, the author extends the concept to radicals in the professions. Positions in the social services or elsewhere cannot be simply subsumed as high status or low "proletarian" status, nor as complementary or conflictual with radical political ideology. Rather these occupational points are fluid suggesting a constant movement on the part of committed radicals to obtain an organic tie to the job market (through both specific job positions, accumulation of credentials and expertise, and professional or other identifications).

This movement is both similar to Freidson's concept of occupations as bargaining points for skill claims, particularly of the professions, and, as radicals, consistent with a desire for opportunity points to exist free from repression and strong control by employers, and at least to some degree, to be free to implement radical politics at work.

Chapter VII:

Career Trends: Empirical Measures

The case studies of Court, Ann, Barbara, and Renee allow us to move into examining in summary form, some of the major trends in this population's careers thus far (commonly considered as the early to middle stages of a "career" as defined by sociologists. This chapter will consider the overall experience of job tensions on the part of the population; the experience of "negative career events" (firings, being "eased out"); the allure of managerial and supervisory positions within the social services as well as mobility to allied fields and positions in fields further removed; the nature of career changing and job changing; and a summary of the current and prospective occupational interests of this population.

A: The Experience Of Job Tensions by Subjects:

The author sought through analysis of the interviews to determine which subjects had experienced significant job tensions. For several individuals like Court, who indicated they "liked all their jobs," this was an easy task. For those such as Ann and Renee who suffered from firings and

layoffs, again classification was easy. There were a few borderline cases. In these instances, a careful review was undertaken, not only of specific comments on each job, but the overall tone of the responses received to a variety of questions. For example, James makes quite clear in discussing the possibilities of "Radical Practice"(see Chapter 10), that he believes his job is limited, alienating, and he would like to leave his position as soon as possible. Generally minor dissatisfactions were not included, but only longstanding conflictual situations experienced in a series of job positions or in one position held over a long period of time. Two subjects who were fairly recent graduates of professional school and have had limited job experience were excluded, as it was not yet possible to make an evaluation of their work lives.

Court's lack of tension with his work was representative of a small minority of the population. Only four others expressed complete satisfaction with their jobs or, in the many hours of interviewing, had not shared a great deal of conflictual material. Those who had experienced serious job tensions accounted for sixteen of the twenty-one people coded. There are significant demographic differences between those experiencing high tension in their jobs and those who did not, as well as significant associations between the "missionary zeal" described in Chapters 5 and job tension, and between job tension and career changes and job turnover (See Table 12)

Like Court, those few not experiencing high job tension tended to be from professional or business families of origin as opposed to subjects from working class/petty bourgeois families; they were more likely to be Protestant than Jewish or Roman Catholic; they were likely to be older (in their forties at the time of the study); and more likely to have education more advanced than a Masters degree. There were small associations, not believed to be statistically significant, between being male and the absence of job tensions and having trained in Casework rather than Community Organization.

Perhaps most interesting, like Ann, Barbara, and Renee, those who suffered from job tensions were overwhelmingly likely to have entered the profession with the "change the world" missionary zeal discussed earlier. Twelve of the sixteen who felt tension were in this group, nearly four times the percentage in the group that felt no tension. Clearly this idealism, whether in the pursuit of a "radical job" or a general sense of doing good ethical work, ran up against a bureaucratic, institutional structure which was felt to be hostile to these goals. On the other hand, those like Court, who had more minimal expectations of being paid to do radical work, and, came to the social services, somewhat more by chance, experienced less tension. Finally, not surprisingly, there is a strong relationship between the experience of tension and changing careers and job turnover

(to be analyzed below). Of the sixteen subjects experiencing tension, nine left the field for at least a temporary period. Four others experienced more than the average number of job changes for this population (median of 5.0 positions in the last ten years). Only three tended to either stay long-term at a position with great tension or with a minimal amount of shifting. James, for example, who has stayed within a public sector bureaucracy at different titles for many years, despite his tension and unhappiness, represents an unusual career pattern in this population.

B: "Negative Career Events":

There is, however, a considerable distinction between Barbara's decision to leave her positions at the Settlement House and the research agency (Chapter VI), and Ann's forced departure from the mental health center (firing) and from the art school (layoff) and Renee's departures from the two home health care jobs (firing). The author was interested in developing an empirical measure to indicate which subjects had been <u>involuntarily</u> separated from employment rather than leaving voluntarily. The term "negative career events" is broader than firings or layoffs; frequently employees are "eased out" or forced to quit, though this is not technically recorded. For example, Rita, was forced to quit a supervisory position at a child welfare agency when she refused to carry out practices which she considered

discriminatory and illegal. Upon her refusal, her choice was basically to quit or be fired. Howard lost a contested re-election campaign to a union position (a full time job) in a campaign marked by politicians and employers allying against him. There are, of course, ambiguous circumstances, but generally subjects were coded in this fashion only if they departed from a position held for a significant period of time under extremely adverse circumstances.

A total of twelve subjects experienced "negative career events" with many experiencing more than one major firing, quitting, "easing out," etc. (See Table 13). Even more than the job tensions, there are significant associations with both demographic factors and with the categories of "missionaries" that we have discussed.

The twelve subjects experiencing "negative career events" are even more overwhelmingly Jewish and Roman Catholic as opposed to Protestant than was the case in the association with job tension; further there is an even stronger correlation with social class of their families of origins: those from professional/business class families are more than twice as likely not to suffer "negative career events" than their peers from working class and petty bourgeois families. The associations with gender, age, and degrees received which appeared significant in job tension do not hold up in this analysis. Interestingly, while neither are statistically significant, training in the Community Organization method appears overrepresented in

those having experienced job tension, but underrepresented in those who suffer "negative career events." There is an even stronger association between those who entered the profession with a "missionary zeal" and those suffering "negative career events." Ten of the twelve who were fired or eased out entered the field with a "missionary zeal," while only four of the eleven not experiencing these events entered with this orientation. Again, not surprisingly, those who experienced "negative career events" were likely to be strong career and job changers. Seven of the twelve would at least temporarily leave the Social Service field (some returning after a period) and four others experienced more than average (for the population) job turnover. Only one subject experiencing the negative events does not fall into these two categories.

While this study is not aimed at providing explanations for "job burnout" or predicting firings or problems at work, the findings above, which are somewhat serendipitious, are worth some exploration. The association of tension and "negative career events" with those lower in social class and in ethnic/religious status as well as with a "change the world" ethic raises several possible theoretical explanations.

One logical theoretical explanation would cite societal discrimination against those from lower socio-economic classes and less than dominant religious/ethnic groupings.

Indeed there is some support for such an argument. Renee notes that anti-semitism characterized the rural agency from which she was fired; when Howard was running for union re-election, he was subjected to Jew baiting as well as red-baiting; Joseph, after being forced out by his Board of Directors, was called "a dirty Jew" by the Board President. However, there were no recorded incidents of overt anti-Catholic sentiments nor can any precise account of class prejudice be made from this study. In any case, developing clear causation and evidence of such motivations would be beyond the scope of this study.

A second cogent explanation would suggest that perhaps those suffering from "negative career events" were more politically active on the job and militant than those who did not suffer such results (see Part III of this study for the political actions of subjects at their jobs). There is again some anecdotal evidence to support this. Renee and Richard were fired from jobs after union organizing; Joseph and Bea ran into difficulties with their Boards of Directors when they moved into highly controversial, political community organizing; Rita, as noted, was forced out after refusing ethically reprehensible orders. However, there is insufficient evidence to support this thesis. First, many of those who were active politically in their jobs, did not suffer retribution. Secondly, most of the subjects experiencing "negative events," did not interpret them politically; like Ann, quoted in Chapter 6, they tend to

cite lack of organizational sophistication as well as high ethical, idealistic principles as causal factors. While this is true of many subjects, Brenda perhaps explains it best when asked by the interviewer about her firing by a child welfare agency:

> Interviewer: Do you think you were fired for political reasons?
>
> Brenda: Its hard to say. I wasn't playing the game right...as a radical or someone who is looking to try to change things you certainly have to become sophisticated in the way you try to do this...I took a very anti-authority stance and came up against a supervisor who was very vindictive...
> Interviewer: What were the circumstances then...?
>
> Brenda: Oh, it was a variety of things. I hadn't initiated a group in the group home. But, of course, I had been complaining about the conditions in the group home, the organizational and staff problems which made it impossible to do anything...But I think you can't consider it political, as my having been fired for taking a stand or anything. I think I was just not being very smart...No, I thought this supervisor was a stupid person, that's all, and I refused to go along with her ideas, it was not consciously political...

The author believes that a third thesis presents itself from the data. While no doubt discrimination plays a role as well as political retaliation, the interviews support a complex interaction between missionary zeal and ethics and social class/ethnic origins. On the one hand, the subjects, particularly those with the ideal of "changing the world" or securing paid "radical work," were, like much of the New

Left, unprepared for the institutional response of social service agencies which adhere to humanistic sounding values, but which function in the same bureaucratic and anti-worker fashion as the profit making sector of capitalism. Those subjects from non-professional families were further handicapped by a lack of familial and historical socialization to the professional culture and bureaucratic norms of their new careers. Brenda, whose father was a road department worker, and Rita, whose father was a policeman, both state in their interviews that they had trouble "closing (their) big mouths." Contrast this to the extensive pre-socialization that Court, whose parents were both professors, had even prior to entering worklife:

> Oh, I remember the academic life when I was a kid. My parents were always helping the faculty with academic squabbles. They'd call all the time.'I'm being screwed,''I'm up for tenure, what do I do,'you know. And I knew from parents that academics always had to cover their asses...

The anticipatory socialization to middle class norms and conduct which is then applied to the professional worksite is more strongly embedded in those from higher classes (for a valuable study of this phenomenon, see Ryan and Sackrey, 1984). Closely related to this is a bifurcation in occupational goals of those from different class backgrounds. For example, Naomi and Martin, never faced the major battles with social service bureaucracies, as they focused from the start on academic research. As we shall

explore below, seven of nine subjects who are either in or preparing for academic careers are from the professional class originally. While we are not arguing that there aren't major political and organizational impediments to success in academia (as Court's quote above and Ryan and Sackrey well note), it does perhaps suggests that the struggles in academia are different from social service work and perhaps more bounded by time and ritual (tenure review, specific criteria for research and publishing, etc.) and that further, there is a self-selection process in which those from the professional class view themselves with more confidence in obtaining entrance into this "club" as compared to working class people (Ryan and Sackrey, 1984).

C. The Allure of Mobility and Other Occupational Goals:

It would be erroneous to conclude that the phrase "worlds of pain" captures the full reality of this population's work experience, and that job movement was solely influenced by negative events. As suggested earlier, this is a highly successful population by societal standards. Despite the events and tensions noted above, few subjects experienced any major periods of unemployment nor have they suffered what appear to be long-term career setbacks. In fact, the very mobility of these subjects somewhat contradict the predictions of Catalyst itself and

some of its members who postulated a "proletarianization" of professional work (see Wagner & Cohen, 1978; Dykema, 1978). While one can sustain an argument that salary levels for social workers remain low, in some cases still lower than blue-collar workers, and that working conditions are no better for these professionals than other workers once they are stripped of the professional mystique, some of the key predictions of the "proletarianization" argument have faltered. Rather than being forced to suffer long term job insecurity, a lack of advancement, and, therefore, resort to increased collective action, these social workers in our study have in fact successfully left "line staff positions" and moved into supervisory and management positions, into faculty positions, or out of the field. The broader political problems this poses to a Left critique of professionalism will be explored in Part III of this study.

Of interest is that most subjects were pulled toward mobility goals as much as pushed by negative circumstances, and these two factors overlap. Court's job history indicates that he did stay at the Welfare Department (in a relatively low status position) for many years, but Court also received a Masters degree and is now in a doctoral program. While his goals are not completely clear, he will certainly have options to teach, do research, or engage in administration. Ann, one of the few subjects to actually experience some significant unemployment, did manage to leave Social Work for Arts Administration, and, afterwards for a publishing

career. Renee describes herself as having been "burned out" at her hospital job, but was able to afford to resign and enter a doctoral program. She was also able to have sufficient resources (financial, family and friends, professional networks) to recover from two firings and eventually acquire a faculty/administration position. While negative events are not suggested to be a pre-condition for moving up; they hardly contradict mobility either. In many cases, it is hard to tell if job tensions are not intertwined with blocked mobility aspirations or with conscious or unconscious desires to move on.

James puts this issue in perspective when he muses about the radicals-in-the-professions, hitting upon the issue of self-consciousness:

> Sometimes I think what this is all about has to do with opportunity theory, like Cloward and Ohlin's. A whole bunch of people whose mobility was blocked and who were educated, children of (the) professional class whose upward mobility was blocked because positions weren't open or as a consequence of values, they didn't share, so they were either driven to or gravitated to the public sector because they didn't share private sector market values...(author emphasis)

The author stresses self-consciousness in James' quote because there is less evidence in this population that mobility was blocked so much by economics, as by values. Both Ann and Renee provide good examples of this. Ann expressed considerable guilt, when interviewed, about going

into publishing; clearly there is a recognition that she is not sure what she is doing is 'politically correct.' On the one hand, she values her mobility;

> I pride myself that with this third career I've never taken a pay cut (pause) It took a long time, but I'm finally earning what many of my peers are making, despite (my) detours. I had a meteoric rise at (publishing company). I maneuvered my way in...

On the other hand, she re-interprets her position as a continuity with Social Work:

> My job is really just like a social worker's. You have to figure out where people are at, what they want to hear and then figure out a way to tell them things so they can hear it. The same skills as social work. Start where the client is at...and it really isn't very corporate. Most people are artists or ex-teachers. The dress is informal...

The self-consciousness of mobility colliding with political ideology is best illustrated by Renee, in answer to the author's question about her previous writings about social workers being part of the working class:

> I don't know if I ever totally believed it! I wanted to identify with the working class and liked to think of myself as working class, but I <u>felt</u> awfully middle class. There was this ambiguity about whether my identification as a social worker was professional or occupational...It had an interactionist effect. I can't say which came first...but for a number of reasons, a lot of it having to do with my own insecurity, I stayed a line staff level social worker for many, many years longer than the typical MSW. I knew I was competent at what I was doing, but if I moved up I might not be. I felt I might be a shitty supervisor or administrator. But also psychologically and ideologically it was more

> comfortable to say 'I'm a worker,' and 'yeh, the Director of the agency might be an oppressor, but I'm not'...(but) as I became more confident about (my) self, about my skills, about myself as a social worker and a professional, my ideology didn't keep me from doing supervisory work or from taking my current job...

As will be described below, the occupational character of the research population has changed considerably over time due to high mobility. The cohesiveness that shaped the group as students or as young caseworkers and organizers has been disrupted by rapid occupational change. The key cleavages along these lines are whether this mobility took the form of moving vertically, or through moving laterally to different careers or to alternative careers.

D. Job and Career Changing: Coping with Tension, and finding a Radical Labor Market Shelter

There is a considerable amount of job changing, and, to a lesser degree, career shifting in subjects' biographical accounts. The author collected a job history from each subject, with dates recorded as well as relevant positions and names of employing organizations. To develop a measure of job changing, the author coded each full time positior (either work or full time in school) as one entry, and developed a count for each subject over the last ten years (1976-1986). This period was chosen for two reasons; the period corresponds to the history of Catalyst and therefore bears most relevance to our study, and, secondly, since the

average subject is now only 36 yrs. old, the previous ten year period would be difficult to code for those now under 40 (e.g. time spent in undergraduate school, for example, or not in the employment market).

Findings related to job changes are summarized in Table 14. The median number of positions held by subjects was five, with a mean of 4.7. As with other measures above, the author, compared this data with demographic characteristics, and the concepts generated in this study (high job tension, "missionary zeal," and "negative career events."

The demographic characteristics are striking. Women changed jobs far more often than men; Jews and Catholics more often than Protestants; subjects from working class families of origin had the most job changes. Less surprising, but also of interest, was that the younger subjects had higher job turnover compared to the over 40 group. While, at first, this finding was felt to be obvious, since those in their thirties are at a different cycle in their careers than those now in their forties, the pattern continues to hold even when the author reviewed the biographies of those now over 40 to analyze their job changes while they were in their twenties and thirties. One explanation might be the high concentration in our population of those now over 40 who were in public sector, civil service positions. It may be that these positions because of their relative security or some intrinsic or extrinsic nature (e.g. relatively high union and radical

activity in these areas in the 1960s and 1970s) plays a role in the statistical portrait of these subjects' relative stability. Or it may be that, as the statistics suggest, there is a generational difference: with those who graduated college from 1968 or so on having a higher job turnover rate than those slightly their seniors. Another, perhaps unsurprising, but telling association, is between education and job turnover. Turnover is much higher among those with only a Masters degree than those with post-Masters training. This would appear to reflect a self-selection process: those subjects who choose to pursue an academic career took an alternative route from other subjects. A bifurcation in the population emerges between the routes of frequent job changing to achieve preferred roles or going back to school for further training in the interest of a job shelter.

There are high associations between job turnover and the high job tension and "negative career events" discussed above, not surprisingly. Again, we find those who entered the professions with a "missionary zeal" to have a job turnover twice as high as those who did not (median of six compared to three for those without such "zeal").

While changing job positions to escape tension is clearly suggested by the associations, and certainly was the case with Ann, Barbara, and Renee's moves from one position to another, it is again important to stress the simultaneous motivations of mobility and finding a "radical job shelter."

Barbara left her job at the research institute because of the allure of working in an alternative radical organization as much as from the fact that she suffered job tension at the agency. Renee was as much attracted to going into a Ph. D. program as she was desirous of relieving her job tensions in the hospital position.

The population's considerable mobility is suggested by data generated by the author which suggests a rather mass move by subjects out of direct practice human service work. The human service professions generally classify as direct service all direct client contact positions such as caseworker, groupworker, therapist, community organizer, etc. Teaching, research, administration, planning or fundraising would be examples of non-direct service work. Of interest to us here, is the tendency of non-direct practice work to be of higher pay and status than direct service, and to remove the occupant from the initial choice of human service work which was most often related to counseling or organizing clients. The table below suggests the dramatic decline (as early as 1979) in subjects occupying direct service positions:

TABLE 7: Subjects employed in Direct Practice by year, 1977-1987:

A. Subjects from Initial Collective N=14

Year (t)	Percentage in Direct Practice
1977	78.6% (11)
1978	71.4% (10)
1979	50.0% (7)
1980	28.6% (4)
1981	28.6% (4)
1982	14. 3% (2)
1983	21.4% (3)
1984	21.4% (3)
1985	21.4% (3)
1986	21.4% (3)
1987	21.4% (3)

(t) January 1st of each year

B. Complete Population(t)

Year	N=	Percentage in Direct Practice
1977	14	78.6% (11)
1978	14	71.4% (10)
1979	14	50.0% (7)
1980	16	31.3% (5)
1981	18	33.3% (6)
1982	19	21.1% (4)
1983	19	21.1% (4)
1984	19	26.3% (5)
1985	22	36.4% (8)
1986	23	30.4% (7)
1987	23	26.1% (6)

(t) Subjects added to (n) as they joined the Catalyst Collective as of January 1 of each year

Although the decline in direct practice positions is especially dramatic in Table 7.a (table 7.b shows fluctuations as new Collective members enter), both measures indicate a similar percentage in recent years (26.1% in table 7.b and 21.4% in chart 7.a).

To illustrate the changing nature of or research population over time, we can take "snapshot" views on Jan. 1, 1977 and Jan.1, 1982. In 1977, the fourteen subjects interviewed included five individuals engaged in social casework/groupwork, four students in Social Work School (all engaged in counseling or organizing internships), two community organizers, and only three individuals not in direct practice (two planners and one researcher). By 1982, a tremendous degree of occupational fragmentation is apparent in observing the nineteen subjects who had been Catalyst members. One person was a carpenter; one was unemployed; one in alternative movement work; four were employed as union officials/representatives; two were working on Ph.D.s and not employed full time; one was completing a Ph.D. and teaching; five were administrators performing no direct practice; and only four were working directly with clients (including one, Rita, who was a supervisor, but continued direct service with clients).

This movement has important ramifications for our study. First, the career patterns indicate a high degree of mobility into administrative and faculty positions as well

as an alternative route to "movement" or "movement like" jobs (e.g. labor unions). In addition to the fact that such mobility contradicted the jointly held belief in proletarianization, we shall suggest (see Part III) that such occupational fragmentation also is subversive of the political strategies and goals that this population of Catalyst members held.

The author was interested in distinguishing between those subjects who stayed in the social services, but moved into administration or supervision (such as Renee), and those subjects (such as Barbara and Ann) who appear to have left the profession. This was not an easy task to accomplish. There are many definitions of Social Work or Human Service work and many borderline cases. The author adopted a combination of the subjects' own definitions ("Did you consider yourself a social worker or in the social services at the time?") and his own (subjects were to be considered in the profession if they either served functionally as a social service worker or were employed by a social service agency). For example, an administrator of a mental health program would clearly be in the profession, but an administrator of labor contracts for a union would not. A person employed as a social worker for a union would be in the profession, but not the elected president (even though a degreed social worker).

With this definition, the author traced the tendency of the subjects to leave the profession over time (see Table

15), and the associations with other variables (see Table 16). Those leaving the social service professions increased dramatically around 1982 with eight of the fourteen subjects who had been in the original collective now in union work, women's fundraising, carpentry, publishing, or fiscal analysis. Interestingly, there is a slight trend in the years since 1982 for a return of subjects to the social services. At the risk of freezing the subjects in their current employment choices, those noted who have returned to the social service professions were labelled as "temporary" departers for the purposes of Table 16, and , those such as Ann and Barbara, who have spent at least five years outside the social service professions were labelled as "permanent."

Table 16 suggests several different dynamics at play: (1) "Temporary departers"are different from those who have left the field more permanently; (2) there is an association between high job tension and "negative career events" and trying other another field of work, (3) but, there is little association between those two factors or "missionary zeal" and the decision to permanently leave the profession. Those who leave the field (at least temporarily) are more generally male, now in their late 30s, Jewish, from non-professional or business families of origin, have a Masters degree (only), and were more likely to have been community organization majors in Social Work School. There is some correlation between high job tension and "negative career

events" and leaving (at least temporarily), but not a striking one. And there is no association between the "missionary zeal" discussed above and leaving the field.

The data would seem to suggest that a combination of factors such as tension and opportunity (note the male relationship) are operative. When Table 16 is studied in reference to "permanent departers," some demographic correlations reverse themselves, while others hold. Gender reverses, with more females staying out of the field (like Ann and Barbara) than males. Age and religion are no longer associated with departing. However, social class, degrees, and method major are significant: those from lower social class families of origin (Ann and Barbara as opposed to Court and Renee, for example) are nearly three times more likely to depart; those with Masters degrees alone are six times more likely to depart than those with Ph.D.s or in pursuit of them (again illustrated by Ann and Barbara compared to Court and Renee); and those who major in community organization are nearly three times as likely to depart (Barbara, for example) than those who major in casework/groupwork. The high departure (both "temporaries" and "permanents") of community organizers would seem to reflect our comments about "blocked mobility," since community organization as an area of employment has been in increasing decline in the last decade (see, for example, Reisch and Wenocur, 1986, pp. 84-85 on the decline of community organization).

This discussion suggests that the mobility of the population has different roots: high tension and difficulty on the job leads to job turnover, but for most subjects, there is little consideration given to leaving the field (particularly for the female caseworkers such as Renee). On the other hand, the allure of "movement" jobs is strong, particularly for organizers and the allure of high level administration is strong, particularly for men. Some subjects, of course, are driven by unanticipated events which may be positive, such as Sam's run for union office, which he did not think would be successful yet is now in its seventh year. The demographic and ideological cleavages become even clearer as we examine the current jobs and future goals of the subjects below.

E. Current Positions and Future Occupational Goals of Subjects:

As noted earlier, the subjects' current employment reflects a picture of relative success with a significant trend away from direct practice to widely dispersed areas within and without the social service fields (Tables 8 and 9). As indicated in the tables, seven of the twenty-three subjects cannot be considered to be doing social service work.[1] Of the remaining sixteen, only six remain in direct practice. The most common current position held was administrative. Three people can be considered to be high

level administrators, supervising a large number of staff in agencies and controlling large funds. Five people occupy middle level management positions within social agencies: for example, James, as a project manager with a small budget in a large public agency; Brenda, as a social work supervisor/program director of a unit within a small child welfare agency; and Josie, as an assistant director of a community center. Four others listed in Table 8 fall into academia in table 9. For example, Martin administers a research program at a university. Within the population, there are also four who hold faculty rank and one full time Ph. D. student. Only four; Court, Alan, Agnes, and Monica; hold traditional mental health/social work counseling positions (and it should be noted that two of these four are relatively recent M.S.W.s).

While prediction of this population's future careers is beyond the capacity of the author, subjects, in some cases, had made obvious plans to move on (such as enrolling in a doctoral program) or, in other cases, stated during the interviews, that they wished to move into a certain area. Even without the advantage of a crystal ball, we can at least account for obvious career plans now anticipated (see Table 11). The table indicates the most prevalent trend is towards academia; the five now employed in this setting wish to remain, and are likely to be joined by three who are obtaining their degrees. Another subject, Bea, who is

currently working as a consultant, discussed her interest in returning to graduate school to obtain a higher degree. Those in high administration or business indicated no plans or desires to move into different career paths nor did those who I have classified as being in "movement" work (Barbara and two subjects, Sam and Jacqueline, who are in union work). For example, Sam was asked what he thought he would do if he lost a union re-election at some point; he replied that he doubted he would ever return to social work or planning, but would try to work as a union organizer or Director of Organizing.

Four of those who are in counseling were fairly definite about staying in this area; for example, Alan, who had once considered an academic career and left his counseling job for a labor union position for one year, told the author that he had decided he had no need for higher status and income and wished to continue to be a therapist at an agency; Monica was anticipating going into analytic training as soon as she could afford it; and Agnes stressed her desire to stay at her public sector agency job as a counselor for the "long haul" with the possibility of accepting a supervisory position.

Several people were difficult to predict. Richard, who cites a history of "moving on" is not sure where he would go from his mid-level management/counseling position. He is drawn to writing and academic pursuits, but has had some negative experiences with teaching as an adjunct, and also

feels his credentials make employment difficult. He would eagerly consider a union or movement job if offered a position that paid sufficiently and utilized his skills. Rita, who holds a middle level position with a health advocacy group, had no immediate plans to move on, but mused in the interview about being an academic or continuing her career in administration. She also is the only one in the population to currently have a private therapy practice, and this activity could be developed further. It should be noted that most of the population has rejected private psychotherapy practice as a full-time option, though several have had private patients for a period of time. Finally, Josie, who is a fairly recent graduate of professional school, suggested she wanted to see how her new job as administrator of a community center went. She indicated the possibility that she would continue in this area or possibly go to Law School in the future.

By combining the subjects' current employment statuses and the additional information gained in the interviews, a more complete profile of the population's careers is obtained in Table 17. First, it is important to note areas which are <u>not</u> trends; unlike many graduates of professional schools in Social Work and Psychology, there is no major movement towards private psychotherapy nor is there any major interest in the more prestigious professions such as medicine or law. Generally this research population clusters

towards academia; counseling, supervising or low level administration in public or voluntary agencies; high level public administration; and full time "movement" work.

There are significant demographic differences in career goals. Seven of the nine individuals heading towards academic careers are from professional families, but professional families of origin are underrepresented in high level administration and movement work. Both of the latter areas attract subjects from more working class backgrounds. The counseling positions show no class distinctions. Consistent with studies of the field (NASW, 1983, p. 180) men are overrepresented in high level administration, while women are in counseling and low level supervisory positions. Religious background presents an interesting dichotomy, with Jews three and a half times more likely to be interested in academia than Catholics, while the percentages are reversed for counseling. Jews compose entirely all subjects in the high administration/business area, but Catholics predominate in the small number of movement jobs. Surprisingly given the overlap in curricula in Schools of Social Work between Community Organization and Administration,[2] most of those trained in C.O. did <u>not</u> move into traditional administration after the drying up of organizing jobs. Rather they have moved towards academia or alternative organizations.

Career direction, political ideology, the experience of job tensions, and "negative career events" interact in a

complex fashion. The academics tend to have had a lower degree of job tension and "negative career events"because academic positions attract more individuals from professional backgrounds (see above) and because, in the last decade or more, most of these subjects were able to do research or teach part-time while securing higher degrees. Some subjects who came to social services with a "missionary zeal" are now moving toward academia, but for the most part the academics were not missionaries. The most salient associations between political ideology, job tension, and career direction occur at the extremes of the population: those like Ann who went into business or into high administration; and those like Barbara who went into "movement" work. As will be further developed in Chapter 8, the high level administrators/business group are the only sub-group of the population to become generally detached from radical ideology. All four subjects experienced considerable job tensions, and three of the four experienced serious "negative career events." Like Ann, they all interpreted their problems situationally, re-formed their careers in an upwardly mobile fashion, and now find political radicalism problematic. Those who are now in "movement" work, like Barbara, interpreted their job tensions more politically, and sought out employers who were more complementary to their ideologies ("labor market shelters"). Interestingly, this sub-group includes the two

subjects who have most increased their radical political activism in recent years (see Chapter 8).

While the counselors have sustained more "negative career events" than the academics (see above), there are no major distinctions between the two groups in terms of political ideology or interpretation of job tension. In fact, many subjects straddle the fence between academia and agency work; a situation common to Social Work and Psychology which frequently draws on "practitioners" to teach. The subjects appear as "reluctant academics" at best. Renee has now returned to completing her doctorate, greatly because of a chance opportunity to be affiliated with a University in her administrative/practice work with the homeless. She now feels it would be foolish not to take advantage of her doctoral work and University connection. However, she returns to her self-concept (see Chapter 4) of not being an "intellectual," and is ambivalent about a full-time faculty position, particularly one which would mean no actual client contact. Rosalind, while currently an assistant professor, also expresses ambivalence, and has begun to work extensively with social agencies. She indicates that she could easily see herself as a counselor or supervisor at a social agency rather than an academic. Howard, who spent six years as an organizer, also expresses ambivalence about his decision to enter academia: the high degree of "impact" (as Barbara sought) that he felt from organizing is rarer for him in academia, and he misses the

contact with working class and poor people in their community environments.

Both academia and counseling positions provide 'job shelters' for the majority of the subjects who have retained their radical political ideology and idealism, yet have suffered job tensions. Compare, for example, Rita's account of her work as a therapist (below) with James' account of teaching:

> (Rita) When you do therapy, you have autonomy. Its just the walls, and you and the client. Here I can be myself. And I can integrate some of my political theory and practice...can be satisfied because on a direct 'one to one,' you don't have to plan <u>through</u> people or maneuver around other people...
>
> (James) The classroom is kind of given to you as your political terrain. I introduce myself in class as a democratic socialist, and I haven't had great problems...Teaching is satisfying personally and politically because it does give me (a) certain social space and says 'this is yours'...

In this sense, the goal of radical professionals is the same as that which sociologists have suggested to be the goal of 'straight' professionals: job autonomy and control over work. Professional skills buttress the market power and ideological claims for professional labor to control their own work (Derber, 1982; Freidson, 1970, 1972, 1973; T. Johnson, 1972; Larson, 1977). In forthcoming chapters, we shall explore to what degree the social space of "autonomous" professional work or a "radical labor market

shelter" is actually utilized for different ends by radicals than for 'straight' professionals.

Summary:

This chapter developed and analyzed a variety of career trends based on longitudinal data collected of subjects and the in-depth interviews. In summary fashion, the subjects' experience of job tensions, "negative career events," the allure of upward mobility, and job and career changing were presented. Additionally, the subjects current and prospective career directions were noted.

A strong association between the "missionary zeal" discussed in Chapter 5 and the experience of job tension and "negative career events" was found. This appears to reflect both the dashing of the high expectations these subjects, who were young, idealistic, and influenced by the New Left, suffered at social service jobs, and a considerable social class/religious/ethnic overlay (reflecting strong differences in socialization to professional and bureaucratic work). Beyond this idealism, most subjects also were significantly influenced by mobility goals and the allure of non-traditional work. Many of these radicals have, over the years, either left the traditional social service field altogether or have left direct practice social service work. It would appear that this population is divided in their occupational choices along the lines of both social

stratification and political/social psychological interpretations made of their work experiences. Those from professional families of origin are more likely to pursue academic careers, and those from non-professional families are more likely to consider high administrative positions and "movement" work as an alternative. Counseling positions are more closely related to gender and method area of training in professional schools than to social class of origin. Those who interpret their tensions psychologically and must struggle to find job positions which meets normative career needs will be more likely to accept high administrative posts. Political commitment to Left ideology is diminished for these subjects, but questions remain as to which came first: the ideological change or the career change.

Most subjects, in contrast to the high level administrators, seek to obtain a "radical labor market shelter," in which at least most of their normative work needs are met, but which also allows them to feel their political ideology is complementary to either their job or employer (or both). Some subjects choose "movement" work which provides a presumed complementarity between political ideology of the employer and employee. Others, in moving towards academic or counseling positions seek job autonomy in which the employer permits enough social space for the employee to pursue her/his idealistic goals. The subjects reject several possible career paths, such as private

psychotherapy (as a full time vocation) and careers in law, medicine, and other high status professions.

The complex career patterns of these radical professionals leads us to the problem of how subjects currently interpret their work and professional status and training, the subject of Chapter 8. To what degree do these radicals, in seeking autonomy and job shelters, actually engage in "radical work" and, to what degree they can be successful, will be the subjects of Part III.

Notes:

1. Two subjects created difficult decisions for the author as to whether they had "left the social services." In both cases, Bea and Joseph, the author ultimately studied the interview data and noted the self-concepts of the individuals. Bea recently started doing consulting work after completing a year of study on a fellowship. Some of her work does involve social service organizations. However, during the interview with Bea, she stated it was very unlikely that she would ever return to her previous roles as a community organizer or social service administrator. Rather she suspected that she would do research or go back to school to get a doctorate in a social science discipline. She indicated strongly that she did not identify as a social worker or social service professional (see case study, Chapter 8).

Joseph has fluctuated over the last decade from social service administration to carpentry to construction. Recently, he has in some sense put these skills together as he is involved in a housing rehabilitation program which improves low income units. However, despite the non-profit and "human need" aspect of his employer, it would appear to be stretching matters to place Joseph in the category of a social service professional. Primarily, Joseph supervises construction and crews of craftspeople on rehab jobs, and does not identify as a social service worker. It is significant to note, however, that given Joseph's substantial skills, he has not moved to the private sector or to forming his own business to make profits, and this is greatly related to his political ideology.

2. Community Organization as a method area of Social Work arose greatly out of the community chest/federation movements of the 1920s, and despite its association with radicalism and "grass roots" organizing in the 1960s and 1970s, was always educationally linked to Administration and Planning. After grass roots organizing positions declined again in the mid 1970s, most Social Work schools again re-oriented their curricula to the job market by stressing administration, planning or policy over grass roots organizing. For a classic formulation of Community Organization as a method area including administration and planning, see Cox, 1974; for a recent history of C.O. which traces the politics of C.O. curricula, see Reisch and Wenocur, 1986.

TABLE 8: CURRENT (1986-87) OCCUPATIONAL POSITIONS OF SUBJECTS (BY JOB FUNCTION)

	Number
Administrator(Hi Level, Large Staffs)	3
Middle Level Administration (frequently combined with direct practice)	8
Teaching and Administration	3
Teaching (only)	1
Counseling (only)	4
Research (only)	1
Consultant	1
Business	1
F/T Student	1

N=23

TABLE 9: CURRENT OCCUPATIONAL POSITIONS OF SUBJECTS
(BY AREA OF EMPLOYMENT)

Area	Number
Academia	5
Social Service Agencies	12
Hospital	(1)
Public Agencies	(4)
Non-profit counseling agencies	(4)
Non-profit miscellaneous	(3)
Labor Union	2
Business	1
Student	1
Consultant	1
Left Organization	1

N=23

TABLE 10: CURRENT EDUCATIONAL DEGREES OF SUBJECTS

Degree	Number
Ph. D.	6
Post-MS (in Ph. d. programs)	5
Masters (including one subject with two Masters degrees)	12

N=23

TABLE 11: OCCUPATIONAL GOALS OF RESEARCH POPULATION

Area	Number
Academia	9
Administration (including Business)	4
Counseling/Supervision	4
"Movement" Work	3
Unclear	3

N=23

TABLE 12: HIGH JOB TENSION CORRELATED
WITH SIGNIFICANT VARIABLES
(percentages)

(excludes two subjects with limited post-MS experience)

	High Tension(N=16)	Low Tension(N=5)
Gender	Female 56.2 Male 43.7	Female 40 Male 60
Age	*Median 36.5 40s:25 * Late 30s:43.7 Early 30s:31.3	*Median 41 40s 60* Late 30s: 20 Early 30s:20
Religion	Jewish: 62.5* Catholic:31.3* Prot: 6.3*	Jewish: 40 * Catholic: 20 * Prot: 40 *
Social Class of Origin	Prof/Bus.:37.5* Petty Bourg.: 31.3* Working Class: 31.3%*	Prof/Bus.:80* P.Bourg: 20* W.Class: 0*
Degrees:	Ph.D.: 25 Post-MS:18.8* MS: 56.3*	Ph.D.: 40 Post-MS: 40* MS: 20*
Method in Social Work School:	Direct Prax.: 50 C.O.: 37.5 (a)N/A: 12.5	Direct Prax: 60 C.O.: 20 N/A: 20
"Negative Career Events"	75*	0 *
"Missionary Zeal"on Entry to Profession	75*	20*

(* notes significant correlation)

(a) N/A applies to those who did not attend Schools of Social Work or one subject not classifiable.

TABLE 13: "NEGATIVE CAREER EVENTS" CORRELATED WITH SIGNIFICANT VARIABLES
(percentages)

	"Negative Events"(N=12)	No(N=11)
Gender	Male 41.6 Female 58.3	Male: 45.4 Female: 54.5
Age:	Median: 36.5 40s: 25 Late 30s:41.7 Early 30s: 33.3	Median: 36 40s: 27.3 Late 30s: 36.4 Early 30s: 27.3
Religion:	Jew: 66.7* RC: 33.3 Prot: 0*	Jew: 45.4* RC: 27.2 Prot: 27.2*
Social Class: of Origin	Prof/Bus.: 33.3* Petty Bour: 33.3* W.Class: 33.3*	Prof/Bus.: 72.7* Petty Bour: 18.1* W.Class: 9.1*
Degrees:	Ph.D.: 25 Post-MS: 16.6 MS: 58.3	Ph.D.: 27.2 Post-MS: 27.2 MS: 45.4
Methods in SW School:	Direct Prax.: 58.3 C.O.: 33.3 (a)N/A: 8.3	Direct Prax.: 45.4 C.O.: 36.3 N/A: 18.1
High Tension With Work	100*	54.5*
"Missionary Zeal" on Entry to Profession	83.3*	36.3*

(*) indicates significance

(a) N/A applies to those who did not attend Schools of Social Work or one subject not classifiable.

TABLE 14: JOB CHANGES CORRELATED WITH SIGNIFICANT VARIABLES (expressed in median number of job positions, 1976-1986)

Overall job positions=109
Overall Median= 5.0

Gender:	
Male	3.5
Female	5.0 *
Age:	
Early 30s	6.0*
Late 30s	5.0
40s	3.0*
Religion:	
Jewish	5.0
Roman Catholic	6.0*
Protestant	2.0*
Social Class of Origin:	
Profl/Business	5.0
Non-profl.	5.0
(Working class)	(6.0)*
Degrees:	
Ph. D.	3.0 *
Post-M.S.	5.0
M.S.	6.0 *
Method Major in Social Work School:	
Direct Practice	5.0
Community Organization	5.0
N/A	2.0 *
High Job Tension:	
Yes	5.0
No	3.0 *

"Negative Career Events:

Yes	6.0	*
No	4.0	*

"Missionary Zeal"
Upon Entry to Profession:

Yes	6.0	*
No	3.0	*

(*) indicates significance

TABLE 15: CAREER CHANGES IN RESEARCH POPULATION

A. Movement out of the social services over the years (original collective of 1976)

N=14

Date (Jan. 1)	Percentage in Social Services
1977	100%
1978	100%
1979	85.7%
1980	71.4%
1981	71.4%
1982	42.9%
1983	57.1%
1984	57.1%
1985	64.3%
1986	57.1%
1987	57.1%

B. Movement out of the social services (all subjects)

(t) subject added upon joining collective

Date (Jan 1)	Percentage in Social Services
1977	100%
1978	100%
1979	85.7%
1980	75.0
1981	77.7%
1982	57.9%
1983	57.9%
1984	62.2%
1985	72.7%
1986	69.6%
1987	69.6%

TABLE 16: CAREER CHANGES CORRELATED
WITH SIGNIFICANT VARIABLES
(percentages)

	"Temporary Changes"	"Permanent"
All subjects N=23	47.8% (11)	30.4%(7)
Gender:		
Male	60.0*	20.0*
Female	38.4*	38.4*
Age:		
Early 30s	28.6	28.7
Late 30s	66.7*	33.3
40s	42.9	28.7
Religion:		
Jewish	61.5*	30.8
Roman Catholic	28.6	28.6
Protestant	33.3	33.3
Social Class of Origin:		
Profl/Business	33.3*	16.7*
Non-Profl.	63.6*	45.4*
Degrees:		
Ph. D.	50.0	16.7*
Post-M.S.	20.0*	0*
M.S.	58.3*	50.0*
Method Major in Social Work School:		
Direct Practice	33.3*	16.7*
Community Org.	62.5*	50.0*
N/A (a)	66.6*	33.3
High Job Tension:		
Yes	56.2*	31.3
No	40.0	40.0

"Negative Career Events:

Yes	58.3 *	33.3
No	36.4	27.3

"Missionary Zeal" upon Entry to Profession:

Yes	50.0	35.7
No	44.4	22.2

(*) indicates significance

(a) N/A applies to those who did not attend Schools of Social Work or one subject not classifiable.

TABLE 17: Occupational Goals correlated with significant variables (percentages)

	(N=9) Academia	(N=4) High Admn.	(N=4) Counseling	(N=3) 'Movement'
Gender:				
Female	55.5	25.0	75.0*	66.6*
Male	44.4	75.0*	25.0	33.3
Religion:				
Jewish	66.6*	100.0*	25.0	0
R.Catholic	11.1*	0	75.0*	66.6*
Protestant	22.2	0	0	33.3
Social Class of Origin:				
Profl/Business	77.7*	25.0	50.0	0
Non-Profl/Bus.	22.2*	75.0*	50.0%	100*
Methods in Social Work School:				
Direct Practice	33.3	75.0	100.0	33.3
Community Org.	44.4*	25.0	0	66.6
N/A	22.2	0	0	0
High Job Tension:				
Yes	55.5	100.0*	100.0*	66.6
No	44.4	0	0	33.3
"Negative Career Events:"				
Yes	33.3*	75.0*	75.0*	33.3*
No	66.6	25.0	25.0	66.6
"Missionary Zeal" on entry to the Profession:				
Yes	44.4	50.0	50.0	66.6*
No	55.5	50.0	50.0	33.3

(*) indicates significance
(a) N/A applies to those who did not attend Schools of

Social Work or one subject not classifiable.

CHAPTER VIII:

INSIDERS AND OUTSIDERS: ALTERNATIVE MEDIATIONS OF PROFESSIONALISM

Having examined in the previous chapters the subjects' experiences with professional socialization and with the beginning of what Rudi Deutscke referred to as "the long march through the institutions," we return to our questions about the subjects' ideological/professional views: To what degree do radical professionals identify themselves with a profession, its norms, ideology, and symbols? Do subjects find their work complementary to their political values, and if so, what ideologies mediate between the two spheres? This chapter will examine these questions by analyzing how subjects described themselves ideologically when interviewed in 1986-1987 and how they they described their attachments to the Social Service professions (the term "attachment" is used to cover both the "objective fact" of occupational location and participation in professional activities, as well as subjective identifications with a profession and use of its symbols, language, and paradigms). The author will develop a typology in order to theoretically describe the structured alternatives available to these radicals in the professions. While the experience of this population as individuals embarking on separate career paths and their

interpretations of these experiences is critical to the questions raised in this study, it has also been suggested that this population is part of broader social movements. Part III will attempt to examine the experiences and subjective understandings of this population from the point of view of a social movement, with particular attention to how these radicals attempt (or attempted) to put their political beliefs into action through their work, and what structural factors limit the success of such political activity.

A. The Stability of Radical Political Ideology:

Before analyzing the population's attempts to mediate political ideology with professional norms and occupational positions, a brief discussion of the subjects' current attachment to political radicalism is necessary, as well as a conceptual distinction made between ideology and activism.

In their 1968 article on the first conference of radicals-in-the-professions, Barbara and Alan Haber comment on the agony and guilt felt by many conference participants (Haber and Haber, in Long, 1969):

> But regardless of background, most of the participants expressed a common set of questions and mood of frustration: 'It's hard to be radical for long -- nothing happens. How shall we live? Where is the revolution? How do we measure and aid its coming?' They were people who had, by themselves or in groups, been seeking answers for

> a long time, but had not found any; people who felt to some degree that they were failing and who were anxious not to fail...And among the bona fide professionals, at least, there was a great deal of guilt; for having 'opted in'; for wearing a suit; for having given up some of the badges of opposition; for making a living; for having had too little success as radicals-within-professions.

Despite the profound changes in the twenty years since Haber and Haber wrote the above, this author found that his study provoked a similar sense of guilt among many subjects during the course of the interviews:

> (Naomi): I was concerned when you came to interview me, I was thinking now I don't do anything political since Catalyst (pause) I guess it gets into the question of what's political (pause)...do you have to be an activist?...
>
> (Renee): When I talk about what I'm doing politically, or not doing, it's hard. Like a radical super-ego nagging at me...and the whole conversation is very upsetting...

The high level of guilt felt by some subjects seems to be a result of the extraordinarily high standards of idealism and activism that date back to the radicalism of the New Left. Since the majority of the research population became radicalized in the 1966-1971 period, they tend to associate radicalism with sustained ongoing and militant political activity. Further, the influence of "social myths" and language must be noted. The media's recent construction of a "yuppie" class of ostensibly well healed middle class professionals who are obsessed with consumption and

indifferent to political issues, also has had an effect on the subjects. Most of the individuals expressed disdain for the so called "yuppies," distinguishing both their political beliefs and daily lives from them. However, the very concern with the issue by subjects indicates the myth's power: subjects wish not to be seen as "yuppies," and fear ascription to this category much as committed 1960s radicals did not want to be seen as "opting out" or "becoming part of the system." Those subjects who have achieved less economic success or social status, not surprisingly, seemed to suffer from less psychological tension about this issue.

However, it is important to separate theoretically political ideology from political activism (and as a clinical device in the interviews, it was frequently necessary for the author to help the subjects do so as well). Political ideology is related to an internal belief system and serves as an evaluative framework to view events and interactions, whether these be international issues or one's own daily life. Political activism, on the other hand, relates to the degree of success in implementing subjective beliefs in a public arena of social action. Numerous studies of radical students in the 1960s (Keniston, 1973, p. xi) found that radical political ideology and actual participation in protest were two completely different variables. Radical ideologies, as with any other ideology, translates into social action only when a complex set of

events occur including opportunities for expression and responsive audiences.

In spite of the subjects' tendency to conflate the two variables (ideology and activism), it is not surprising theoretically to find a high degree of ideological consistency over the years present in this population, at the same time as one finds some degree of diminution in political activism.

Despite the guilt expressed by some subjects and considerable debate about what was "radical" in practice, the author found that subjects displayed a strong persistence of radical ideology. With few exceptions (see below), subjects retained a strong commitment to radicalism, including beliefs in the need for revolutionary change. Barbara's comments in Chapter 4 about "(not) see(ing) living any other way" were echoed by many other subjects:

> (Monica): I don't think it (my politics) will ever change, its hard to imagine...nothing upsets me more than hypocrisy and (I) can't imagine becoming, ever becoming conservative...(it's) very clear to me how (the) political economy works, that's fact and (one) can't pretend it doesn't exist...
>
> (Richard): I still feel very militant, (I) haven't felt my militancy diminishing. It's still worth struggling...and, of course, I see all sorts of people become less committed to radical politics as they advance, you know, get a co-op and a management job or whatever...
>
> (Howard): Radicalism, I guess, still dominates whatever I do (pause) I feel that whatever else I haven't sold out my political values. (And) its led me to leave a lot of jobs, and not to take others. It's a constant issue. What compromises

you're willing to make. But after awhile you're committed, you can't turn back on your beliefs...

The problem with self-labelling noted in Chapter 4 appears to indicate discomfort only within a relatively narrow region of the political spectrum. Subjects appeared reluctant to choose between such labels as socialist, Marxist, socialist-feminist, Marxist-Feminist, feminist, democratic socialist or anarchist. Except for the four subjects discussed below, there was little question that the population displayed a consistent leftist ideology. While the difficulty in constructing a common language of description is not insignificant, and, is indicative of the fundamental lack of a popular Left culture and symbols in the U.S. in the 1980s, it cannot be interpreted as a diminution in adherence to radical values or beliefs.

How surprising is this finding? In some ways, perhaps not very. As indicated earlier, this research population is drawn from Catalyst collective members over a ten year period, and includes four current collective members. While the remainder are no longer associated with Catalyst, their departures range in time from only two years to eight years ago (median time out of Catalyst for all subjects was four and one half years).

In two ways, however, the finding is of significance. First, given the current emphasis by the media on "yuppies" and the decline of radicalism, the stability of ideology in

our population is striking. The average subject was radicalized seventeen years before this study (see Chapter 4), and despite the demise of the New Left and other social movements, still embraces the principles of radicalism. Secondly, and most relevant to our study, the consistency of political ideology appears in striking contrast to the lack of stability of professional ideology and identification. As we shall see below, an analysis of the population's attachment to the social service professions indicates that these normative ties and bonds are far weaker, and they have eroded for many subjects during the same time period.

B. The Vicissitudes of Political Activism:

While, at times, self-description of activism seemed to minimize subjects' involvement (consistent with the guilt of the subjects), there is little question that, compared to the stability of political ideology, political activism is more fluid. Indeed, political activism ebbs and flows, but there was a noticeable decline in activity for <u>most of the subjects</u>, particularly in the last half dozen years.

For those who displayed a decline in radical political activism, a variety of reasons were noted. Increased work and family responsibilities (as noted by Aries, 1984) were chief among them:

> (James): I guess my activity has dwindled in the last four years...My job takes alot of time, then

> my teaching, and then, of course, writing my dissertation...it's hard to sort out political activism, maybe alot of Left politics has to do with people being single and in their twenties and thirties...
>
> (Sam): Maybe if I didn't have the union movement to keep my time active I would more actively search out more Left activity to be involved in (pause) because I certainly am very concerned about politics...
>
> (Naomi): Of course it's real hard with (child) being born, and then there's work, and with a faculty job you're always busy...so sometimes I think I just survive (pause) day to day and work and come back home and so forth...

The second major issues cited was the "change in the times" in the 1980s. For some subjects the times appeared so quiescent that it was difficult to see what to be involved in. Court suggests a parallel with Marx in the 1850s:

> It's family responsibilities and the hours of work and school, but it's also <u>there is less to be active in</u>. Maybe the times are what is most significant. You know, after the revolutions of 1848, Marx returned to his writings in the 1850s. You can't always be active, particularly in the absence of movements...

Others recognized the presence of some social movements, but felt they were removed from certain political struggles. Bea, who was a community organizer and an activist for many years, feels that the accent on self-help in minority and other ethnic communities and the exclusion of whites from some of these movements has made participation difficult:

> I was forced to confront the fact that I was Jewish, white, female, and middle class. You know I kind of denied some of this for a long time...But I can't just go into Bedford-Stuyvesant and talk passionately and be a leader in that community. It was mostly a fluke that I got to be a leader in (community which has now become heavily Third World)...Remember the analysis of the Weathermen...or was it someone else?...That the only role for white political people on the Left is to educate, to work with people of your own kind, not others...I find this totally untenable and yet I find alot of people I believe in, politically, espousing these kinds of beliefs. At least in the city (N.Y.C) there is an increasing separatism, a tribalism...this makes even finding an organization to work with difficult...

Others who were active in the anti-war and civil rights movements or in the New Left, feel less compatibility with newer movements:

> (Renee): I guess you have to look at what was going on at the time (late 1970s). I mean the major political activism was stuff like the anti-nuke movement. Those of us older folks from the 1960s didn't get as into that. I mean, of course, I'm sympathetic, but it was different, much younger (people) and less politically radical. I felt that way with alot of the Feminist stuff by the late 1970s. By then you were also branded as being on the 'Male Left' if you were a Marxist (as I am)...

Indeed, one of the two most significant variables in recent political activism that could be gleaned from the interviews, was a generational one. Those who were currently most active (other than those in movement jobs, see below) were most likely to be younger (30-37) and, radicalized in the post 1975 period. There may, indeed, be a significant

relationship between age and work involvement and family responsibilities, and political differences between individuals and movements of the late 1970s/1980s compared to the 1960s/1970s. However, what seems most salient is that consistent political activism, at least for most people interviewed, appears to have certain finite time limits. Therefore, it is not surprising that the four subjects who are still in the Catalyst collective are between the ages of 30 and 36 and were radicalized post 1975, whereas many of the older and longer term radicals are less involved. While activism is more fluid than can be captured by such generalizations, it appears that many of those who became radical in the late 1960s trailed off in their activities by the late 1970s, while some of the more recently radicalized (such as Rosa and Brenda in the late 1970s) began to trail off by the mid-1980s. Certainly the psychic energy and time commitment demanded by political activities cannot sustain themselves at the same level indefinitely.

As we shall discuss below, the second evident variable appeared to be occupational position. As noted, the extremes of the population; those who worked in "movement" jobs, and those working in high administrative positions; showed the highest activism on the part of the former and the lowest activism (as well as the least adherence to radical political ideology) on the part of the latter. Additionally, certain occupational factors, such as being a

doctoral student or a new member of academia, seemed to mitigate against activism other than those related to lectures, speaking engagements and publications.

C. Points of Ideological Consensus:

Since the remainder of this chapter will focus on different alternative attachments to ideology and professional careers, it is important to briefly note areas where the subjects were almost unanimous in their opinions.

In three ways, subjects reflected a less antagonistic relationship to social service professionalism than might have been case in the heat of the 1960s attacks on professionalism. In two respects, most subjects, for different reasons, appeared to somewhat 'buck the tide' dominant in the social service professions.

In regards to the anti-professionalist views of the 1960s, subjects disagreed with a tendency in the late 1960s to simply describe Social Work or other mental health work as a "social control" profession. Most subjects acknowledged that the mental health professions indeed did perform some social control functions (such as labelling "deviants" and monitoring clients), however, subjects felt these functions were built into most every job under capitalism. Moreover, these functions were just one part of social service work, and left out the considerable helping functions social service workers served. Many subjects commented that social

service work had gotten a "bad rap" from parts of the Left in the late 1960s.

Secondly, subjects felt that criticism of professional degrees and the credentialling process, which was common in the 1960s, were also overdrawn. Subjects felt strongly that the work of social workers or psychologists is highly skilled, and could not simply be given over "to the people" at one fell swoop as sometimes suggested in the late 1960s. Subjects differed, however, in how they regarded the criticisms of credentials. Some subjects felt that the movement against credentials was simply a part of the guilt and self-abnegation of the 1960s; these subjects tended to be those who found professionalism non-problematic. Those who were more critical of professionalism saw the credentialling issue as reflecting a very real "contradiction" under capitalism like the social control/helping dialectic in the social services:

> (Martin): This has been a very hard one for me to resolve (the question of credentials)...For us of the 1960s it was all too easy and self-defeating to equate personal success with selling out...(Yet) I'm sure sociologically and politically, that credentialling slows down the impetus and possibilities for real change and is elitist...(But) I don't think we're living in a pre-revolutionary situation, and I don't see myself as being any more effective without credentials...Professional credentials are a source of power; most important for us to recognize they are also limited and must be constantly critiqued...still I think the thing to do is encourage people to get them (credentials), and also critique them...
>
> (Richard): It's a hard question. I encourage

> working class people to go and get degrees. Education can lead to leadership and power (pause) yet (I) oppose the notion that only professionals should have knowledge and professionals have an obligation to give away their knowledge as much as possible...I guess it's one of those contradictions where we have to encourage education, but at the same time, we need to have conscious resistance to professional norms...It's an issue now when there is a revolution, like in Nicaragua or Zimbabwe, you know, the New Class or technocrats still has the expertise. I guess I'm pretty sure that I'm willing to surrender a degree of my power in such a situation, at least I think I am...

Thirdly, there was general consensus among the subjects that some of the historic methodological battles in Social Work (such as Community Organization versus Casework) and some of the major paradigmatic battles (theories of psychological causation versus sociological explanations; ego psychology versus behavioral or ecological approaches to direct practice) had also been overdrawn in the past. For example, while organizers were still proud of their own training and often identified themselves with a different tradition (see Bucher and Strauss, 1961, on 'segments' within professions), they accepted the need for radical counselors. Many subjects, in commenting on counseling, suggested a need for eclectic approaches among radicals, and agreement that some critiques of Freudianism were overdrawn. There was a general feeling that the skills and political orientations of the practitioners were at least as important (if not more so) than the particular therapeutic approach.

In two respects, the subjects maintain what might

appear to be norms that are counterposed to many social service professionals, even when those most loyal to the profession and those most detached from radical ideology are included. One, noted already in Chapters 5-7, is their continued opposition to a private practice model of professionalism in the social services. While a number of people have seen patients privately, the idea of a full-time private psychotherapy practice was seen as both personally isolating and unrealistic, and, in general, as a politically retrogressive step for the profession. Of course, the fact that those who are detached from radicalism have tended to leave the social service professions or to move into administrative or business work, suggests that they are not attached to the 'segment' of the profession which would be most attracted to the psychotherapy venture.

Secondly, and more surprisingly, was the near universal criticism of professional associations. Except for Court and Rosa, who praised the National Association of Social Workers (N.A.S.W.) for moving in a progressive direction, the twenty-one other subjects expressed criticisms of N.A.S.W. as well as other professional associations such as the American Psychological Association. The author found the universality of the criticism of N.A.S.W. somewhat surprising in that the organization appears to have moved leftward in recent years, and, in at least a few cities, has drawn the participation of individuals affiliated

with radical social work groups.

Interestingly, while the psychological associations were criticized as conservative along rather classical Left lines of being a "professional guild," N.A.S.W. received this attack from the Left, as well as attacks by a few subjects for failing to act to defend social workers. Below are two examples of the classic criticisms:

> (James): I still share the criticisms of N.A.S.W. and other professional associations. Their strategies of licensing and vendorship are conservative. They have a top heavy leadership. They're oriented too much toward private practice, their base is not representative of Social Work, and (I) guess that reinforces the more conservative elements of (the) profession...
>
> (Rosalind): No, I'm critical of N.A.S.W. I haven't seen it do very much for Social Work...it's mostly a way to gain status, a vehicle for upward mobility...it's not representative of M.S.W.s, and certainly not of B.S.W.s, it's elitist...

On the other hand, some subjects criticized N.A.S.W. as failing the Social Work field by not achieving any material benefits for social workers. Joseph and Monica's remarks were also typical:

> (Joseph): I'm angry at the profession. The professional organization is fucked up. (They) take no responsibility for the salaries in the field or mobility...I mean in twelve years the cost of living goes up 200% and Social Work salaries like 4%. I hold the professional association responsible for that. It hasn't controlled supply, and graduate schools just keep producing more and more graduates, and more and more programs of human services...

(Monica): I suppose I might join N.A.S.W. if I felt it had anything to offer. But to pay $120 a year to get the newspaper and I don't know what else...nothing...I don't know what material benefits N.A.S.W. offers the profession at all...

And so, for different reasons, involvement in or support of professional organizations is not popular with this population. Perhaps reflecting the contradictions of the social service professions, some felt N.A.S.W. was counterposed to trade unionism as an organizing vehicle (a traditional critique of Catalyst and other Left social workers), while others felt that N.A.S.W. also failed on its own terms, that indeed it should act as a trade union or as a stronger professional guild for social workers.

D. A Typology of Alternative Professional/Ideological Mediations:

Despite the points of agreement above; some of which were held for different reasons by subjects; there was considerable differences in the population as to how they now regarded the professions they had trained in, whether they identified themselves with a profession, and on whether they regarded social service professionalism as having a complementary set of values and beliefs to radicalism. Conceptually, there are three broad patterns of attachment that were found in the population, and one that did not emerge:

Strong Adherence to Radical Ideology	Strong Adherence to Professionalism	Classification
+	+	"Mediated"
+	-	"Critics"
-	-	"Detached"
(-)	(+)	("Professionalist")*

* Potential orientation not found in this study, see below.

The above representation seeks to locate subjects along major alternative professionally linked ideologies. The first conceptual category is described by the author as a "mediated" group: these radical social service professionals have remained attached to their political radicalism and identify strongly with a profession (Social Work in all cases). Although the "mediated" category is not identical to the "missionary zeal" discussed earlier, it reflects in more sophisticated fashion the ability of these individuals to envelop their idealistic principles within the field. To the extent that the numbers of subjects holding such an orientation is fairly small (less than one-third of the population, seven of twenty-three), a substantial decline in "missionary zeal" enunciated upon entry to the social

services or upon receiving professional training is indicated (dropping substantially from eighteen holding such a view upon graduating professional school).

Sixteen of the twenty-three subjects fall into two categories which represent a more "outsider" stance towards the professions. The great majority (twelve) are classified by the author as "critics"; they remain strong ideological adherents of radicalism, but do not strongly identify with the Social Service professions. I have included here both those who have 'objectively' broken ties with the profession through career changes and those, who on the surface, engage in the same work and use the same symbols as the "mediated" group, but interpret their work differently.

The "detached" category is composed of only four subjects for whom radical political ideology and professional ideology have become weaker. For these four, career changing or changed functional roles within Social Service (e.g. high administration) has simultaneously led to a detachment from both radical political identification and professional identification.

Logically, a fourth category could be expected to appear: a group of social service professionals who have become detached from radical political ideology, but strongly loyal to and identified with the profession. There were no subjects who 'fit' into such a category; whether this absence is merely chance or holds important

ramifications will be discussed below.

While the typology will suggest some strong associations between job locations and political orientation, the relationship between job positions and political ideology could not be reduced merely to a position or class consciousness of sorts. While administrators had a strong occupational consciousness which suggested a detachment from radicalism, counselors and academics, for example, were split between the categories of how they interpreted their work. As the chart below suggests, there is not a consistent relationship between ideology and job/career directions, but a complex relationship which includes demographics, professional training, theoretical paradigms, and political ideology and job position.

TABLE 18: A Descriptive Typology of Professional Attachments:

	(Categories)		
	"Mediated"	"Critics"	"Detached"
Gender:	Female	Mixed	> Male
Age:	Youngest (med. age 34)	Med. age 36	Oldest (med. age 40)
Religion:	Roman Catholic	Mixed	Jewish
Method Trained in:	Social Casework	Community Org Social Casework Social Policy Psychology	Soc. Casework
Theoretical Paradigm:	Social Work theory: particularly systems theory	Social Science theories: particularly Marxism	N/A
Political Ideology:			
	Feminism> Marxism: consciousness-raising; "empowerment"	Marxism>New Left >Feminism Critical Theory Organizing method	New Left radicalization (only)

Time period of Radicalization:

post-1975 dominant	1960s-early '70s dominant	1960s

Occupational Positions (current):

Counselors/ Supervisors Academic	Academics(more social science) Movement work Organizing Counseling Policy/Research	Administration Business

Radical Labor Market shelter as objective:

Yes	Yes	No

E. The "Mediated" Category: Social Work as Subversive Activity:

The seven subjects described as "mediated" are typically female subjects trained in Social Casework with strong grounding in feminist theory (though often co-existing with Marxism and other theories) who mediate their occupational attachment to Social Work through an ideology of consciousness raising and 'empowerment.' These subjects were strongly identified with the profession, whether employed as counselors, supervisors or academics, and they all had developed a self-conscious strategy of bringing progressive values into Social Work. They believe that while many others in the profession do not subscribe to these values, they can wage a kind of subversive struggle through their daily praxis which reflects the best historical traditions of Social Work. The intimate knowledge and connection with Social Work's history, with its theories, and with certain client populations allowed these subjects to feel they did "radical social work."

A few subjects implied that the organized Social Work profession itself was radical. Court approaches this view in stating:

> There is a radical potential (in Social Work). That's why the Far Right doesn't like us. They know, they know, they're much smarter than Left. They know Social Work is inherently subversive

activity...

While Court and Rosa bordered on being professional loyalists (as well as radicals), most subjects were careful to distinguish their views from the organized profession, and were critical of professional associations, educational institutions, and certain tendencies in the field (private practice, overly 'clinicalizing' the profession, some of its mobility aspirations). They distinguished a positive "good sense of professionalism" based on skill, from the "elitist" connotations of professionalism. In contrast to the "critics" and the "detached," however, they do identify strongly with their roles and training as social workers and associate themselves with the terminology, theory, and symbols of the profession. They are also disposed to consider the profession a relatively hospitable place for radicals. When questioned about how they reconcile their radical political ideology with strong identifications with a profession they had criticized so intently (through Catalyst and other forums), the "mediated" group suggested an interpretation of the values and norms of Social Work which self-consciously identifies with certain traditions in the profession, and a "stretching" of professional norms in which radical social work could be carried out in a guerilla fashion.

One way in which subjects were able to assert the complementary of Social Work to radical political ideology

was through an association with past values and traditions:

> (Brenda): It's funny. I identify with Social Work, but that doesn't mean I'm not critical of it as an institution...you can be cynical about Social Work, and the schools are just like businesses....but when you look at the basic values and how the profession started, which is what I identify with, it's there. It's there! Implicitly, its radical, but the schools and professional garbage collapses it...
>
> (Rita): I identify strongly with the values I perceive Social Work to stand for...people like Bertha Reynolds. I'm proud of certain people in Social Work history and want to be identified with them. If people want to think it is no good (Social Work) (pause) I have never found it repulsive to be thought of as a social worker who does good for poor people. That's no insult. That's fine! But I do have trouble identifying with some of the people in the field today. But the roots of Social Work are progressive...
>
> (Interviewer): So how do you conceive of yourself in relation to organized Social Work as a profession?
>
> (Rita): I guess I compartmentalize, that's what I do. I tend to identify with the roots (of Social Work), but the people in the field, some of them make me cringe. But the endemic values of Social Work, these are consistent with raising political consciousness, helping the poor and oppressed, and with social activism...

In addition to a strong awareness of the historic tradition in Social Work, particularly of the early Settlement House movement, the R.F.M. of the thirties, and the 1960s community organizers, those who identify with Social Work "stretch" concepts which are liberal in their origins to radical ones in a self-conscious manner:

(Renee): There are good norms and bad norms in the profession. The bad sense of professionalism is that identification as part of the ruling class or as a social control agent, the need for status and prestige, the unequal relationship between client and worker, the 'I'm better than you' feeling. But professionalism can also mean competency and skill...If you really believe in the "mutuality" that is taught in Social Work School, which I do, and I teach my students, then you sit down with clients and help figure out together what changes need to be made in their lives or what resources they need, you help them sort it out, you don't do for clients, you help empower them to gain control, to gain greater power and resources...and then there are the phrases like "self-determination,""advocacy,""empowerment,""respect for individual differences,""change strategies," they (students) get this drummed into their heads. There are a lot worse things to teach a student. They are not exactly 'power to the people,' but they are left-liberal phrases which don't contradict radical notions either, and they can be used in a radical way, which is why I like them...

Rita makes a similar point in describing her five years as a social work supervisor at a child care agency. The agency was an old traditional sectarian agency hostile to professionalism and reliant on volunteers for labor. Rita's experience was that she and the other social workers were the more progressive force:

They were extremely anti-professional, but I mean professional in the best sense of what skilled Social Work can be. I don't mean elitist crapola. To them (the volunteers and the agency) these (children) were little savages who needed socializing...But I was able to hire a staff and do the kind of work we wanted. We could use words like 'advocacy' to do tenant organizing, to constantly raise issues of concern to the kids, to raise the banner of self-determination to protect

> the rights of the kids against the agency's norms...I guess we were undercover radicals. It was radical thought under the guise of (pause) or camoflaged as good Social Work practice...

Court believes that aspects of Social Work theory can be interpreted and used by radicals to promote a practice which is "between the lines" of the texts:

> You take Carol Meyer's theory of 'developmental Social Work practice.' Well, this is kind of a radical concept. She says social work practice is part of the developmental process of humans. But it allows for how in many ways capitalism is not very developed, how it thwarts the needs of women, the poor, the oppressed. So we can stretch this, it becomes in its own way a radical idea. So in working with battered women, the theory allows us to see patriarchy and oppression as representing a very low level of societal development. The theory allows for a counter-attack on the old dominant institutions and ideologies. Oh, it's not on a grand scale, but then on the other hand, given that the personal is political, it doesn't have to be...

It is perhaps the last sentence of Court's which is most significant in distinguishing the "mediated" group from those whose view of the profession is more critical. There is a substantial dispute around therapeutic goals. For the "mediated" group, feminist theory and post-New Left consensual affinity group radicalism allows the individual to see political gains as being achieved more easily through the accomplishment of personal changes. The ideas of Paulo Freire (1984) were also frequently cited by these subjects who saw counseling and teaching as a process of

"conscientization" or in its more Americanized form, "empowerment," a word used by almost all seven in this group. What differentiates this stance from some of the "critics" who are also employed as counselors or teachers, is that radical ideology often remains implicit for the "mediated" group, embedded in the process, while many of the "critics" find consciousness raising in the absence of ultimate political radicalization and changed power relations to be insufficient.

To highlight the distinctions, material from interviews with Rita and Monica can be contrasted with two "critics," James and Bea. Rita suggests in describing her work at a hospital that struggling for change and being a radical is part of a process not based on outcomes; she also suggests that doing humane work with a radical consciousness is "radical:"

> We struggled to get the hospital staff to discuss all these issues...I don't think we we're very successful. But I've never felt success is measured by an outcome. That's something I feel very strongly about, about being a social worker. Just to get people to think can be a success. That's why I like Freire, I think I always felt that the effort to make people conscious of their oppression on a very personal level was what I was doing...I think living your life with conscious political choices is radical, its a political statement. Sometimes the best you can do is be as conscious as possible of both the system you're working in and the larger political ramifications, how you fit in...A doctor who is empathic, who cares about his or her patients, that can be radical. Is it enough? No! But still it's a way of participating in a struggle of sorts, in transforming the work...

Monica, when asked about what a "radical practice" in Social Work might look like, at one point gave a case example which reflected her belief about the close ties between psychological oppression, and political empowerment, and how pointing out these connections could be radical:

> I've been working with this woman and (welfare) is giving her a horrible time. She has this very controlling, awful caseworker there. (We) spent a lot of time talking about her family and how her sister constantly tries to control her. And as she is talking about Mr. B, who is the welfare caseworker, I thought this sounds so much like her sister and how she couldn't deal with this guy, how she was totally intimidated. I began to ask her if she saw any similarities and she made the connections too. If we can keep helping her say 'fuck you' to this sister of hers who dominates her, hopefully she can eventually confront Mr. B and the welfare bureaucrats. I don't know. This feels like an example of how I see therapy being radical. Maybe it isn't. And it (is) certainly not radical in an overt way...

While the "mediated" group saw good counseling, therapy, teaching and organizing as providing a "conscientization" process in which oppressed people could regain some control over their lives by learning to confront authority figures and being better able to make personal decisions unencumbered by personal oppression, several "critics" explicitly rejected "process" as political. James, in discussing his teaching, suggests that his classes have a more participatory and involving quality to them than traditional classes. But he draws a distinction between

process and content:

> But to say that stuff like this (the class process) is radical seems to me to be an extraordinary gutting of the term in a way. Of course, I need to be sensitive to how people learn. But you do both, you teach well and you teach radical content. Then hopefully you have an effect. At least a few people each year say that my class re-politicized them...We used to think of 'radical' as meaning significant changes in society, but I don't even know how the term is being used now...

Bea, another "critic," when asked to describe what politically radical organizing would be, as a former organizer, draws a distinction between simply working with the oppressed and the political content actually involved:

> I know a lot of people feel it's radical to be working with the homeless or other populations like this. But that's not in itself radical. If your goal is to empower the powerless, fine, but then the work you do must move things forward in some measurable way. Even if you're an organizer working on low-income housing issues, <u>that's not political</u>, not unless you use the organizing to move into political education, to deal with the class structure in housing and the politics in the City which shape it. But just to be out there being paid as an organizer and even being a good one, that's not radical...

Another important distinction between the "mediated" subjects and many non-radical social service professionals, and some of the "critics," is their desire to be associated with certain oppressed parts of the population which provide the client base for their services. Renee, Rosa, and Rosalind all have been active in working with battered

women; Monica in abortion counseling; Renee and Rosalind, with the homeless; Brenda with trade unionists. While many social service workers have held similar positions, there is a strong movement among mental health professionals towards service directed at more middle class populations. In contrast, these subjects define their radicalism and professionalism in terms of their commitment to the poor, to women, minorities and "the oppressed" generally:

> (Rita): I've never worked with (the) middle class, (I) can't relate (to their problems). Social Work should be with the poor, with working people. (This is) another conscious choice. It's difficult for me, and its my own class bias and politics, but the kind of empathy I feel with working class and poor people, I don't feel with people who have money...

Moreover, the populations to be served go beyond social class definitions, frequently including work with women as part of the "mission" of radical social work:

> (Rosalind): I certainly wouldn't limit organizing or service efforts to only the poor. I guess my Feminism suggests class is not the only issue. Because Social Work serves millions of women and most social workers are women, this is a primary commitment of ours...

In sum, the "mediated" group sustains its commitment to a radical Social Work professionalism by mediating the norms, symbols, and trappings of the profession through association to a progressive historical tradition in Social Work; through a process oriented practice which utilizes the

terms of the profession to "conscientize" clients or students in a guerilla fashion; and through selection of a client base for social services which includes women, the poor, the working class, minorities, and "other oppressed people."

F. The "Critics": Social Work is not a Vanguard of Change:

As noted in Table 19, those labelled "critics" include more males, almost all subjects who trained in Community Organization, concentrations in research and policy and Psychology (as well as several subjects trained in Social Casework), and subjects who tend to draw on social science theories or organizing methodology to mediate their occupational choices with their political ideology. Occupationally, the group is far from homogeneous. Those in our research population who are counselors and academics split between "critics" and "mediated" with the former believing they are challenging the core theories or normative values of a profession rather than upholding historic traditions. In addition to counselors and teachers, the group includes those doing movement work and organizing. Some subjects were previously categorized as having left the social services, while other subjects remain in the social services. What the group shares is a continued attachment to radical political ideology, but a diminution of professional identification with Social Work (or Psychology) as well as

with the trappings, language, and paradigms of the Social Service professions. Further, rather than process being "empowering," "critics" suggest political ideology should be made explicit and success measured through actual politicization of clients or students.

This alternative structural choice to mediating worklife suggests two different paths to a "critical" vision. Some subjects came to the Social Services with a critical view (see Chapter 4) or came to this view during the course of their professional training, a pattern described below (Richard). However, for other subjects, critical visions of professional work developed over a long period of time in which the individual went through two distinct career stages: one in which the subject adhered to a marginal "segment" of the profession (e.g. Community Organization in Social Work), and a second stage, in which a deepening intellectualization detached the subject even further from an "insider" stance (see Bea's case below). Typically, the "critics" came to the profession with high "missionary zeal," and <u>at one point in time</u> were able to mediate radical and professional identifications successfully. Barbara suggests a common theme for the "critics" as she describes her "naivety" and "confusion" about Social Work as a radical endeavor:

> I used to think when I was 18 or 22 or even when I was in Social Work School, that, you know, Social Work was this vanguard, which now I think is total bullshit. It got me to Social Work School, I

> wanted to work and change society and this seemed the one profession to do it. But as I think back on it, that was stupid, because even when I was younger, working around the anti-war stuff and civil rights, that wasn't social work, those were social movements, but, of course, there aren't always huge movements to attach (oneself) to, so Social Work was a way to, on a daily basis, grind this out. I don't think the profession as a whole embraces that. As a political person, I was naive to believe that Social Work was going to provide leadership...in terms of real change, its not the Social Work profession that does it. But you understand how my mind worked, it got murky in my mind-here is this whole profession set up to help people-so I thought this was my calling. But its not a radical profession, its a profession. There are some radicals in the profession...You have to measure this handful of radicals against all the organizations and people that provide the major thrust of the profession which is anything but radical...

The high expectations of Social Work changing into disappointment that the profession is not a "vanguard for change" suggests a common phenomenon in our research population. The case studies of Richard and Bea, below, suggest a synergistic pattern in which ideology and career events interact: political discomfort with professional education or employment can lead to disillusionment; while educational or professional disillusionment can lead to different ideological stances. While Richard suggests the first pattern, Bea's experiences suggests a two stage model of gradual criticism.

Richard: The Professional as 'Homeless' and Marginalized:

For Richard, like other subjects, political ideology interacted with career goals in such a way as to distance him from certain areas of occupational mobility and professional loyalty, almost upon completion of the professional degree. Richard entered the professions (Psychology) with a "missionary zeal" greatly influenced by his mother's career as a social worker/psychotherapist, summer camp experiences, and the idealism of the times (late 1960s). During college, Richard was attracted to a humanistic and civil libertarian approach to Psychology. When he went on to get his Masters degree, he found he had increasing problems "fitting in" with his surroundings:

> I was a very non-traditional Psychology student. I was critical of mainstream Psychology. You know, critical of the medical model and psychopathology...and then critical of psychological research, of the studies, of the normative basis of it...in a way, this was the kiss of death for me because I was very isolated at school...

Richard's conversion to Marxism, which occurred while he was taking doctoral courses and trying to gain admission to a Clinical Psychology Ph. D. program, further distanced him from the mainstream:

> In the middle of my graduate training, I became a Marxist...this reinforced my feelings about Psychology. But now I was two steps removed from

> traditional Psychology. I had an oddball theoretical perspective to begin with. Now I felt further marginalized. (This) put me in a hole. Now sometimes I think 'If only you had been a good boy!' (pause) but the seeds were already sown. I (would) never get into a mainstream program...

The "hole" Richard refers to was partly a reflection of his own ambivalence about mobility, political ideology, and professionalism. On the one hand, Richard applied several times to Clinical Psychology Ph. D. programs; yet he refused to take many of the quantitative and testing courses required to gain admission. Finally, as a result of his own political/professional interests and his failing to get into a "mainstream" program, Richard gained admission into a Counseling Education program where he eventually earned his doctorate. To a great degree, this program, which allowed Richard to focus on qualitative research and social science concepts rather than on traditional Psychology, was the equivalent of a 'radical shelter.' Richard was able to put together a dissertation committee which worked with him on a Marxist critique of counseling. However, in retrospect, Richard's difficulties in gaining a secure career position over the six years since he has been out of school, makes him ambivalent about his own choice of a program:

> Well, the program was flexible, almost anarchic. It was neither fish nor fowl. And I deliberately did not take traditional courses. (I took) a smorgasbord approach which the School allowed. (But) it was a mixed blessing. I liked it and liked doing my own thing, but it wasn't on track in terms of a job market or anything...

Since Richard completed his Ph. D., he has worked in a variety of mostly social service settings (with short ventures into adjunct teaching and a brief full-time job as a union organizer). Richard's criticisms of the human service professions and lack of identification is fueled by a combination of his strong Marxist-Feminist-Critical Theory ideology, and by an occupational structure which has limited his options. With a Ph. D. in Counseling Education, he has found the job market extremely difficult and has contemplated returning to school in other areas, including Social Work. Feeling, however, that he had already spent enough years in school, he has attempted to gain the years of psychological supervision necessary to secure a license. In 1986, Richard received notice that his application to take the licensing exam was rejected due to the nature of his training. These setbacks have, not surprisingly, led to an uneasy professional identification:

> (Interviewer): How would you identify yourself currently if asked what profession you are in...?
>
> (Richard): (That's) a difficult question. A short answer can be dismissed. Technically I'm not to call myself a psychologist because I'm not licensed. So I've stopped using the word. I wrestle with this. I've left it and come back to it (the profession). Sometimes I say, 'I trained for this, I'm going to insist on some way-some way of becoming a Marxist-Feminist psychologist!' To carve out some way (to) stay in the field. At other times, (I say) 'fuck it,' they won't allow me to call myself a psychologist, I can't stay in the field...so then I consider myself an educator,

> a mental health educator, an organizer, a psychotherapist, a Marxist with a background in Psychology. I wrestle with it right up to this minute...It's like I'm a homeless person, I'm marginalized in the professions...

While Richard's structural difficulties with the employment market are somewhat unusual in this population, and obviously affect his professional identification (Richard has been unsuccessful thus far in locating a "radical labor market shelter," but unlike Ann in Chapter 6, refuses to abandon the effort to make his work complementary to his political ideology), it would be overly deterministic to view his status as a "critic" as purely situational. Richard came to a clear intellectual position of criticism while in graduate school, and has self-consciously weighed his options to "join the mainstream" of his profession, but has rejected these alternatives. Further, Richard has a clearly delineated view of what mental health services should be, and clearly rejects the primacy of professional paradigms. When asked about his several positions as a counselor/therapist and its relationship to radicalism, he gives a very different answer than those in the "mediated" group:

> I can't be satisfied with this (social service work). I find the basic day-to-day activity of these kinds of jobs typically limiting, reformist, individualistic (and) ultimately unsatisfying. I demand more political, critical thinking, and a more, political, critical context linked up with action. I can't give that up! I wish I could and accept that this is the only role for leftists...

At another point in the interview, Richard states explicitly that politics should be superordinate to professional identity:

> My view would be along the line of Gramsci's 'organic intellectual,' and I was also influenced by a book by Martin Shaw called Marxism and Social Science. He argues that whether as a radical, you're working as a teacher, therapist, whatever, your primary identification is to the working class. It's a bitch to live up to, but I subscribe to it. Our expertise should be in the service of the working class. (And) if that conflicts with professional loyalty or identity, I believe I would take the side of the class...

Richard agrees that there is a need for radical therapy (and is one of the six subjects still engaged in this activity), but feels strongly that therapy and consciousness raising by themselves are insufficient. Unless therapy is combined with political education, organizing, and a broad preventative approach to health and mental health it will fail to achieve the radical goals. To Richard, "empowerment," in a therapeutic context, means something different than it does to the less critical subjects: it suggests a therapeutic process which is overtly politicizing into left-wing ideologies and class consciousness (as well as dealing with issues of personal oppression) and such services should ideally be in the hands of the working class. The latter vision propels Richard toward an ideal of services which is de-professionalized and non-specialized:

services housed in unions, movement organizations, etc. which could combine political organizing with counseling. This vision, shared by some of the other "critics," is a very different understanding of what I have called a "radical labor market shelter." For the "mediated" group, non-profit services to an "oppressed" population (battered women, the homeless) represents a sufficient approximation of an ideal employer; while Richard is seeking a model which successfully links mental health to political mobilization and Marxist politics. He acknowledges that this vision may be unrealistic, and may further isolate him:

> (What I want to do) may not be possible. I struggle with what I see myself as. I came up with a 'mental health educator.' You know, in the sense of public health, since there is a long Left tradition in that field. But obviously if you look through the New York Times you're not going to find the type of job advertised that's broad enough for what I would really want to do...

BEA: A TWO-STAGE CAREER OF A CRITIC:

Bea, a 34 year old subject, shares some similarities with Richard, but because of her training in Social Work and previous attachment with the Community Organizing "segment" in this field (see Bucher & Strauss, 1961; Carleton, 1977), her career pattern is more appropriately described as a two-stage development from organizing to social science criticism.

As described in Chapters 4 and 5, Bea entered Social Work with high "missionary zeal," associating Social Work with political activism. She felt that becoming a community organizer was doing "what came naturally" as she was "always organizing anyway," and her description of Social Work School shows little separation between political and professional organizing. Like Renee and Barbara, described in Chapter 6, Bea has spent her ten or more post-graduate years seeking a "radical job shelter." As with Barbara and Richard, this was not an easy task, since Bea also did not believe that merely doing macro-level work (as an organizer) or working on "process" was sufficient. Similar to Barbara's need to "have impact" (see Chapter 6), Bea left her first job as a community organizer at a settlement house after two years, because it lacked political impact:

> The job required you to do all sorts of little bitty kinds of organizing. Crime problems of middle and upper class people. These weren't the clients or the issues I came into Social Work to work with. (I) wanted to work with low income people on social justice issues...not just a small piece of the problem, (the job was) not at the level of education that I wanted to be doing things...

Indeed, Bea was able to find a position with impact. Hired to be Executive Director of what was a small neighborhood coalition in a neighborhood which was undergoing massive ethnic and racial population changes and subsequently experienced a tremendous drive toward

gentrification of housing and destruction of low income units, Bea developed a major agency. Her accomplishments in the six years as the coalition's executive were not only in building up a significant coalition, but in achieving some major victories in organizing in a low income neighborhood including successful struggles around housing and community schools.

Bea's description of the first eight years of her worklife appears to be the first stage in the formation of a critical consciousness. Bea suggests that long before she left the traditional social service field (about two years ago), she did not identify with Social Work as a profession. She describes having to go to a series of meetings at a Social Work School in order to obtain students for her agency:

> No, I never identified as a social worker, not when I was an organizer or Executive. No, my interest was always as a sort of reformer of the field. I never identified (pause) I'd go to these meetings of field instructors (at Social Work School) and I'd say 'I'm not like these people, not at all'...

Moreover, the nature of organizing and community leadership is such that a Social Work identification was not the most pronounced identity Bea wanted to share:

> It was a strange position to be a social worker, which is probably why I didn't identify that way. You know you're perceived in the community as a social control agent and it is a negative to be

> seen as a social work community organizer. Rather than try to change everybody's understanding of Social Work, I tried to just get to these people on the basis of goals (pause) And I certainly didn't have my diplomas on the wall...

As Bucher and Strauss(1961) have suggested, professions are divided into "segments" of competing forces which do not share common trappings and symbols despite the fiction of a "professional culture." Further, in the Social Work field, Epstein (1970) and others have found that a true professional community is fictitious in that occupants do not share the same identifications and professional ascriptions. It is not surprising then that Bea and the other seven subjects trained in Community Organization did not identify with Social Work. Clearly, as suggested by sociologists of the professions, the "core nuclear skill" of social casework has dominated over other segments of Social Work historically and forms the key discourse of the field (see Toren, 1971; Larson, 1977). The first stage in the development of an "outsider" orientation may then be adhesion to a subordinate segment of a field. Unlike Carleton (1977), the author would argue that it is not only methodology which separates the segments in Social Work, but field-of-practice location. For example, Agnes, though a recent graduate of a School of Social Work in Social Casework, also does not identify strongly with the profession, primarily because of her work location in corrections, an area generally uninhabited by M.S.W. social

workers and not central to the professional discourse.

After five years of directing the coalition, Bea began to experience both severe job conflicts and personal tension. The Board of Directors began to attack Bea and her staff's efforts to politicize a Latino population and to bring them into the mainstream of the agency's services. Reflecting a story very similar to other organizers in our population, Bea describes herself as "trapped between funding sources, the staff, the Board. Being out there all by myself trying to juggle it all." Finally Bea set a date to leave the agency, and just prior, was awarded a one year fellowship. The year of study changed her outlook considerably:

> It was great. I got to study about immigration, ethnicity, Latin American culture, and I learned all these things about what I had become interested in, Anthropology, History, Political Science. (That's a) lot more the way I look at things now. Everything is related to world politics. But having seen that, it was very hard for me to go back to that sort of limited practice. That's why I decided to (not return)...

Indeed, Bea has not returned to Social Service work, but has done research and consulting. While her future plans were not totally clear, Bea suggests she would not return to Social Work, but is likely to get a Ph. D. in the social sciences or do research. It appears that Bea currently, in her second stage of a critical consciousness, now questions the Community Organizing paradigms she was attached to

earlier:

> What came up for me politically (was) it was very clear to me that Social Work professionalism is an alienating experience. There's this effort to separate the worker and the client which is so pervasive in training and everything...(here I) was this white, trained professional person, living comfortably on a middle income salary. Yet I don't want to take the route of living in the same community and organizing my whole social life around it...I saw the gulf between worker and client and I thought that could be overcome. That was naive. Societal structures are such that it is very hard to overcome that. (Particularly) if you want to live a lifestyle of a middle class professional...

Relative to her Social Work training, Bea is now quite critical:

> Social Work training is basically technical training! We're trained to do things, but not why to do things and not who you were doing things with!...That's why I feel Anthropology is a much more important discipline in terms of understanding what you're dealing with. Social workers are not trained to understand that. They're just trained to get out there on the front lines and deal with it, somehow! I don't think that's good training to do really good social change work, because social change requires a much firmer grasp on things you don't get in Social Work School...Politics and political theory...culture...a real sense of where people are at culturally, this is missing from Social Work training, (it's) just a kind of skill training...

Having become alienated from the Social Work field as well as organizing, Bea finds the intellectual mediation of politics and work, and her interest in social science

somewhat uncomfortable. For unlike Richard, she would not describe herself as an intellectual. She feels in some ways more "homeless" than Richard who in contrast to Bea came to radicalism more intellectually. Bea feels uncertain about political activism now as well as organizing:

> I guess you can say I'm an activist in search of activity or an organization, like a homeless radical. I'm not quite sure what to do, where to fit in. I find it more difficult than ever to be actively involved in a struggle (and I) don't find that there are organizations that I feel compelled to go to meetings (of)...

In sum, the group labelled "critics" have become detached from strong professional identifications, though not from the ideological basis of their politics. The group mediates occupational life primarily on the basis of social science theory and particularly Marxism. Some subjects have fairly consistently occupied a critical position; for example, James, came to the field with such a perspective and seems to have retained it through many years of suffering in an administrative position. Others such as Bea went through a two stage process in which they were first enthusiastically linked to marginal segments and then upon experiencing certain critical incidents (e.g. Bea's unsuccessful struggle with her Board) developed a further attachment to intellectual and social science criticism.

The author stresses the interpretive process which Bea and other subjects went through in evaluating such negative

career experiences. Obviously, it is only one possible interpretation. For example, Joseph, who the author places in the "detached" group below, was trained in Community Organization, and suffered considerable tension from adopting an activist, political approach to a major community struggle. Although parts of his biography are quite similar to Bea's, his attempts to resolve his occupational/political conflicts led him to a degree of detachment from radical political ideology, not a deepening intellectual conviction about the limits of professionalism.

G. "The Detached": The Left doesn't Understand!"

The small number of subjects (four) that the author has labelled "detached" share two unifying characteristics: they are currently (and generally for the last decade) occupying more powerful occupational positions than the other subjects, coming to identify as "managers" in "the search for excellence"; secondly, along with advancement, each of the four expressees to varying degrees a critical attitude towards the Left, which they feel does not understand their daily struggles and concerns and is unrealistic about the nature of work.

Several points require comment prior to exploring the case study below of George, who exemplifies movement from what he now considers the "in-bred rhetorical circle of left-wing politics" to being a manager in search of excellence. First, the division between "high

administration" locations that these subjects occupy and the occupational positions other subjects have occupied is significant. While other subjects had experience supervising staff or managing budgets, for the most part, these positions were of "straw boss" quality; they reflected little actual overall control of agencies. Several other subjects such as Bea ran small coalitions or alternative organizations which were greatly operated on consensual or participatory models of organization. This contrasts sharply with the responsibilities of George and Mitch who operate parts of major public agencies, and of Ann, who makes significant business decisions for a publishing house. Further, those subjects who have held administrative responsibilities for neighborhood coalitions or trade unions identified themselves as community organizers or union activists responsible to a constituency. In contrast, the "detached" group identifies more with the system in which they work rather than outside social movements or democratic constituencies.

Secondly, detachment from radical ideology is relative. George, who began the interview by stating, "I don't know how radical I ever was...and it's fading fast" was the only subject in our study who went on to repudiate much of his past political activity as a "folly of youth." In some sense, we might suggest that if any sympathy with the Left and occasional donations or participation in events is taken

to reflect ideological commitment, that the other three labelled "detached" are still 'radical.' However, the interviews with Ann, Joseph, and Mitch also suggested significant weakening in radical ideology and a general feeling of irrelevance of political radicalism to their lives. They generally saw radical ideologies as highly personally conflictual in their own recent lives.

Thirdly, like other subjects' occupational choices, the choice of management represents only a contingent choice which as of the time of this study appears to be the end result of a process of painful occupational experience. Two of the four came to the Social Services with high "missionary zeal" and all trained in areas of Social Work, all but Joseph in Social Casework. Interestingly, this group experienced uniformly high job tension in their past positions, and all but one suffered very traumatic "negative career events." As the vignette of Ann in Chapter 6 suggests, careers in business or high management were <u>not anticipated</u> by this group, but rather were obtained only after <u>significant disappointments or failures</u> in other career ventures. While the allure of mobility should, of course, not be discounted as motivational, there is a great sense that at least initially these subjects were "reluctant managers" similar to the "reluctant academics" described above. The career histories of the "detached" group suggest that these subjects did not enter their managerial positions having discarded their political attachments, but have

gradually become distanced from both the culture of the Left and of social service professionalism after they began to occupy their managerial roles.

George: Radicalism as the Follies of Youth:

George chose a self-accounting in his interview which stressed his distance and disdain for Left ideology. The difficulty for the author resided in the fact that the author had knowledge that George had been an active participant in events which George, at times, seemed to deny. While some of George's cynicism and irony make his retrospective account difficult to evaluate, the author suggests that he is perhaps representative of many other ex-leftists and therefore the interview data is of particular interest.

George received his Masters in Social Work in the mid-1960s, motivated greatly by exposure to skilled groupworkers in summer camp. He became radicalized in the late 1960s through involvement with welfare rights organizing and the community mental health movement. To avoid the draft, George entered a doctoral program in Sociology, while continuing to work at a community mental health center. Initially, George sought the degree only to stay in school and gain credentials to perform human service work, but gradually he became attracted to Sociology as a discipline and to college teaching. After receiving a Ph.D., George went on to teach

Sociology at two liberal arts colleges for a half dozen years.

George links the political activities he was involved in (which were considerable) to his status as an academic as opposed to a practitioner:

> Being in the academy probably was why I was in Catalyst. I think I left Catalyst because I left academia. Once I had left academia, this sort of participation had to stand on its own as an activity...you know, being on a journal, this was something an academic does. I guess the other groups I was in--RASSW, NIC/PAC--I was also in academia...

George distinguishes his current position as a director of state hospital services for children with his political involvement earlier in his life:

> Here I'm doing so much, affecting the lives of hundreds of kids and families...I guess one thing that distinguishes it, particularly from the kind of thing I was into as an academic in which I was heavily into theory, is (a) lot of it is rhetoric. I was pretty good at rhetoric. I was pretty successful in convincing people on what the line should be. I began to realize that this is crazy...Now if I think something is true or I know something, I guess I try to do it, and if it works, I guess I'm right, I knew something. But its not just asserting the right Left principles and line that wins a vote at a small committee meeting...

Although George mentions a number of his reasons for his dissociation from radical politics (he believes, for example, that many people on the Left are neurotic, are

ineffectual at implementing change, and that many people who are single or divorced are attracted to activity for social reasons), his materialist analysis of the links between occupation and political ideology is convincing and bears similarities with the other three "detached" subjects.

Like Ann and Joseph, a negative career experience propelled him away from his earlier jobs. In his second teaching job, George tried to teach radically, which he describes as attempting to "empower" the primarily working class human service students to learn on their own and think critically. George found that his outspokenness caused him to be regarded as an "obnoxious colleague" by his fellow professors. George recalls his experience in a similar fashion to Ann's description of her lack of organizational sophistication:

> Basically the lesson was if you try to empower students, the University will try to destroy you. But I wasn't savvy enough to that. I was very naive, I think if I ever did it again I could be successful. I mean I also thought that universities took learning seriously. But they don't. There's no bottom line to the bullshit...

While the exact circumstance of George's departure from the college are not crystal clear (whether firing, non-renewal of contract or pressured to quit), what is most significant is George's interpretation of the experience. While he believes his difficulties were greatly situational and psychological, the dashed idealism of an academic career

is clear in George's tone of bitterness in his account of these years. He associates this particular occupational arena (academia) with a radical ideological context which corresponded in part to his teaching career:

> This was a 'ridiculous period' (1970s). A lot of us were intoxicated, maybe by the success of the anti-war movement and civil rights. We thought that if we got together, had some meetings, a few of us could do anything...and this corresponded to my academic career. You know how these left academics, they have all these pretensions, like they are proletarians. (Its) basically romantic bullshit...

George now describes his occupational and political commitment as being one of "good government" in which he can develop humane and efficient services to the public:

> The commitment is to the search for excellence, to improve services to people when you begin to treat it (mental health) as a business. That you treat patients as customers who could go elsewhere, even if they can't, you dramatically increase the quality of care. The worst thing about bad government programs is that they don't give a damn about the customers...

While George's "search for excellence" appears commendable, he interprets this goal in a context which is hostile to not only the Left, but to the Social Work profession, and unions as the following quotations make clear:

> (On Social Work): The first thing I'd do is screw AAUP and fire all the faculty. Tenure is bullshit! No one on a faculty in Social Work has spoken out

> on anything anyway...(you) have to look at Social Work as a business, and let some of Social Work go out of business...In the old days you could just say 'give us the money and resources and we social workers could save the world.' Well, nobody believes that anymore, and even with all the resources we wouldn't eliminate poverty. Maybe we should eliminate welfare, start out with the basic fact that 60 to 70% of (the) country agrees with Reagan, that welfare is a mess...maybe Social Work needs some Boone Pickens...
>
> (On state unions): Certainly in the state system, the union is a corrupting and alienating institution. (name of union) just protects incompetent workers, it has no other function...if there is a class conflict, it doesn't have much to do with the relationship of public sector unions to the state, and I'm not sure it has anything to do with anything in the U.S. (class conflict)...

It appears that George's strong success in his career as a "manager" along with growing isolation from his former peers in both the profession (Social Work) and radical politics, has led him to a new identification with the efficiency of business and the power of traditional politics ("Maybe the Democratic Party is a little sleazy, but it deals with power, not mere ideas like the Left"). He appears to associate aspects of past life (politics, social work, sociology, even past friendships) with a lack of realism, youth, and the disappointments he suffered through activity on the Left and in his employment.

The other "detached" subjects showed similar discomfort with aspects of Left politics and with the Social Services which they associate with past "negative career events" and personal uneasiness. Like George, Ann stresses an ideology

of efficiency:

> Its (publishing career) has made me broader...I don't feel comfortable with radical groups anymore. Its hard to explain why. I feel alienated. They just talk to themselves. And its kind of condescending...And I want to be a participating member of society, not in a subculture. And the Left is one. I want to be able to relate to my in-laws who are Irish Catholic working class, to be comfortable in the South with my clients. Its a different world...And (publishing company) is a very efficiently run organization, most non-profits aren't. (I) really like that. You know we used to believe in collective decision-making, but this seems dubious now. I think hierarchy is necessary, and I'd prefer an efficient one like (company) to the social agencies I worked in...

Both Joseph and Mitch show how high administrative positions create a 'class consciousness' of position which puts them at odds with unions and potentially with the Left:

> (Joseph on past administrative position): I'd never go back to that job. The staff were totally incompetent and sat around doing nothing, protected by the union...and the Left has difficulty understanding what you need to do to administer a program like this. I mean you have to run a housing program with money from somewhere. You either raise rents...or forget it...Yet the community groups are always attacking you, even when you're doing the best you can...
>
> (Mitch on running a large state program:) There are a couple of people on (my) staff with strong militant backgrounds. Certainly as a manager (this) presents a problem for me at times...There's no doubt that the things that become important to you as a manager very often become far removed from radical goals...And when confronted with someone who I think is going to make life impossible for me because he's constantly going to take an oppositional point of view, no, I think I'd have trepidations about that...

The "detached" group has not lost its "conscience" or even some sympathies with the Left (three of the four, for example, reject an affiliation with for-profit institutions and at least two do donate money to radical causes), but all feel a great deal of tension with what they perceive as a Left social service view of work, credentials, unions, and political action. Clearly in this research population, occupancy of high administrative positions occurred after a disillusionment with other types of social service work. After entering the managerial positions, subjects felt increasingly isolated from both the culture of the Left and from the symbols and identifications of their profession of training, which all of them criticized.

The lack of strong ideological attachment of these four subjects with Marxism, Feminism or other well elaborated political reference points (see table 18) suggests not that the "detached" group was less completely socialized to left politics and culture, but that their radicalization (which occurred for all four in the 1960s) was primarily framed by the New Left experience. All four displayed a propensity towards activism, and were categorized as "activist only" in Chapter 4 (as opposed to intellectual or intellectual/activist radicalization). The decline of 1960s social movements and the New Left community particularly impacted upon these subjects. Unlike other subjects, the

"detached" appear to have less fully integrated an intellectual interpretation of political events. This combined with the difficulties they experienced in the occupational structure detached them from previous political and professional associations, and reinforced a degree of cynicism and distance from both the profession and radical politics.

H. A Fourth Category?

As noted earlier, it would appear logical that a fourth alternative pattern would be available to radical professionals. Subjects could conceivably move over the years towards increased loyalty and association with professional norms, symbols, and paradigms while displaying a diminution of radical ideology. This orientation which could be described as a "professionalist" stance was not found among the subjects studied.

Since our research population is not argued to be a random sample of radicals, no definitive statement can be made as to the prevalence of this orientation among the general population of (ex) radical social workers or professionals. However, the author postulates that this orientation would be far less common than the three discussed above. First, increased mobility and commitment to professional paradigms and symbols was not associated with diminished radicalism in our study. While the question of

militancy is a very different one (see Part III), even those subjects who were most identified with the mainstream organizations and theories of Social Work (like Court and Rosa) did not feel great tension in mediating the two orientations. On the other hand, occupationally, it appears that movement into management tends to hold the strongest association with diminished ideological commitment. As will be commented on further below, both the elasticity of professional norms in the Social Services as well as the function of the social services as a mediating institution which reflects oppositional elements in society often hospitable to a broad left-liberal interpretation, are suggested to militate towards retention of radical ideology for the low level staff social worker, supervisor, organizer, etc. At the level of technobureaucratic employment (such as administration), there is a greater possibility of direct conflict between the values and norms of radical Social Service professionalism and organizationally bound self-interest. It might be suggested, and is an area for further inquiry, that more of the administrative personnel in social services (and those who have the left the field) have become detached from left ideology than those engaged in direct practice work.

Summary:

This chapter reviewed the research population's ideological and professional attachments at the time of the study in order to analyze how radical social service professionals currently understand and mediate the norms and beliefs of professionalism and radical ideology. Despite considerable feelings of guilt and some diminution in radical activism in recent years, virtually all subjects remained strongly committed to radicalism. Depending on the strictness of definition, one can count only one subject, or, at most, four subjects whose attachment to Left ideology had weakened considerably. In contrast to this finding, and the high degree of complementarity between radicalism and Social Service professionalism expressed by subjects in their retrospective accounts of professional training (Chapter 5), there was a significant decline in professional identification for most subjects.

Less than one-third of the population strongly identified themselves with a profession (Social Work in each instance), and felt that the professional values and norms were complementary to radical political beliefs. This group was labelled as "mediated" and was composed primarily of females trained in Social Casework, with a majority of subjects relatively recently radicalized. Generally, they were strong Feminists, and were highly committed to an

ideology of personal empowerment in which the "personal is political." This group self-consciously utilizes the terminology, paradigms, and language of the Social Work profession in a subversive manner to "stretch" the concepts of Social Work to "fit" leftist political objectives.

Two very different groups composed the overwhelming part of the population which had become detached from strong professional identification and subjectively felt like "outsiders" in the Social Service field or had left the field entirely. The largest sub-group was labelled as "critics" by the author. The "critics" had retained a strong ideological attachment to Left politics, while showing a decline in professional attachment. This group contained more men than the "mediated" group as well as more subjects radicalized in the late 1960s/early 1970s. Although three of the subjects were trained in social casework and the actual number of subjects currently doing counseling split 50-50 between the "mediated" and "critics", this category contained most of the subjects trained in Community Organization, Social Policy, Research, and Psychology. The group showed a stronger affinity for Marxist theory as well as other social science paradigms than the "mediated" group. They tended to reject the view of the "mediated" group that the social services could be radicalizing, particularly without overt political education in counseling, organizing, or other occupational roles. They retrospectively viewed

their training as inadequate and normative, and saw their role as radicals more as breaking through the limited visions of the professions. Having come to the view that the social service professions were not the 'vanguard for change,' they also felt 'homeless' in relation to the professional occupational structure.

A small group within the population (four), was labelled as "detached" by the author. These subjects displayed a symmetrical pattern in occupational movement and political ideology: as subjects moved over the years to high administrative positions, they increasingly were divorced from professional and radical identifications. This group was mostly male, trained in Social Casework, and were all radicalized in the 1960s. While previously extremely politically active, they were less ideologically connected with theory, such as Marxism or Feminism. In an interesting similarity to the "mediated" group, the "detached" group lumped together Left politics and a strong identification with the Social Work profession. In their case, they tended to reject both as unrealistic or as a barrier to efficiency at work.

The author noted the possible orientation of "professionalist" in which individuals might come to reject radical political ideologies while strongly attaching themselves to professional identifications. No subjects in this study displayed this orientation. The author suggests that career advancement in the social services is more

likely to lead to the "detached" stance than to the "professionalist" stance. The implications of these findings and its relevance to the research questions posed by this study will be analyzed below.

Discussion and Analysis of Part II

The preceding chapters have reviewed in a generally chronological fashion, subjects' individual experiences as radicals in the social service professions. Chapters 4 and 5 reviewed the processes of political radicalization and career selection of social service work. The majority of this population began to define themselves as radicals in the 1966-1971 period influenced by the social movements of that time. A strong association between radical values and Social Service careers was made by many subjects who entered the Social Services with a "missionary zeal" and desire to "change the world." At the same time, the normative goals of upward mobility were important to many subjects, and a career in the Social Services was hoped to meet both material and idealistic needs.

An analysis of subjects' experience of professional training in Chapter 5 suggested that the experience of socialization provided a strong supportive environment for radicalization and for increased activism among those already radical. While a number of subjects became critical

of the Social Service professions while in school, for the vast majority of subjects, the time in professional school was the time when the complementarity of radical political ideology and professionalism appeared most possible. Chapters 6 and 7 reviewed the experiences of this population thus far in the employment market (corresponding to early to mid stages of a career). As compared with the experience of professional school, the experience of the job market fragmented the unity of the population as vast discrepancies in career paths became apparent. Most subjects experienced their work lives with tension, and many suffered from firings, layoffs, forced quits, etc. The problems of Social Service employment combined with the allure of mobility into other careers led subjects to either leave the social services or to leave direct practice work for administration, academia or "movement" work. An analysis of subjects' attitudes towards radical ideology and social service professionalism in this chapter suggests a major decline in "missionary zeal" and in commitment to professionalism as a vehicle for radical change. While some subjects continued to "mediate" their radical political ideology with strong loyalty to Social Service professional identifications (in the tradition of radical social workers such as Bertha Reynolds), the majority of the population had become "critics" of the field, feeling they were using their occupational positions in the academy, in counseling, in "movement" jobs, etc. to promote radical values, but this

project was not particularly linked to Social Service professionalism. A few subjects had become "detached" from both strong political and professional identifications as they moved into high administrative or business positions.

Prior to moving to Part III of this study which will analyze the collective dimension of this population's experience, several theoretical conclusions are suggested from the data presented in Part II. The author will note (1) the relative primacy of adherence to radical ideology in comparison to adherence to professional ideology (2) the strong link between occupational position and political orientation, as well as the attendant weakness of professionalism as an explanatory concept, (3)the availability of alternative mediating constructs between the professional occupational structure and political beliefs, which raises questions about sociologists' classifications of occupations, and (4) the particular importance of the intellectual interpretation of occupational events in sustaining radical professional ideology.

The Primacy of Political Ideology:

As noted in this chapter, this population has sustained its ideological adherence to radical political views over a significant time period (average of 17 years) while simultaneously showing a diminution in adherence to professional ideology or even an identification with a

profession. If the three subjects labelled "detached," and considered weakening in ideological commitment (but marginally aligned to the Left) are added, and the young age of many of the "mediated" group is considered, there is an unmistaken trend in the direction of weakening professional identification, but continuing Left identification.

The experience of this population strongly challenges the view that occupational mobility and professionalization as a process are destructive of radical visions or conservatizing, as the Durkheimian tradition in the sociology of the professions would suggest (as well as much of the radical literature on the professions). Rather the conversion to radical ideology, while fluid in its specific interpretations and its translation to political activism, is felt to be a rather permanent commitment by these subjects. In contrast, professional identification and loyalty to its training, symbols, and paradigms appears in contrast to be highly <u>contingent</u>. Identification is extremely strong in anticipatory socialization (such as the "missionary zeal" in choosing a career), while engaged in the socialization process (professional training), but is weakened once radicals find themselves in actual employment situations. Continued commitment to professional norms and values once in the occupational structure appears contingent on the three other points made below: occupational position, alternative mediations of occupational life, and particular

intellectual interpretations made of career events.

Occupations, Politics, and Professionalism:

While there are limitations in generalizing from our population, it is critical to note the clear association between certain occupational choices and commitment to radical ideology and to professional norms. Not surprisingly, "movement" positions on the Left or in closely related social movements such as labor unions and work with the homeless tend to sustain a radical political commitment, and are the strongest factor in sustaining political activism. On the other hand, positions in business or high level administration, tend to particularly isolate the occupant from the left subculture and induce a position consciousness focused on efficient management rather than visions of social change and social justice. Counseling positions, academic positions, and low level supervisory and middle level management roles (at least in the Social Services) appear to serve as better "shelters" for political radicals. These findings then further expand on the many studies undertaken in the 1960s and early 1970s which noted a strong association between radical students and liberal arts/social sciences, and between radicalism and the occupations of teaching and social work as opposed to business, science, and technical fields.

In a parallel manner, professional identification and

attachment appears contingent, at least in part, upon specific occupational position. We suggest, along with sociologists such as Larson (1977) that a "technobureaucratic" ideology better captures the occupational identification of managers and administrators than "professionalism." Loyalty is firm (or agency specific) rather than generalized to a collectivity (such as Social Work), and the orientation to achievement is personalistic, rather than viewed as linked to gains of a profession. At its extreme (as the case with George) the "service ethic" and client obligations codified in the professions are transferred to an identification of the firm and manager him/herself as the embodiment of service (rather than an abstract professional loyalty). Second, it is, of course, not dramatically surprising to find that those who leave positions whose technical functions are in one professional domain (such as Social Work) for another career show a collapse of professional identification (e.g. Barbara's move to "movement" work; Sam and Jacqueline's to union work, etc.) Here again the setting and the movement it represents is primary to identification and values, not the profession trained in. Interestingly, despite the obviousness to these statements, sociologists of work and occupations have tended to view professionals as inevitably linked to their disciplines and training regardless of setting and particular role in the work setting.

Thirdly, when the factors above - the tendency towards

technobureaucratic positions and positions outside of the Social Service professions- are then considered along with the powerful analysis of the professions themselves being "segments" and only "pseudo communities" (Bucher & Strauss, 1961; Epstein, 1969; Carleton, 1977), the ability to identify and attach oneself to professional values, norms, and loyalties appears even more difficult. As students of the professions have indicated (Bucher & Strauss, 1961; Larson, 1977; Montagna, 1974, 1980), professions are organized along the lines of dominant factions whose "core paradigms," skills, and belief systems co-exist with many other subordinate "segments," producing a "spurious unity." Hence, it is not surprising to find in our study that those identified as "mediated" occupy functional and method positions which are strongly associated with the dominant segments in Social Work; training in Social Casework rather than in Community Organization or Policy, and service to population groups at the core of social work mission and current training (for example, Agnes' work in corrections; as opposed to Court's work in a hospital, Monica and Brenda's work in child welfare, and Renee and Rosalind's employment in Social Work Schools, would also be a measure of distance from the dominant segments of Social Work).

Fragmentation of the professions by roles, paradigms, core skills, employment stratification, and population group then weakens the ability to mediate one's professional labor

with a vision of a "profession" which is after all an abstraction. Perhaps the "profession" exists in its pure form only in the training schools where the various different segments join together, as they fail to in the occupational structure. The study then supports the developing body of sociological theory in questioning the explanatory abilities of the concept "professionalism" (Epstein & Conrad, 1978; T. Johnson, 1972; Roth, 1974).

Alternative Mediating Constructs:

If the above is true, difficult conceptual questions still remain. Subjects, as any individuals, develop a consciousness of their experiences and still need to interpret, make sense of, and describe their work to others in some intellectual fashion. Indeed, it is the case that identification with professional Social Work (or Psychology) is one way in which subjects did so. For the "mediated" group their work is made comprehensible and understandable in relation to the particular roles, values, and paradigms of the Social Work profession. However, as suggested, sociological theory has perhaps underrated alternative ways of mediating work life. One possibility, suggested above, is a technobureaucratic mediation. Work is understood in relation to efficient management of people, money, and other resources in the best interests of a company or public office.

While Weber's initial construct of a "calling" was greatly based on the civil service as a model of public service, in this population the "public servant" bureaucratic orientation toward work was found satisfactory only for those who detached themselves from strong radical affiliation. Efficient operations and identification with powerful institutions appear to be distasteful as occupational mediations to these radicals for at least two different reasons; it conflicts with an accent on democratic, participatory process and consciousness raising (particularly for, though hardly exclusively, for the "mediated" group), and with the specific intellectual sentiments of the population which sees the societal institutions as repressive (particularly, though hardly exclusively, for the "critics"). On the other hand, since the mobility structure provides numerous opportunities for administrative positions for those with high educational credentials, and many of these positions are available in managing welfare state programs, the technobureauratic ideology is likely to increase over time as more radicals or ex-radicals find themselves in managerial positions. As we shall develop further in Part III, movement into managerial positions, even for those in positions which have thusfar been labelled "movement" or "movement like" is not without its ambiguities. While radicals may indeed bring a more humanistic 'process' and perhaps even content into their work through administrative positions, paradoxically, the

ability to sustain the traditional oppositional prescriptions of radicals (such as organizing workers and siding with clients and consumers) is weakened. Sam, for example, in his high union position is still strongly identified with radical ideology and weakly identified with professionalism. However, his position weakens his ability to support many efforts of his own rank and file to challenge certain internal union policies and to support, at least openly, certain outside political movements. The categorizations we have made are not fixed. If Sam's self-consciousness moves further into complete identification with the goals of his organization (the Union) and his own position in it, increasingly he may come to adopt a more technobureaucratic ideology.[3]

For those who adopt neither a professional identification nor bureaucratic identification, the predominant alternative is the intellectual mediation. Richard's citation of Gramsci's "organic intellectual" suggests the social role and work/political mediation of a growing number of subjects ("Critics"). The intellectual need not describe his/her work as a commitment to profession or institution, but to outside social forces and movements which link their work to societal change, and knowledge production. The alternative of the social role of the intellectual is surprising to suggest for <u>these radical social service professionals</u> for three reasons. One, is that

this population, with perhaps two exceptions, did not enter social services considering themselves intellectuals, but as activists. Most subjects would still reject such an appellation. Second, sociologists and other observers have also tended to locate intellectuals in somewhat restrictive social roles, generally being unlikely to consider social workers or even psychologists as likely intellectuals (but perhaps part of Gouldner's "technical intelligentsia"). Significantly, there is no complete correlation between the intellectual mediation and dissemination of political ideology and knowledge, and the occupational roles of this population. Richard and Alan, as counselors/therapists, are perhaps more active in promoting left-wing ideas through their work (some of this may be in 'off-duty' time such as talks and speeches to forums on the Left, but are still related to their occupational roles) than the academics in the "mediated" group are in their work. As indicated, counselors and academics, and even middle managers, split across functional lines in their loyalty to profession ("Mediated") or intellectual activity ("Critics"). Thirdly, as we shall suggest in Part III, there is considerable irony to the fact that as Catalyst members whose key political agenda was client and worker organizing, and "radical social work practice," the majority of this population is more actively oriented to intellectual activity than to the other foci of their political project.

However, it would be in error to view either the

author's categories as fixed or as autonomous from occupational roles. While it is suggested that the public and sociological view of "intellectuals" may be overly restrictive, it is argued that the very availability of alternative roles in the social structure due to mobility fragments professional identification. Just as the ability of social workers or psychologists to enter high administrative and business positions fragments professional identification by introducing a "technobureaucratic" ideology, the ability of radical professionals to locate themselves either in "movement" positions and other "radical labor market shelters" or in positions with high professional autonomy such as teaching and (certain) counseling positions allows for the possibility of an intellectual alternative to professionalism. What is suggested is that while Richard and Alan need not be in academia to be intellectuals, they require a certain degree of freedom from job tension and work autonomy, as well as sufficient income and time off to engage in intellectual activity. Their search for the freedom to work autonomously and have time, resources, and energy for intellectual pursuits, the drive for a "radical labor market shelter", has been greatly successful through job and career changing which the mobility structure (which these subjects argued was limited) has actually allowed for. Paradoxically, as Part III will suggest, the very availability of alternative

mobility paths (and their parallel mediations of work and politics) has drastically reduced the traditional concerns of these subjects which were not intellectual: organizing as workers, client organizing, forms of radical practice. In this sense, the occupational structure both fragments the way these subjects think of their work, and the activities they are likely to engage in on and off the job.

In reviewing our data, perhaps the most important factor is suggested to be the job and career movement which radicals display in an effort to make work complementary to their self-conceptions. For most of the subjects who either came to radicalism in an intellectual manner (and the intellectual/activist manner) described in Chapter 4, or who became more theoretically based subsequently, there has been an effort to locate work which as Barbara, Bea, and Richard's case examples suggested, could have an <u>impact</u>. Such an impact is understood by subjects labelled as 'critics' as applying Marxist and other Left ideology within the context of one's work. While some subjects, such as Richard, have been fairly consistent in their intellectual self-conception, and have consistently strived to find occupational positions which enable them to apply an intellectual criticism on and off the job, other subjects, such as Barbara and Bea, did not begin their attachments to radicalism or the workforce as "intellectuals." Rather their work experiences have reinforced the elements of their self-conceptions which were more intellectual and the parts of

their identities which were "different" from other social workers and professionals. Since there is a strong normative drive for both occupational success and for a feeling of "belongingness,"the intellectuals experience considerable tension (feeling of "homelessness") because at least in the 1980s, their experiences at work (and elsewhere to varying degrees) is unlikely to validate their critiques of capitalist society. Finally, the existence of at least three alternative mediating constructs in positions variously considered to be Social Service jobs raises the question of how well sociologists of the professions have analyzed and categorized professions. For example, in de-constructing the structural-functionalist view of a "professional community," sociologists such as Terence Johnson and Magali Larson have attempted to undermine the monolithic characterizations of the "professions" by introducing social structural variables which divide them. Johnson (1972), for example, speaks of colleagial control, corporate patronage and state mediated professions. Larson(1977) divides professions between the consulting professions, organizational professions, and academic professions. While these analyses are helpful, they also have serious drawbacks. One is the continued tendency to locate particular professions in one stratification point: i.e. social workers as "organizational professionals" or "state mediated professionals." Depending on job location

within the Welfare State, social workers may occupy any of these structural positions (as faculty, managers, private therapists, agency employed caseworkers, etc.). Therefore, the inclusion of an entire profession in these categories overdetermines the issue. Secondly, while we do not argue that subjective understandings of work can supplant a social structural analysis of occupations, it would appear that the study of consciousness of social service employees (and other "professionals") would appear as least as important as objective accountings (salary, employment status, etc.) in determining their location in the social structure. Indeed the managerial class of Burnham, the intellectual classes of Mannheim and Gouldner, and the professional class of the Durkheim may all have strong relevancy to understanding how occupations and consciousness shape and stratify the "middle strata."

The Primacy of Intellectual Interpretation in Sustaining Radicalism:

Finally, we have suggested at several points, particularly in the vignettes of subjects' careers, that the nature of interpretation of career events is critical in understanding the relative strengthening or weakening of radical or professional attachments over time. For example, most subjects experienced at least one or more crisis point, either a "negative career event" (Ann and Renee's being

fired; Richard's rejection from mainstream programs and failure to secure licensing; Bea's ultimately unsuccessful fight with her Board; George's troubles with teaching) or a period in which they had to make critical occupational choices (Court's decisions as to securing higher credentials or staying at welfare; Barbara's tensions with her planning jobs and need to decide to stay or move on). Retrospectively, the strongest predictor of career movement is the attachment to theoretical and intellectualized political ideology. Those most grounded in Marxist and Feminist theory are most likely to interpret career events in such a way as to ultimately see their problems as an example of systematic oppression, and are able to re-group themselves, even in a period of crisis, to continue their struggle for a job site that can provide a "radical labor market shelter."

Less the above appear merely a circular finding (i.e. those who are the most radical, stay the most radical), two points require exploration. One is that attachment to left activism or identification is not related to career interpretations as is intellectual subscription. For example, an examination of the radical <u>activities</u> of this population ten years ago or even five years ago would provide little explanation for those subjects who became "detached," since some now labelled "detached" were arguably as active (or more) than other subjects at earlier points.

However, a close examination of their intellectual/theoretical orientations would have proved more predictive. This leads to a second and more important point. Sociologists of social movements have often stressed reference groups and social bonds as significant in sustaining ideologies. In this study, there was a complete absence of evidence to support this explanation. In reviewing the participation of the subjects in the journal, Catalyst, and in related Left groups, there was no evidence that such affiliations had a major impact on individual career decisions. For example, subjects such as Richard, Barbara, Bea, and Renee, who attempted through job changing and other career patterns to find a "radical labor market shelter," did so prior to involvement in these groups and subsequent to involvement in these groups. In the same vein, subjects who left social services for administration or business and who came to interpret social service professionalism and radical political ideology negatively, such as Ann and George, did so prior to involvement in these groups, during, and afterwards (though not surprisingly detachment from radical ideology did eventually propel them away from memberships in radical groups). It would appear therefore that the most fluid concepts of this study are identifications with a profession, with radical activism, and with participation in and identification with radical reference groups. There is a relatively more fixed attachment to theoretical beliefs and to personal patterns

of coping with work tensions.

Notes:

1. While as indicated in Chapter 2, involvement with N.A.S.W. and other professional organizations has always been controversial in the Left, since the mid-1970s several chapters of the association have elected leftists, including ex-members of groups like RASSW and URHSW. Since the 'entry' of some leftist groups and individuals into N.A.S.W., the author believed that subjects would view the association more sympathetically. Of course, like trade unions, local chapters may differ significantly from national leadership, and this further complicates generalizations about an organization's political orientation.

2. "Missionary zeal" was used to describe the high idealism with which subjects come to their social service careers ("change the world"). To a great degree, the zeal implied changing the world through a political social service professionalism. The "mediated" group is, of course, the group which comes closest to retaining such zeal. However, two caveats are in order. First, for the most part, the high goals and expectations of all subjects have been reduced considerably, probably greatly attributable to difficulties in actually implementing radical social action (see Part III), and the "mediated" group reflects a tempered zeal. Secondly, the author suggests, that for some subjects, "zeal" was extremely time limited and its diminution not the result of significant ideological and social psychological change over a long period of time. For example, Josie, a relatively recent graduate of professional school, was able only several years ago to strongly identify with the profession and feel more zeal as a student. When the large peer group of community organizing students and faculty disappeared, her employment positions as solo organizer and planner/administrator distanced her from any identification with Social Work. This reinforces the analysis of Bucher and Strauss(1961) of a "fictional unity" in the professions, perhaps most strongly bound to the academic settings in which each professional "segment" is accommodated. The employment market fragments the professional unity of a field and isolates weaker "segments"at the fringes of the profession (Wagner, 1986). In this sense, the movement to "critic" may simply represent a recognition of the weakness and isolation of a particular sub-group (e.g.organizing) rather than a major long-term diminution of political zeal in general.

3. There has been an absence of good studies of the contradictions of paid movement service positions or even service to institutions such as trade unions in recent

years. The tendency on the Left has been to generally commend those who remain committed to these pursuits (see Withorn, 1978, 1984; for example). One historical exception was Harold Wilensky's classic Intellectuals in Labor Unions (1956) which traced the cross-pressures of union work and noted the tendency of "missionaries" influenced by politics to eventually move into a non-political 'technical' orientations. In contrast to Wilensky, however, this study does not freeze radicals into a "missionary" category separate from professionalists, careerists, and other orientations (see Wilensky, 1956, Chapter 7). Rather we assume political and professional ideologies co-exist and that political beliefs can continue to survive simultaneously with the other modes of relating to work. We expand upon Wilensky's seminal work to ask under what conditions the "missionary" turns into a "program professional" or "technician" and under what conditions he or she does not.

Part III: Radicalism, Social Action, and Social Service Careers

Introduction:

Part II of this study focused primarily on individual subjects' experience of their careers as they confronted the dilemma of obtaining professional training and employment in an occupational structure which they tended to view (or came to view) as contradictory to their political values. Since our interest in Part II was in drawing from interview material to study the subjects' experience of social service careers and how such experience affected their political and professional attachments, it was necessary to "bracket" to some degree the collective nature of their experience. In addition, social action as related to political ideology and social service careers was also "bracketted." The following section will attempt, through further analysis of the interview data, to develop some theoretical conclusions about both the possibilities and constraints on political action posed by social service careers and the occupational structure.

This section will analyze the subjects' experience particularly in reference to the shared goals these subjects had while members of Catalyst and other closely related groups of radical professionals . For although the experience of work life, the meanings and interpretations of such experience, and the mediation of political values with a career, are, in many senses, highly personal phenomena,

they also are highly bounded in shared meanings and objectives which the subjects held as part of a social movement of radical social workers. They also are deeply bound in historical processes and a political economy which is both shaped by the general contours of other social movements, and by the particular stages of radical professional movements.

Catalyst and other radical groups strongly held to a belief in the relevancy of radical political ideology for daily social service work. While radical social service groups recognized that activism at work would vary and that personal employment situations would shape the ability of group members to openly implement radical tactics or overtly espouse certain ideas, Catalyst as an entity nevertheless viewed its mission as assisting social service workers in promoting radical change. While undeniably, radical theory and analysis of the social service system, was a key tool in this struggle, and was the topic of many articles in the journal, theory was seen primarily as adjunctive to struggle by both social service workers and their clients.

Three political goals, which were key to the philosophy of Catalyst and were suggested as appropriate "radicalizing" activities that could be implemented at social service jobs, will be analyzed in this section. Catalyst's first goal was to encourage social service workers in fighting their employers in their own interests as workers:

> ... social service workers' (should be engaged in) efforts toward unionization, better working conditions, and increased pay and benefits. We reject the appeal to the worker's guilt which equates material improvements for workers with reductions in client services." ("Why Catalyst?"in Catalyst, 1978:1:1, p.3)

A second goal for Catalyst was the encouragement of radicals providing assistance to "client struggles": .lsl

> ... supporting struggles by clients for increases in social service benefits and for increased control in delivery of those benefits."("Why Catalyst?"in Catalyst, 1978, 1:1, p.3)

Finally, Catalyst saw a role for itself as a journal, and an obligation of its members and readers, to engage in a "radical practice" in which all methods of social service work could be stripped of repressive functions, and be made emancipatory:

> ...we will encourage practice that emphasizes our helping functions while struggling against our function of social control...(help promote understanding of) the ways mainstream practice reinforces conformist attitudes towards class, racism, and sexism..."("Why Catalyst?"in Catalyst, 1978, 1:1, pp.2-3)

The following section will explore how the shared goals of Catalyst members; organizing as workers, supporting "client struggles," and practicing in a helping and "non-mainstream" way; were put into action by the study subjects in their own careers. By reviewing the in-depth biographies of the

subjects over the course of two decades we gain the opportunity to analyze the actual experience of social actors who were key participants in a social movement. Their successes and failures, and the perceptions and interpretations of actions and strategies engaged in at work which flowed from the common goals of this group, could provide data about the structural features of this social movement, but also provide important sociological insight into similar efforts to impart radical ideas and practice at the workplace (such as previous historical movements of radical professionals).

Methodology of Part III:

While the material in Part III was elicited through the same interview process described in Chapter 3, the analysis and presentation of the data is somewhat different. In Part II, we were interested in describing, in chronological detail, the subjects' experiences with career choice, professional training, careers, etc.. In this part of the study we were interested in inferring from subjects' accounts of their activities over the last decades, the degree to which they implemented radical activities at the workplace or in the profession. Subjects' current discussions of what they now believed doing "radical social work" or "radical psychology" or being a "radical-in-the-

professions" meant to them were analyzed along with the large amount of data previously elicited in the interview (i.e in discussing jobs or school experiences, many examples of organizing or "radical practice" were mentioned). The author intentionally sought to elicit unprompted reactions to the question of social action in the social services. That is, if the subject did not mention an area that was of key interest, the interviewer normally did not ask about it (i.e. if radical therapy or union organizing was not raised, the interviewer did not do so). Through content analysis of the earlier parts of the interview, the author could review the data for what appear to be changes in political action over time, and to gauge areas of activity which appear to more or less consistent.

This method has both advantages and limitations. A key limitation is the possibility that the information gathered is not comprehensive, i.e. the subject had not thought of a particular area of social action or hadn't the time to bring it up. For example, the author cannot suggest that every instance of attempted union organizing or client organizing was elicited in the interviews since these questions were usually not directly posed.[1] A great deal of this limitation is mitigated by the fact that many subjects were well known to the author, or had a public life in Catalyst or elsewhere (for example, many subjects who engaged in social action such as organizing had written news items for

the journal or were in other ways 'on the record' about such actions). The key advantage of the method was in reducing the possibility of leading the subjects into pat ideological and abstract answers which they may have constructed as being the "correct" ones to the interviewer or to a broader audience. It was believed that asking about each Catalyst goal might increase stress and guilt without providing an accurate assessment of the subjects' current and past orientation towards political action at the workplace.

Organization:

The following section has been organized around what appeared to the author to be the most significant findings of the study in relation to social action and political ideology. Over the years, almost all of the subjects had moved away from overt oppositional political action at the workplace or in the professions. This finding, particularly in reference to the 'professional as worker' orientation and support of 'client struggle' is the topic of Chapter 9. As oppositional political action has decreased, these radical professionals have continued some focus on the "retail" level of their work; the politics of individual transformations dominates both the groups previously labelled 'mediated' and 'critics.' Both groups use their occupational positions as springboards for a type of radicalism: as a sort of 'prefigurative politics' which

attempts to raise personal consciousness through psychosocial methods or through intellectual education of students and clients. These findings are summarized in Chapter 10.

Finally, the author will propose in the Summary (Chapter 11), that the findings are a significant contribution to the theories of social action and social movements. Both the structural constraints of certain occupational positions, and, paradoxically, the increasing identification of radicals with their own employers as "labor market shelters" limits the possibility of oppositional political action on the job, and possibly <u>off</u> the job as well. This movement into a type of "program professional" radicalism is not a simple product of an iron law, however. The social conditions that produced a movement of radical professionalism, beginning in the 1960s, are analyzed and compared with the history of the radical social service movements of the 1930s-1940s. Both movements arise and develop under certain structural conditions which change over time. The author will propose a three stage model that radical professional movements appear to go through.

<u>Note:</u>

1. The author noticed a "snowball" effect in the tendency of those mentioning one action (such as union organizing) to mention another example of the same action. This is not surprising, as the mention of one experience brings to memory another, and often caused the author to enquire further, thus eliciting other examples of such action. It is difficult to know for certain then whether some subjects

were repeatedly drawn to certain political action, while others were not, or whether the discourses were of a different order and may have failed to capture a particular aspect of a subjects' career. Impressionistically, the author believes the material that follows generally has captured the major tendencies toward radical activity, particularly in the concerns of Chapter 9 related to union and client organizing. The issues of "radical practice" dealt with in Chapter 10, such as radical therapy, are more difficult to completely account for retrospectively as they entail innumerable individual experiences over many years, with fewer 'landmarks' than dramatic social action campaigns.

CHAPTER IX:

THE DECLINE OF OPPOSITIONAL ACTIVISM

The following chapter will review, through analysis of interview data, the apparent decline in oppositional political activity at the workplace or within the professions on the part of the subjects. Oppositional activity is defined as public efforts at implementing radical precepts through challenges to established institutional structures including conflicts with employers, professional associations or schools, and other major social institutions that are not sanctioned by the individual's own employer (except in the case of paid community or labor organizers, where "employer sanction" while often ambivalent, is ostensibly present to confront institutional structures). This chapter will review some of the past efforts undertaken by the study subjects to organize at their workplaces, in the community or in the profession. The author will then analyze the subjects' current attitudes and propensity to undertake such activity, and the possible reasons for diminished activism.

I. The Professional-as-Worker:

As noted, the conceptualization of professional social workers, psychologists, and other human service

professionals as being part of the working class was (and is) a key element of Catalyst's political philosophy. In fact, a content analysis of the journal indicates that in the twenty journal issues published as of 1986, only one issue is devoid of specific reference to social service workers as workers or to union issues. Issue I of Catalyst, for example, contained three articles (out of five) that specifically argued the working class nature of social service professionals and urged unionization and alliance with clients on class terms.

From the first issue on, most Catalyst articles addressing the issue of social service employment and unionization, also generally subscribed to the view that social service and other professional work was becoming increasingly "proletarianized." While the exact meaning of this term varied, for the most part, authors projected the increased immiseration of social service professionals through a decline in job security, income and benefits, advancement and promotion, and reduced status as work became more "routinized" and subject to Taylorization which was then coming to the social services (especially important on this issue was Braverman, 1974; see also Patry, 1978; Wagner & Cohen, 1978; Webber, 1980; Adams & Freeman, 1980). The journal, as well as other organs of the Left in the 1970s, projected a circumstance in which the fiscal crisis of the state and the 'natural' trends of routinization would lead

social service professionals to increasingly subscribe to militant employee action once the "mystique" of professionalism was stripped away from their employment by deteriorating working conditions.

The focus on union organizing, internal struggles in worker organizations, and the need to view social service work in Marxist terms continued to be a major focus of Catalyst along with articles which addressed social policy issues, theory, and 'how to's of "radical practice." By 1980, the journal, was placing perhaps even more emphasis on the issues above than it had previously. This was reflected not only in the News section on worker organizing and reprints from Union publications, but by several articles which argued that human service workers were overestimating their radical potential as therapists or organizers/advocates of clients, and that they (human service workers) could have more effect by concentrating on organizing themselves as workers (see Adams & Freeman, 1980; Webber, 1980).

In 1985, a special double issue on "Labor and the Human Services"(Volume 17/18) was published by Catalyst as a joint venture with Boston Catalyst supporters. The 142 page issue provided a variety of descriptive materials on union organizing among social workers, internal union struggles for democracy, interviews with several progressive human service union leaders, and reprints on labor organizing and the social worker-as-worker from the 1930s journal Social

Work Today. As recently as the last issue reviewed, (Volume 20, 1986), one major article concluded that counselors, social workers, and psychologists should organize in unions and engage in struggles against employers to fight their own "proletarianization."

While the balance of articles in each issue varied, and authors frequently disagreed with each other on an exclusive emphasis either on the 'worker' side or the 'client' side of the debate, there was a broad consensus among both the Catalyst Collective and in the articles published, that: (1) Social Service workers should identify as part of the working class, and not with an elitist professionalism; (2) Social Service workers should unionize and fight for improved pay, working conditions, and job control; (3) Unions were often run by conservative bureaucrats who identified themselves with capitalist ideology and, once unionized, social service workers (and most notably radical social service workers) needed to fight for union democracy, more militant tactics, and more radical political programs and; (4) Social Service workers and their unions had an obligation, and were perhaps in an unique position to form alliances with client groups so that the demands of the poor and other benefit recipients would be the joint demands of a worker/client alliance.

A. The Experience of the Subjects with Employee Organizing:

In reviewing their political experiences and career experiences with the author, subjects frequently referred to past union organizing efforts, attempts at unifying staffs against employers (even without a union), and, to a lesser degree, internal union struggles around various issues. Our research population includes a number of individuals who themselves contributed to the literature on the "proletarianization of professionals" (in Catalyst and other publications) and who urged unionization and client alliances. Five subjects were at one point or other officials or employees of unions themselves (although only two are currently). A content analysis of the interview data indicates that at least fourteen subjects noted experience with employee organizing, and only two (George and Joseph, see Chapter 8) appear to have been historically either somewhat hostile to unionism or at least skeptical about the professional-as-worker view.

A complete inventory of the subjects' experience in union organizing and oppositional actions as employees is beyond the scope of this chapter, but several trends can be noted in subjects' retrospective accounts: (1) a strong militancy was expressed by the subjects about previous organizing efforts with a general sense of pride in their efforts, whether they were ultimately successful or not; (2)

with several exceptions, the strongest employee activism occurred while the subject was a relatively young and low level employee, and ceased or tapered off with age and mobility and; (3) as has been the experience of the labor movement generally, successful efforts at organizing as well as overall adherence to the professional-as-worker view corresponds strongly with public sector employment and relatively low paid and lower status social service work.

Interestingly, when describing their previous jobs and organizing efforts, subjects were usually quite militant in their descriptions and quite consistent in their view of social service workers as 'proletarianized.' This is particularly interesting in light of the discourse of the later parts of the interviews in which the subjects often neither displayed these sentiments about their current jobs nor even mentioned employee concerns. Rosalind and Howard's descriptions of previous employee struggles are indicative of subjects' activities in the 1960s and 1970s:

> (Howard, on an organizing effort at a state mental institution): It wasn't only that we were paid poorly and treated like shit, but the kids were oppressed and brutalized. We were morally outraged that this was how the State was responding to mental retardation. We fought hard and along with the parents to prevent another Willowbrook, and, in great measure, we succeeded. Of course, most of us were harassed or forced to quit. When I resigned, I wrote in my resignation letter something about how the management were jailkeepers and should be transferred to Attica. You know, it wasn't that long after (Attica). Boy they hated me, and (I) certainly didn't think I'd ever get a state job again...

> (Rosalind, on a successful union organizing effort among teaching assistants at a university): The issue was professionalism. People wanted to think of themselves as young, upwardly mobile professionals and a lot of people didn't want to think of themselves as lackeys who were doing 30% of the university's undergraduate teaching. We didn't want to think of ourselves as exploited workers. We wanted to think of ourselves as starving intellectuals who were going to become genius academics and no way would we bite the hand that feeds us because we knew academic politics and we knew if we became rabblerousers in our departments, we could sabotage our careers. So there was a lot of debate about this union, should it exist at all. But I knew! The Union was key, it was the only way conditions would improve. And I was self-supporting and poor, I didn't buy this crap that I was privileged...

Such militancy and much organizing activity corresponded (with some exceptions) to early parts of subjects' careers which clustered in the late 1960s-early 1970s, and the 1976-1980 period. For those over forty, their employment location during the late 1960s in public welfare departments and other state agencies provided a context of militant strikes (such as the S.S.E.U. strikes in N.Y.C. in 1966 and 1967), of colonization by numerous left-wing groups of the major unions and employment settings, and of a solidarity between public workers and welfare clients who were organized in N.W.R.O. at the time. For most subjects who are now under forty, however, the mid-1970s period was most active. This period corresponds to the average subject age of 25-30 and followed shortly after professional training when subjects held positions as line caseworkers or staff organizers. Significantly, the years in which Catalyst

was forming (1976-77) were extremely active. It is difficult to interpret from the interview material whether this particular cluster of activity perhaps represents the initial strength of Catalyst as a reference group in supporting activism or whether the "fiscal crisis of the state" with the large number of staff cutbacks, pay freezes, and client service cutbacks provoked such a response from the study's subjects.[1]

Indeed at one point (1976-78), at least nine subjects were involved in some form of organizing: Bea, in one of the most successful of the drives mentioned (organizing a major settlement house); Howard, Renee, and Alan, all were employed at a large hospital where they sought to organize the health care professionals; Barbara was involved at her settlement house in efforts to form a union; Rosalind (though not yet a Catalyst member) was involved in the teaching assistants union; Rita, was active as a hospital social worker struggling with other staff to get their union to take action; and Court and Sam were both public employees at the time and extremely active in their unions, serving as union delegates/stewards.

Finally, as noted above, certain types of employment correspond with greater consistency of activity and success of unionization. Overwhelmingly those involved in the public sector (welfare, corrections, city planning , etc.) were more consistently involved in union activity and more

successful in gaining the support of other employees. Among the small number of subjects who mentioned activity in recent years, almost all are employed by the public sector. Within the private sector, activity appears to correlate inversely with income and status. Bea and Richard were involved in unusual successes (for the labor movement in general) at a settlement house and a moderately sized social agency on contract with the public sector. While such success is not to be minimized, these workplaces also contrast with higher pay and status agencies such as hospitals, psychiatric clinics, and family agencies where efforts have been less successful. There are also significant differences (well established in the labor relations literature) between the environments organized in that had an important impact: *e.g.* urban areas versus rural, as with Renee's unsuccessful efforts at a rural health care agency; sectarian versus non-sectarian, with the latter being easier, exemplified by Rita and Brenda's difficulties at sectarian agencies; and university environments (such as Rosalind's) versus other non-profits with the former being "easier."

B. The Detachment from Employee Militance:

In contrast to the retrospective accounts of union organizing, efforts to unify staff against managerial or state policies, and activity within unions, when subjects

were asked about what constituted being a radical today, and when interview data was analyzed relative to recent employment experience, there was a surprising lack of mention of either unions, anti-management perspectives or on-the-job militancy. Importantly, the author was eliciting comments not only as to what actions subjects were taking, but what actions subjects wished they could do at work ('what is radicalism in the social services?').

At the time of their interviews, only five subjects either commented on the professional-as-worker orientation or implicitly saw their employment as relevant to a labor perspective. This category includes Sam, an official of a public sector union, and Jacqueline, employed as a staff member at the same public union. Other than Sam and Jacqueline, only three people: Agnes, Richard, and Barbara, suggested a key role for radicals organizing and mobilizing at the workplace. Significantly this represents the three people classified earlier as 'movement' employed, and two people (Agnes and Richard) who are in the small percentage of the population still engaged in direct practice (see Chapter 7) and potentially eligible for collective bargaining unit membership (see below).

Agnes' strong commitment to union activity provides a good example of what <u>one might have anticipated</u> to be the common outlook of these subjects who had been in the <u>Catalyst</u> Collective. When asked about her current job as a

counselor in a public sector correctional agency, Agnes moves back and forth between client need and worker organizing, seeing them not as counterposed, but as two critical tasks:

> This is a crazy place and sometimes I wonder what I'm doing here. I mean these people lock up poor oppressed people in jail, and the system stinks, its rotten, its disgusting. I see horrible things happen all the time. I guess this is all in answering how I ended up here and why I stay here. I think radicals need a commitment to people nobody else cares about, and second to (the) public institutions which everybody thinks are raggeddy and terrible and thinks you can't do any social work in.(Pause) And above all, I wanted a union job! No, this is a whole other piece. It was crucial to me. (The) people I work with are as important to me, if not more, than those (clients)...yeh, I came to see myself more as a worker. Also my personal life had a lot to do with this. I had a lot of problems, I had no money. I was on the verge of eviction, and I wanted to know(pause) all of a sudden, the nobility of social work, the liberal kinds of notions, for shit! They're not paying the rent! I'm a poor exploited person here, at least my (clients) have enough sense to go hit someone on the head to get money...

Agnes was recently elected a union delegate, and seeks, in the tradition of Catalyst, to link efforts for better pay with lower caseloads and better supervisors to improve conditions for clients. Agnes was quite pleased when recently, a large number of workers had protested at a manager's office and blocked the doors as a protest against the doubling and tripling up of office space, which affects client privacy as well as worker comfort.

Agnes provides a contrast to other subjects in several

ways; unlike most subjects, she is working in the public sector which, as noted, appears associated with union and other oppositional sentiment. Second, while Agnes is not young in age, she is among the most recent professional school graduates (3 1/2 years before interview took place), and hence her relative militancy and low level position correspond to where other subjects were in the late 1960s or mid-1970s. However, if Agnes' sentiments do hold constant over time, it may not be her relative newness to the social service professions, but her negative view of mobility which separates her from other subjects. When the author asked if she hoped to move on and do better, Agnes noted she had taken another job for four months at a psychiatric hospital which offered better pay and higher status, but she hated it. She now feels:

> ...For me the goal is to stay in this agency until I retire, for me to retain a progressive attitude towards things, stay as a line worker, and a union member, at (the) absolute most, maybe I'd try to be a supervisor at some point, which is still a union job. I want to feel good about what I do and not look down on myself. I don't like this moving up in the organization stuff...Everything in this society teaches you to be competitive and to stomp on whoever you have to stomp on to move up in whatever you're moving up in, and <u>to me, Social Work is no different than anything else, and to me that's just representative of how social service agencies mirror what the business world is doing</u>. It's a real struggle for me, because every one in my family is like that, its inbred, like oxygen, the mobility stuff. So the fight is to keep a cap on it...

In contrast to Agnes, most subjects have moved out of low level direct practice positions in the social services into higher positions. It is not suggested that these subjects (with the exception of those labelled "detached" in Part II) are no longer ideologically supportive of unionism or of worker opposition (in fact several who are administrators are helpful in an ongoing, but often surreptitious way, to unions and employee groups). However, the population as a whole has become detached from the professional-as-worker mode for three reasons: (1) Upward mobility which separates these radicals from major roles in employee opposition, often even excluding them from potential eligibility to be in a union (2) Strong evidence that union organizing and oppositional activity, while emotionally fulfilling at the time, did not satisfy the personal needs of complementing radicalism and career needs, and (3) The increasing movement of many subjects into an identification with their employers as they move into 'labor market shelters' in which they feel their work (and hence their workplace) is 'progressive' or 'movement like' or is simply not very 'oppressive.'

C. Upward and Away from the Rank-and-File:

Rick Spano's (1982) study of the Rank-and-File Movement of radical social workers in the 1930s suggested it was not merely a change in politics (the Popular Front period), but

the increasing mobility of some of the R.F.M. constituents which led to a decline in militant, oppositional sentiment among radical social workers. It is equally true in this study that while professional career mobility may not necessarily alter ideological commitment (see Part II), it does affect militancy and oppositional sentiment. Most of this population, at some point, felt they wanted to take advantage of the opportunities for increased pay, autonomy, and control that higher positions allow. Rita is typical in describing why she left a "line" position as a hospital social worker after two years to become a supervisor of a child care program:

> I had hated all authority. I always thought the superiors were incompetent assholes. So I struggled with this whole idea of being a supervisor. Part of it felt political. You know, if I become a supervisor, does it mean I identify with those authoritarian assholes? I was suspicious, the possibility of cooptation is there. <u>But I think you can assume authority without being authoritarian</u>. I had to ask myself, was I going to do something about the fact that lots of people who are in charge are such creeps?...And I thought I might be able to influence people more in some ways than working one on one, and I was sick and tired of being the 'low person' all my life...

Subjects interviewed in all work areas, from faculty members to those who went to high positions in 'movement like' organizations, were all painfully aware of the "contradictions" in their roles. Rosalind found she was able to secure a faculty position due to her radicalism. By re-

formulating her previous organizing experience, she could present herself as a candidate for a Social Work faculty job teaching in Organization and Policy. In fact, a leftist faculty member on the search committee advised her on how to make her political work relevant to Social Work professionalism. But she speaks of the dilemmas of mobility:

> So to be a radical was a professional asset. Because I was hired and all the professional opportunities I have had is because I'm a progressive social worker. Maybe I'm making my upward mobility within the progressive social work side of professionalism. I'm just mimicking the whole process, except I'm doing it within the Left...But I can't take chances. I'm low on the totem pole at (university). The milieu wears you down. And I'm not out to change them (the other faculty). If I pick a fight, I'm very vulnerable. Plus I need their cooperation...(I) could only take the soapbox when things are less risky. There are these horrible decisions. I often have to let them slide. (And) the nights before faculty meetings, I have nightmares, and (I) am pissed off afterwards...

High level 'movement like' jobs, in a similar fashion, thwart the subject's ability to be militant and may place the occupant in an antagonistic role to other staff. Howard, after entering the union movement as a staff person, was later elected to the chief office of a union, which made him "management" to the staff:

> It was really strange. I never imagined I would have to bargain <u>as management</u> with my staff, they had their own Union. And they were friends. I had hired them. But when we got into negotiations, of course, the roles changed. They got angry at me.

> Of course I knew the union's budget, which was close to nothing, and although I wanted them to get more pay, and eventually we resolved a lot, I kept returning to our low budget. I felt just like these damn employers we bargained with...

The small number of subjects mentioning current union activity or employee activism then is partly a reflection of the mass move into management, supervision, and small alternative settings. As the following two charts indicate, only seven of the subjects would be eligible for union membership under the National Labor Relations Board regulations, a decline from a high of nearly 92% in 1978 to 33% in 1987 (excluding the one student and consultant):[2]

Table 19A: PERCENTAGE OF SUBJECTS ELIGIBLE FOR UNION MEMBERSHIP BY YEAR
(excludes subjects who were students, unemployed, etc. at the time)

Year	Total Base	Percentage
1977	9	8(88.8%)
1978	12	11(91.7%)
1979	13	10(76.9%)
1980	11	5(45.5%)
1981	14	6(42.9%)
1982	16	4(25.0%)
1983	16	4(25.0%)
1984	18	4(22.2%)
1985	18	7(38.9%)
1986	21	8(38.1%)
1987	21	7(33.3%)

For an even clearer view of how the group has changed over time, we can focus only on the fourteen subjects who

were among the original Collective members. If the fourteen are viewed over the ten year period we see a decline from a high of nearly 92% being bargaining unit eligible in 1978 to only 15.4% in 1987:

TABLE 19B: PERCENTAGE OF ORIGINAL CATALYST COLLECTIVE MEMBERS AND POTENTIAL BARGAINING UNIT ELIGIBILITY BY YEAR
(excludes subjects while in school, unemployed, etc.)

Year	Base	Percentage
1977	9	8(88.8%)
1978	12	11(91.7%)
1979	13	10(76.9%)
1980	10	4(40.0%)
1981	11	4(36.4%)
1982	11	1(9.1%)
1983	12	2(16.6%)
1984	13	2(15.4%)
1985	12	2(16.6%)
1986	13	2(15.4%)
1987	13	2(15.4%)

While eligibility for union membership is likely to fluctuate some in the future and is subject to continuing political and labor relations struggles,[3] the small number of subjects eligible for unionization is significant for a group which placed such a major emphasis on their role as employees. The trend towards administration and supervision, as well as to non-social service positions, contradicts the view of many Catalyst authors and Collective members who predicted social service professionals would undergo continued proletarianization. At the time of the massive

fiscal crisis of the state in the mid-1970s it appeared as if social service jobs would shrink, social workers and psychologists would be subject to long term unemployment and lack of job security, a diminution in salaries and benefits, and that unionization and militant job actions would increase (see O'Connor, 1973; for an example of the application of such arguments to social service workers, see Johnston, 1978). While our population is too small to generalize about all of the Social Service professions in the 1980s, it would appear that the job market has remained relatively healthy and expansionist for these professions even in the face of economic stagnation and severe federal budget cutbacks in the Reagan Administration.[4]

In another interesting example of contrasts between subjects' accounts as the interviews went on, there was a tendency on the part of many subjects to describe their earlier occupational positions as "proletarianized," yet this word rarely came up in discussing their current or recent positions. Further, in describing their recent jobs, subjects were concerned not about their working conditions as employees, but about how to be a "radical" program administrator, supervisor, faculty member or therapist. This trend affects both the groups labelled "mediated" and "critics" in Part II, and both those subjects who are in non-eligible (for unionization) jobs and those who are still in union eligible positions.

Finally, it should be noted that of the seven subjects

who are union eligible, only three are actually union members. Naomi, who is a faculty member at a public university, recently filed a grievance on tenure, but otherwise did not mention union activity. And Court in his position at a large private hospital is in a union, but did not mention activity. Only Agnes was currently both in a union position and actively involved with her union.

D. Employee Militancy and Its Inability to Satisfy Personal Career Needs:

There is strong evidence, particularly salient in the cases of subjects who were once extremely active in on-the-job oppositional activism, that even a employment location within a low level position and the existence of opportunities for organizing does not ultimately satisfy the social psychological needs of subjects for job satisfaction. The author suggests that not only has job mobility opportunities been greater than anticipated by this population, but that Catalyst Collective members (as well as other radical groups) failed to anticipate the contradiction between radical activism extrinsic to job duties with the desire for job locations in which activism and overall job satisfaction ("labor market shelter") was intrinsic to a job.

This contradiction is illustrated in the cases of Bea and Howard, both of whom were trained as organizers, were

committed to social action on the job and off, and who had been consistently involved in oppositional activity. As noted, Bea was involved in a highly successful union organizing campaign at a major settlement house. Bea notes that there was some fear on her part ("I knew the consequences could entail my departure from the agency") as is common in union campaigns, yet she notes the agency was ultimately accepting of the Union and did not engage in retaliation ("the administration stayed amicable, praised me as an organizer begrudgingly"). Yet the success of the Union drive and its emotional satisfaction bore no impact on Bea's desire to stay at the organization:

> (I) wasn't doing it for anything personal. I was planning to leave, the only reason I stayed there was that I felt they needed a union and I could help with that. Once the election was over, I started to look for another job. I was tired of it...

Despite her ideological commitment to unionization, Bea apparently did not feel the gains of unionizing were most salient for her personal satisfaction. As noted in Chapter 8, Bea found her staff organizing job limited and less than fulfilling. She also sought more autonomy and higher status:

> (I) always had (the) idea of running (my) own agency and (I) was working for a supervisor that I detested, and being held back. I wanted a position that (I) could develop my own work rather than work for someone...

So ironically, the hard won victory of the union did

not induce Bea to remain and "continue the struggle" as Catalyst or other radical organizations might have advocated, but served only to keep Bea employed at the agency a little longer than she had anticipated. She then moved into an Executive Director position (see Chapter 8) and has not returned to an employment position eligible for unionization.

Howard's career provides a similar example. Strongly committed to the professional-as-worker philosophy, he quickly became involved in initiating employee activism at a hospital, his first position after receiving an M.S.W. Shortly after his probationary period ended, he was involved in organizing staff to complain to management about higher caseloads which were putting pressure on workers and hurting patient service by reducing the ability of workers to fully serve them. This organizing quickly led to an effort to unionize the professional staff of the hospital. Howard found the organizing exciting, in contrast to aspects of his actual job duties as a medical social worker:

> It was great doing this organizing, and also being openly political there (at the hospital). Passing out Catalysts and stuff like that. And they (administration) were liberal about it. They really successfully outmaneuvered us, but they weren't going to fire any of us. But the work wasn't interesting enough to me (pause) I mean the union organizing was, but the job wasn't, not the day-to-day stuff which I was paid to do...

Since the organizing eventually failed, Howard was

asked whether its success would have made a difference in his decision to leave the hospital after a year and one half to enter a paid career in Labor Studies:

> To be honest, I don't think it would have mattered too much. Sure I would have loved it(if the union had won), and maybe I'd be a delegate or steward for awhile, but no, it wouldn't have changed the job that much. And also the more I got interested in Union stuff, the more I wanted to enter it as a career. Now, even if we had won (the union campaign), (the Union) was not going to come in and say, hey we're giving you this job on our staff. No, I had begun to feel like casework was like a band-aid. That it was like the myth of Sisyphus, you know, just pushing the rock up the cliff, and nothing changes. The macro level work of organizing, this seemed exciting and what I decided I wanted to do for a living...

Bea and Howard's experiences suggest that not only does the opportunity for mobility fragment radical goals, but the desire to make day-to-day work intrinsically meaningful suggests a move away from the 'shop floor' of Social Work to positions which appear more consonant with radical goals. Paradoxically, this entails leaving the very arenas of struggle that radical professionals had previously asserted was so critical (Howard, like Bea, has not been eligible for union membership since the job above).

E. Increased Identification with the Employer:

One of the paradoxes of the drive for a "radical labor market shelter" is that previously militant radicals no longer feel hostile to their employers, but tend to identify

their interests with those of their agencies. The vast majority of the subjects interviewed had laudatory comments about their agencies or institutions; certainly this orientation suggests that union organizing or other on-the-job militancy is unlikely. While such an orientation is least surprising in agencies we have labelled as "movement" services or "movement like," a very large number of social service agencies were described as being "good" jobs with little grounds for complaint. The author found the comments of Alan, now employed as a counselor in a drug program, particularly interesting. Alan had been a member of a Marxist party for eleven years and still describes himself as a "revolutionary socialist." He is still employed in direct counseling and is eligible for union membership (though his agency is not unionized). Yet his description of his agency shows a strong identification with its goals and organization:

> This is my best job. The administrator is the best guy I've seen. You know, morale is high, it is well organized. There's a lot of autonomy, and the opportunity to do a lot of groups, which I like...Everybody considers the place great. The administration is benign. The non-economic benefits are great. There's a lot of time off which is important to me because of my daughter. Its informal, not straight laced. Certainly its not a place where there would be a union organizing drive...

Given the increased identity and commitment of 'hard core' Marxists, like Alan, to their agencies, it is less

surprising that some of the younger subjects interviewed who were less affected by Marxism, the fiscal crisis, and the "proletarianization" argument show less consciousness of labor-management conflict. For example, when Josie was musing about her new job as an administrator of a community center, she was surprised to find people were treating her differently. When the author suggested that being an administrator might entail tensions with employees, she responded:

> I don't know. The agencies I (have) worked in, there wasn't much distinction between management and staff. Not a lot of flaunting of authority. (The) staff is very self-sufficient. (There's) not much of a hierarchical structure though titles are definitely there. People make distinctions, but I don't. People ascribe things to this position, like 'I'm associate director,' but I don't...

In some cases, subjects were even able to mediate their values in positions which they found personally rewarding, but which they described in objective terms as being hostile to their politics. For example, Rosa served as a program director for a private agency delivering services to battered women. She worked under a director who she described as being hostile to staff and connected to political powers which included the right wing:

> This was an excellent job! I quickly got in with (name of Director). She was known for firing people at her whim. She was very politically connected with the Mayor, she was head of the agency...all these political deals were fascinating to me. It was interesting. At first I

> found it repellent, but I learned to work the system. It was interesting to be that close to power...At first I was afraid of her. But I got in real good with her...It was strange though. I mean she had some bizarre ideas. One day I was working with (city union) to get funds, but the next day she sent me to the Heritage Foundation and the Junior League. Can you imagine to the Heritage Foundation, which is right wing, to get funds for victims of abuse? But it was all very interesting...

In sum, the increased identification with both the goals of the organization (whether drug counseling or service to battered women) and the increased perception of organizations as "non-hierarchical" and non-oppressive make the professional-as-worker orientation less likely today than in earlier years. It should be noted at this juncture that, however, that this may not simply be a change in the subjects' orientation, but in the organization of social service delivery.

Since the 1960s, a plethora of small, relatively non-bureaucratic agencies have arisen, originally from community action monies, and now from contracted state services which funnel money to a variety of private agencies. As small decentralized programs which developed in the 1960s have become greater in number, they are often headed by liberal or even radical administrators trained in Social Work, Counseling, Psychology or Liberal Arts. No doubt, organizational theorists in Social Service (see Brager & Holloway, 1978, for example) are correct in labelling many of these new agencies as "campaign" and "client service

agencies" as contrasted with classical bureaucratic complex institutions such as hospitals, welfare departments or correctional facilities. These agencies, such as services to gays and lesbians, women's organizations, health advocacy groups, alternative programs for adolescents, etc. came out of idealistic campaigns for needy populations, often led by progressives. In this sense, the very success of 1960s social unrest among clients, and radical change in agency structure demanded even by Social Work academics in the 1960s and early 1970s (see Resnick & Patti's Change from Within, 1980, for example), have created a less formalized, less hierarchical, and 'movement like' feel in many social agencies. Paradoxically, as agencies abandon the bureaucratic model, many radicals appear to be responsive to work in such agencies despite their critique of capitalism. The acceptance of such structures is hardly without its problems, as Court's earlier comments (Chapter 6) suggest. As Court's critical remarks about "little agencies which are fiefdoms" imply, neither the organizational structure (usually non-union, hierarchical though appearing informal, low pay, often highly personalistic, and based on the charismatic authority of a director) nor the ultimate goals of the agency (usually liberal in political orientation and solely focused on direct service delivery) correspond to what socialists would demand from the social welfare system.

II Client Organizing:

Just as Catalyst consistently stressed the role of social service professionals in organizing their workplaces and struggling within their unions, many articles in Catalyst stress an obligation to help clients organize or to "support and assist client struggles." However, client or community organizing is a less easy role to define for several reasons, and often, the prescript of organizing and support of clients remained at a more abstract level than the prescriptions about workplace organizing. First, social service workers cannot create client unrest without indigenous movements on the part of low income or other groups of people. By the mid-1970s, many of the most dramatic instances of community organizing, such as the welfare rights and poor people's campaigns, the community control movement, and the civil rights movements had receded. Unquestionably, social service professionals lacked the organic connection with mobilized client groups that existed in the days of the anti-poverty wars and welfare rights.

Secondly, social service professionals work within a wide array of contexts some of which are more conducive than others to the possibility of organizing. For example, while a large degree of consensus exists within the radical community about the need for welfare clients, the homeless or low income tenants to engage in organizing, other populations such as the mentally ill, the retarded, children

or substance abusers present at a minimum difficult "challenges" to organizing or may even arouse controversy as to the suitability of organizing strategies. Finally, community and client organizing within the social services has always meant different things to different people. Most theory in Community Organization suggests that organizing or "change efforts" can range from the "collaboration" model in which the "change agents" confront a sympathetic target system (and therefore can rely on joint planning, moral persuasion and education to achieve desired ends) to "contest strategies" in which all out struggle is necessary to achieve the desired ends (see, Brager & Specht, 1973; Cox et. al., 1974, for example). While "contest" strategies are most associated with the political Left in the U.S., along with the Alinsky School of organizing, there is considerable ambiguity as to what constitutes support for clients, and under what circumstances 'contest' strategies are most appropriate. For example, the articles in Catalyst itself present very different organizing examples, some of which are closer to collaborative strategies than to traditional contest strategies.

Theoretical articles on Community Organization did not dominate the journal's pages, though there were many references to clients struggles as individuals, and as part of broader movements. Issue I included (in addition to many articles calling abstractly for support of client

struggles), an article on organizing in the Black community and a book review of Piven and Cloward's Poor People's Movements. By Issue II, the Collective, concerned about moving beyond global theoretical statements, stressed in its "Call for Articles" the need for "articles addressing practice and includ(ing) personal experience" (Catalyst, 1978, 1:2, p.ii). This emphasis led to several articles describing client views of life on welfare (see issues 3 and 4), an increased news section which featured not only labor organizing, but community groups fighting fiscal cuts, women's organizing, housing organizing, and anti-intervention struggles. Three articles on organizing models in the United States were published in 1981-1983 including the use of sports as an issue, a community alliance around health, and housing organizing (Naison, 1981; Freudenberg and Kohn, 1982; Angiotti, 1983). Beginning in 1985, Catalyst began a new feature entitled "Organizing and the Human Service Community" which had a broad focus: presenting short items ranging from labor strikes to social workers organizing around a variety of issues to community struggles such as hospital closings, AIDS, and housing, to broad based political organizing such as anti-intervention demonstrations.

Despite the consistency of the journal's support of activism of all kinds, it is not possible to draw from the journal's pages any clearly delineated theory or model for organizing. On the one hand, the journal increasingly

covered non-social service related militant actions ranging from the Miami ghetto riots to the Women's Pentagon demonstrations. On the other hand, there are numerous articles which corresponded to a more collaborative form of planning, community development or organizing: for example, focusing on planning concerns such as the development of a display of gay culture at a library, and the use of sports for community development. Increasingly as the Reagan years proceeded, more attention was given to political legislation, the need to combat the Right electorally and to register new voters rather than employing "contest" strategies.

Since "struggles" or "organizing" can mean so many things, the author will use a fairly broad definition of support for client organizing including the use of social advocacy and planning in evaluating the experience of the subjects.

A. The Lack of Saliency of Client Organizing in Subjects' Accounts:

To an even greater degree than the decline in the professional-as-worker orientation, the self-reporting of organizing or significant involvement in client organizing was virtually non-existent among the subjects interviewed except for those few whose employment was institutionalized in a leadership position within a Union or Left

organization. Further, even those who might arguably be involved in some client organization of a collaborative nature, did not cite this work as a key role for radical social service workers (though earlier in the interview they mentioned such activity). Nor was any subject employed as an actual grass roots organizer at the time of the study.

Some of the reasons for the above finding are quite clear. The major movements of the 1960s/early 1970s provided direct employment for several subjects in community organizing (Jacqueline in VISTA; Martin with welfare rights organizing; George in Community Mental Health centers) which had now evaporated. By the mid-1970s, even those who graduated with degrees as professional community organizers had difficulty finding jobs, with the possible exception of positions in labor unions.

While the above context is critical to understanding organizing history, there is also a tendency to overdetermine the decline of oppositional activism by reference to "the times." There are still social movements and there are still those who are either paid organizers or who actively use their work roles to support client efforts. Secondly, the decline of oppositional organizing, in this study, corresponds <u>not</u> so much to the end of the 1960s movements, but (like the union efforts) to the period several years into employment (including the 1970s and 1980s) with the apparent decline corresponding to advancing age, status, and accumulated work experience.

As with our discussion of employee organizing, militant client organizing is limited both by structural constraints on those who serve as paid organizers or in associated macro-level areas of social service (planners, administrators), by alternative opportunities for employment available to subjects, and by an increased identification by subjects of expertise on client issues residing with the employing agency.

B. The Crisis for Professional Organizers:

As contrasted with subjects who worked primarily in direct practice counseling, subjects whose job functions were primarily in Community Organization or in other macro-level roles (e.g. planning) were more likely to be forced out of particular jobs or change career paths as a result of overtly political conflicts. While as noted in Chapter 7, subjects changed jobs and careers for a variety of reasons, and both groups (counselors and organizers) suffered from "negative career events," the counselors usually did not experience interference with their actual work with clients, and when difficulties arose with particular agencies, they were often attributed to lack of "fit" between the agency and the subject. Further, most counselors remained strongly committed to their actual direct practice skills and changed positions in an attempt to continue providing such service. Even when many counselors came to occupy supervisory or

administrative positions, as they now do, they still maintain a strong positive feeling about counseling, and seek to remain organically connected to counseling tasks.

By contrast, most organizers found that a particular event or series of events led to a "crisis point" in which they felt "caught between" the employing agency and the clients and at times other staff. In most cases, the conflict was resolved by the subject departing from the organization, and, often, departing from the role of organizer entirely. These incidents are experienced with a great deal of trauma, and, in several cases, led to feelings of great bitterness.

Joseph's experience is illustrative of the struggles faced by organizers (and administrators of 'movement like' organizations such as neighborhood coalitions) when they engage in "contest strategies" which are highly visible. Joseph, as noted in Chapter 5, went to Social Work School in order to "organize the white working class." He had a very positive experience in one of his field placements, as a community organizer at a small neighborhood service center in a white, ethnic neighborhood. Upon graduating from school, Joseph was offered the position of director of the Center. Interestingly, Joseph told the interviewer, "I really wanted to be an organizer, not a director, but there was no choice, if I wanted to work there, it was just that one paid (position)." But Joseph's interest in organizing and activism would not be wasted. Shortly after he began, some

neighborhood residents informed him that a local firehouse was going to be closed by the city. Concerned with the issue of arson and redlining in the old residential working class neighborhood of wooden frame houses, as well as with cuts in city services which were discriminatory to this section of the city, Joseph and a small number of neighborhood residents began a series of protests which quickly escalated to a human chain blocking the firehouse. The initial organizing of rallies and the sit-in began a two year neighborhood struggle in which the firehouse occupation was perhaps one of the most visible fights against the budget cutbacks in N.Y.C. Joseph talks with pride about his role, and at the same time, notes the attitude of his employer to these actions:

> We started it (the occupation) ourselves. We orchestrated the whole thing! And yeh, it was very exciting, the rallies with hundreds of people, being on TV. (We) had people ready to come in and mobilize at anytime, but when we started there was no identified leadership yet from the community, mostly it was me, my staff, and the students. (My) Board President was scared shit, at first he just wasn't there at all. Then he began to undermine me, he became a link to the police and the politicians to work out a quick way to get these people (protesters) out...

As the protest continued, an indigenous leadership of local community people did emerge, aided by outside activists drawn to the fray. On the other side were the local political "ward heelers," including some of Joseph's

own Board, who regarded the conflict with great suspicion. While publicly siding with the need for fire protection, they were fearful that things were getting 'out of hand,' and that the local political machine would be harmed by such conflict and by an emerging new leadership. As the months of the occupation continued on, Joseph's role became more problematic:

> For a long time I was in the lead, and our agency continued all the time to funnel money to the protesters, you know, everything from food provisions, to the xerox machine to free phones. I had to start backing off though. Partly it was, I lost control over it. The students and other activists were going their own way. And also my Director opposed what I was doing. He felt I wasn't his boy and he wasn't controlling me...

Finally, because of the confrontative tactics of a militant organizer hired by Joseph, the Board began to confront Joseph, blaming him for the actions of his staff. As Joseph was attacked and constantly threatened with being fired, he retrospectively speaks in saddened tones about the lack of support he received from his own staff and from the community activists he was personally close to:

> There was incredible conflicts between the Board of Directors, the Firehouse, and me. I guess I was the fence between the radicals on one side and the conservative neighborhood folks including my bosses. (I) was heavily red-baited and provoked...The battles were constant. But I got no support from the Firehouse (occupiers) at all. They started to feel I was against them. I was there by myself. It was real lonely... When I quit I was hated by the Board, hated by the Firehouse (occupiers). (I) was really beaten by it. I'm not

> sure why. But I was hurt, not supported by even my staff...

Joseph's description of this episode and his tone of bitterness are also reflective of his detachment from his early career goal of organizing. Neither his subsequent career (ten years) nor the later parts of his interview again display an interest in organizing (either paid or otherwise). When Joseph left the neighborhood center after two and a half years, he accepted a position as director of a coalition of settlement houses. When the author asked him why he took this career route, Joseph replied:

> I decided (that) I didn't want to work with lay people. I wanted to work with professionals. I figured they would be better, saner. And working with the service providers did feel better...

Joseph's career development reflected a move from "contest" style "grass roots" organizing which had been his career goal to a series of administrative positions which can be characterized as "collaborative" organizational tasks in the Social Work literature. He served as a fundraiser and planner at the settlement coalition, securing money for job training, the provision of home health care, and funds for the homeless. In later positions, he also worked on developing housing programs, services for the homeless, and low cost rehabilitation programs. But in each case, the work was conducted in a "top down" manner typical of large private and public agencies who determine a community's

needs and seek funding from corporate and public services to develop programs. As noted in Chapter 8, Joseph, in the course of his career, came more and more to identify with his fellow professionals, and view community groups as unrealistic and hostile.

While Joseph's interpretation of his job experience contrasts with other former organizers, Joseph's experience itself is mirrored in at least four out of six other cases of subjects whose employment involved organizing. As noted earlier, Bea was "caught between (the) Board, (her) staff and (the) community" when she tried to defend militant organizing among new immigrants to the neighborhood; Barbara's work as a planner/researcher put her in conflict with her agency directors. Howard, in several union positions, was able to secure the support of union leadership only as long as the goal was to organize new employees or to defend the incumbent union against outside threats. When Howard moved into "contest" strategies within the Union itself, in an attempt to have rank-and-filers control the structure of the Union, he was attacked by the leadership. Like Joseph and Bea's situation, Howard found himself isolated as certain staff and rank-and-filers, who were previously strong supporters, were influenced by conservative unionists and outside political leaders to either stay neutral or even dissociate themselves from Howard.

The constraints on community organizers and planners,

as well as labor organizers and other "professionalized" activist positions have been well documented and debated elsewhere. The dangers of "contest strategies" has been a subject of much interest to liberal social service thinkers who often suggest that these strategies are ineffective (see Brager and Holloway, 1978, for example). Despite the gulf between leftist thinking on organizing and Social Work views of organizing/planning, there is some agreement that lacking a broadly based organic support from an entire client group or community, paid organizers or administrators are quite limited in confronting their own employers or funding sources. Virtually all the subjects interviewed themselves expressed strong disappointment, not only with their funders and employers, but with their constituents (community residents, union members, etc.) who failed to view professional organizers as worthy of support or who at least failed to mobilize sufficiently on their behalf.

Clearly, paid organizing is highly constrained in that contest strategies are limited by the objectives of unions, social service agencies, neighborhood groups, and other institutions. As long as the organizer carries out the collaborative functions of increasing funds for a center or securing more members for a union, conflict can be avoided. But when aspects of a political agenda are brought in, and conflict ensues, few institutions are prepared to back the organizer. Most interesting in noting the structural

constraints on organizers "assisting client struggles," is the rather self-conscious effort of the subjects to avoid such problems by either departing the field (like Joseph and Bea) or by trying to find a job shelter which hopefully is more hospitable to their political views. Howard, for example, switched union positions several times, hoping to find positions in more "progressive" unions where a militant agenda could be reflected by his employer; after six years in this field, he left, finding himself critical of unions and skeptical of the possibility of institutional support for militant actions.

The mobility opportunities present in the social structure allows these radicals to ultimately leave behind the crisis of organizing, and accept positions in different areas (such as Howard and Bea's moves to academic interests; Joseph and Josie's to administration). As with the decline of the professional-as-worker orientation, organizers have generally moved up and out of staff positions where their previous focus was on militant activity.

C. Client Organizing by Non-Professional Organizers:

Despite the broad 'call to arms' in the journal about 'client struggles,' subjects who were employed as therapists or other direct practitioners, educators or supervisors did not mention client organizing nor did they conceptualize their work with clients in these terms. With the exception of the late 1960s/early 1970s, when older subjects were able

to support N.W.R.O. and other groups while employed as city caseworkers or in other jobs, it appears that either the diminished organization of clients as an interest group in the post-1960s period or the constraining structure of social service positions (or both) has precluded major professional support for clients at the workplace.

If organizing and client support is viewed broadly, however, two kinds of client organizing can be gleaned through a content analysis of the interviews. The most common orientation is suggested by a 'generalist' theory of direct practice in which many subjects attempted to interpret client need which often comes to the practitioner in individual cases ("private troubles") into broader concerns which they demand their agencies or employers respond to ("public issues"). A second type of organizing has occurred sporadically when the interest of clients, professionals, and social agencies coalesce enough to allow for a unified action against another target (such as a funding source). In both cases, the general mode of such 'organizing' is closer to collaborative tactics, or social advocacy, than to contest strategies.

The first orientation, as noted in Chapter 5, typifies many of the subjects who conceptualize a generalist "radical social work practice" in the ability to move from "case" to "cause" and to demand that the collective problems of clients be heard rather than only individualized into

"cases" (as counterposed to Mills', 1943, famous article on social pathologists). For the most part, however, subjects used their positions in counseling or education or administration primarily as an advocacy role rather than acting as catalysts for organizing. Brenda, for example, stressed repeatedly in her interview, the necessity of all social workers seeing problems in broad terms, linking up individual problems with broader issues, and demanding agencies live up to their missions. Indeed, in Brenda's accounts of her jobs-casework with children, hospital patients and union members- she did just that; frequently "opening her big mouth" to complain about client issues or urge others to do so. In her position as a social worker with a union, for example, Brenda viewed the low pay scales of clients, the lack of affordable housing and constant displacement of clients, and lack of available child care for clients as issues the union should address in a macro-level manner (whether through political action, collective bargaining or other organizing). But her advocacy, as well as that of her colleagues, was not successful:

> I saw it as a failure of vision. A failure of commitment to...It's not progressive if there isn't any attempt to organize things. I think caseworkers can be a part of that and use their experience and gather information that should then be fed up the line and management and supervisory (staff) then have the burden to do something with that. But that commitment was not there. They were content to kind of limp along and continue to put bandaids on...
>
> Interviewer: What would happen when you brought up

> these issues, that the union should address these issues in a militant way...?
>
> Brenda: Oh, we kept raising it, but (it) was frustrating. People there were around forever and some got into (their) positions and just sat. But the commitment was not there on the part of the Administration because of the power structure there, you couldn't go very far. Continually you brought it up (and) got superficial responses. It would be 'Yes, but...' 'What after all, can we do about housing in the City? What can we do about poverty? We are doing the best we can'....

Difficulties emerge with the advocacy/generalist approach for two reasons. In Brenda's case, and many similar situations described by subjects, employers will not radically change their agendas without mass pressure. But caseworkers like Brenda do not appear to be in sufficiently powerful enough positions to be able to mobilize clients. As Brenda notes:

> (The social service Unit of Union) is very compartmentalized. We're isolated from the power in the Union. We each see some individuals out of the thousands of members (of the union)...and you cool people out also. I mean it's absolutely valid to be helping these members with their survival needs, but in a funny way it takes the Union off the hook politically. Because they (union members) are grateful to the Union (for the social services) and then they don't make demands on the union to actually fight to change their pay or the structure of society...

Secondly, advocacy without client mobilization usually succeeds, at best, in the development of new programs or new funding which subjects were able to achieve from their agencies or by permission to write grants. In some cases,

such as Rose's efforts on behalf of battered women and Rita's program development for adolescents, this can be seen in broad terms as representing advancements in client services. However, since actual mobilization of clients is not involved, it is difficult to ascertain the degree to which clients actually viewed new services as a victory or whether they even viewed services as necessary. Since clients are atomized as population groups, rather than mobilized, the sense of "empowerment" that radical organizers seek does not occur with a funding of a new program by professional grantsmanship. Essentially, the advocacy planning approach, while in a broad way is presumably responsive to some client need, represents a collaborative strategy of seeking agency/institutional response to client problem without resorting to actual engagement of clients in their own affairs (for a similar argument, see Piven, 1970).

Of course, one can well argue that in the absence of client unrest, these subjects are not located in structural positions in which they can do otherwise. Since social service agencies tend to isolate clients from each other (as well as workers who may sit in private offices all day with their individual clients, separated from their colleagues) and are also perceived as delivering service rather than responsible for social problems, organizing at the juncture of service receipt is quite difficult. Moreover, the critique of 'experts' and 'professionals' as imposing their values

and agendas on people has historically been shared by Left and Right. These critiques, to a great degree, led to rise of the self-help movement of the 1970s. While much of this movement has remained at the level of service delivery (self-help groups for cancer victims, drug users, battered women, etc.), one can argue that the majority of successful community organizing in the last decade has flowed from indigenous local sources (such as local environmental and tenant protests). Ironically the critique of the 'expert' doubly restricts the caseworker or educator. They are perceived as experts lacking the local community legitimacy to lead struggles around issues but, unlike paid organizers, they do not even have a structural link with an organization that can mediate between client groups, macro-level issues, and the expert providing some credentials to engage in organizing.

A second type of organizing is possible, at times, in which organizational needs are threatened by outside sources. Here, organizing of clients takes on an appearance of 'contest' tactics, but is collaborative in terms of the employing institution. For example, Monica provided an example of "radical practice" which developed around the City's decision to stop funding for the agency in which she worked which provided group home services to adolescents. In response to the City's decision to cut funds (and therefore depriving the children of their only homes, forcing them

back into either foster care or new homes elsewhere), "the kids went wild." Monica decided "the time was right for a demonstration." In this instance, Monica was able to do successful strategic organizing by suggesting the idea to the teenagers, rather than imposing her own idea. However, the idea aroused no opposition from agency executives who promptly helped with the organization which culminated in a spirited march by the children on City Hall. Because the agency's funding and existence were at stake, contest strategy (at least for this brief time period) was embraced by employer, workers, and clients.

In a similar vein, Renee also described a recent effort at her program for homeless, mentally ill women in which she and her staff assisted the clients in taking over a tenants council. Renee's program, an on-site mental health team, could ally with clients, since the primary target was the management of the hotel which had co-opted the rather moribund tenants meetings. The agency's (Renee's) goal of empowering the formerly homeless clients conflicted with the key goal of control held by the hotel. While the clients succeeded in taking greater control of their own meetings (as opposed to the unsuccessful results of Monica's demonstration), the implications for client organizing are unclear. To Renee, the tenants meetings:

> have a radical flavor to them. A hell of a lot of programs would not have enabled this. The tenants empowered (them) selves. (They) knew the program could help them take over...

Yet there are considerable ambiguities to the situation. Renee strongly identifies with her own social agency, which assisted the clients against the hotel staff, who are employed by another non-profit social service agency. Structurally, since Renee's agency does not have to worry about rent collection or other instrumental issues in the hotel, her agency can have a freer role in advocating/organizing clients. But the clients' "empowerment" is greatly symbolic, since neither clients nor social workers placed emphasis on specific issues of hotel control, material benefits or conditions, etc. Rather the idea that the tenants groups should be self-led is embraced as a goal in itself, which while commendable, runs the risk of remaining at the level of "sociotherapy" (see Rein, 1970) if not broadened out to attack the structural issues of concern to the low income tenants.

In sum, there is considerable ambiguity in "client organizing" and efforts at advocacy planning. While the late 1960s/early 1970s saw some very strong client groups emerge which occasionally received organized support from professionals, in the last decade both community organization, as practiced by professionals, and assistance to client organizing, as attempted at times by social service workers and others not paid to organize, has suffered disarray. Paid organizers, in this population, were quite successful in some efforts at organizing community

residents and workers, but eventually felt caught between the competing demands of their employing organizations and elements in the community/worksite that may have wanted to go further than the organizer or who did not support or understand the professionals' limitations. Nor can it be asserted at all, as supported by this study, that client or worker groups are always the more militant of the organizer/client dyad. As many accounts indicate, it is often the conservativism of the community or union members that is the eventual downfall of the organizer. In any case, this study shows a strong trend away from paid organizing positions and into administrative or faculty positions where the pressures are evidently fewer. For those employed as social service workers in non-organizing positions, there is little evidence of an oppositional strategy or even an inclination to challenge the agencies in which subjects are employed to change policies, benefit provisions or other aspects of client treatment. In some cases, subjects have raised their voices about client needs, and sometimes have been able to achieve success only in so far as they themselves were allowed to plan or develop new programs. In other cases, agencies allow employees some autonomy in challenging other organizations where it is in the agency's own vested interest. However, a consistent strategy of client organizing was not developed or integrated into the workplace by these subjects. Indeed Catalyst itself, in an

introduction to an issue (Catalyst, 4:1, 1982, p.3), publicly shared the frustration felt by its members:

> As human service workers, we have consistently tried to integrate our work and our politics...Except for those people who work in alternative agencies, we have found that our jobs are not always the best places for political organizing. Human service agencies often subordinate the political issues of service delivery to the technical problems of program development and implementation. As a result, workers who have tried to politicize their work often find themselves caught between the contradictory demands of their agencies and those of communities in which their agencies are located...

Summary:

This chapter reviewed through analysis of the interview data the degree to which the study's subjects had carried out the key precepts of Catalyst: organizing as employees at their workplaces, and organizing and supporting struggles by client groups. In the case of employee activism, Catalyst's intent was clear. Social service professionals should fight for their own rights, including organizing unions, fighting both professional elitism and the conservatism of union leaderships, and linking issues of workers with client issues. Catalyst's call to assist client struggles and organization was consistent, but less well defined, particularly in a time period when poor people at least in the role of "clients" were less well organized. Nevertheless, the rhetoric of the journal primarily

suggested traditional "contest" strategies of community and client organizing.

The chapter reviewed the experience of the subjects in these two areas of social action. Many subjects had been involved over the years with union organizing, with employee efforts to fight managerial policies, and with internal union issues. Most subjects appeared, at least at earlier points in time, to have felt their work was "proletarianized" and that resistance and militancy at work was an appropriate response. The population's recent experience and current orientation to employee militancy was very low. Relatively few subjects would even be eligible for bargaining unit participation, should their workplaces be organized by a union. Further, there is evidence that as subjects sought to find intrinsic value to their work, they found employee militancy ultimately did not satisfy their personal need for meaningful work ('labor market shelter'). Finally, evidence of a decline of oppositional activity is noted in the increased identification many subjects felt with their own employing agency. As subjects have moved to job positions which they feel are more complementary to their personal needs and political values, the possibility of employee activism and militancy is considerably reduced.

Organizing of clients in traditional "contest" terms was greatly limited to the late 1960s/early 1970s and to those subjects who obtained paid employment as organizers or planners/administrators in small coalitions. In several

cases, subjects were involved in major organizing battles in a community or in the workplace. Most subjects who had such experience suffered political attacks and also felt disappointed with the lack of support they received from their constituencies. Organizers eventually left these positions, either for other careers entirely or for related work which involved more collaborative roles, rather than "contest" style "grass roots" organizing. Subjects who were not paid organizers had little experience with militant support for client struggles. Often, however, client issues were addressed through advocacy of a cause, program development, fundraising or by joint efforts with the employing agency to effect some change. As a whole, however, the subjects looked to their employers to respond to client need, either identifying themselves with the agency's mission/goals or seeking through persuasion to influence those in the agency whose role it was to deal with macro level systems.

In summarizing both areas of action, few subjects remained wedded to an oppositional orientation towards their employers. While Catalyst envisioned an oppositional role for social service professionals within the professions, the workplace, and social welfare institutions, most members of the Catalyst Collective no longer see these institutions as oppressive or as a key arena for struggle.

Notes:

1. Because of the overlapping context of these years; the relative youth and low status positions held by the subjects, the formation of Catalyst and other radical professional groups, and the widespread cuts in public spending (particularly the N.Y.C. fiscal crisis); it is difficult to separate these variables when any one particular form of social action is analyzed. On the one hand, it appears that many union battles described by subjects in the 1976-78 period were related to service cuts, caseload rises, pay and benefit freezes, etc. which accompanied the "fiscal crisis." On the other hand, these years were not particularly years of labor militancy in the U.S. (as opposed to the 1960s), and the "fiscal crisis" in public services did not come to a sudden end in 1978 or even 1980. It appears that the coalescence of the 'crisis in social services' as noted by Catalyst, and the relatively low level employee status occupied by subjects in this time period facilitated employee militancy, as it did in the 1930s period for the Rank-and-File-Movement in Social Work.

2. The author's many years of work in Labor Relations allow for an informed guesstimate of the eligibility of subjects for union membership. Generally, national labor law precludes those with substantial, meaningful input into hiring and firing of employees, and substantial control over agency policy to be union members (see NLRA, as amended). As interpreted, almost all managers and supervisors in the population would not be eligible for unionization. Further, the NLRA also excludes very small agencies (usually less than five employees) from coverage. Often the criteria overlap, so that, in the case of Barbara, for example, if her position as associate director of fundraising for the Left foundation were not excluded from eligibility (most likely it would be), the fact that she occupies this office in a three employee organization would certainly lead the NLRB towards exclusion. Despite the very political nature of the NLRB (see below), the fact that the labor law has a great degree of legitimacy (it feels like "common sense") is reflected in the degree to which most subjects regarded themselves as administrators/supervisors rather than employees.

3. The labor laws are not fixed and are subject to highly political decisions reflective of national political policy and the relationship of the classes. An important example for this study is the recent Yeshiva decision (1980) which ruled many collective bargaining contracts at private universities to be invalid because, at least at certain universities, faculty allegedly were managers within the "meaning of the law"((NLRB). Since many of our study subjects are now in academe or preparing to enter this area,

this highly political, anti-union move has a strong effect. Nevertheless, despite the highly contingent nature of any summary of the bargaining unit eligibility of this group (subject to change as subjects leave jobs and as the sociopolitical context changes), it would seem highly unlikely that the trend discussed will reverse itself in the future. Most subjects who were now in administrative/supervisory positions noted that economically it would be impossible for them to return to "line" positions. For the faculty members, a change in employee orientation would require not only a seachange in the political, economic, and legal environment (including the reversal of decisions like Yeshiva), but a major change in the self-consciousness of faculty as employees. Neither faculty as a whole (particularly in private universities in the United States) nor the subjects who were faculty members tended to stress employee militancy or trade unionism.

4. According to Siegal (1986, pp. 5-6), growth of social service employees continued unabated in the eighties, increasing at a rate of 14.4% in 1980-1985 compared to an increase of only 7.9% in the overall growth of the total employees in the U.S. Since Siegal's data combines all levels of social service employment, it may underrate growth at the highest levels of the profession. According to a phone interview with Miles Johnson, senior staff associate at the National Association of Social Workers, employment of M.S.W social workers has increased at a much higher rate in recent years than these figures would indicate (phone interview, June 8, 1987). Statistics available from Columbia U. School of Social Work (employment summary, 1980-1986, CUSSW Job Development Information Services) indicate that their graduating M.S.W.s have steadily done better in the employment market from 1980 to 1986. For example, in 1980, 23% of graduates were unemployed (including some voluntarily) nine months after graduating; this figure dropped to 13% by 1982, and to 6% by 1986.

CHAPTER 10:

POLITICS AT THE RETAIL LEVEL: "RADICAL PRACTICE"

As indicated in the introduction to this section, the third general goal of Catalyst was to report on, clarify, and support a "radical practice" in the social service professions. While the very definition of such "radical practice" was the focus of much debate in the pages of the journal and in internal discussion within the Collective, there was a strong consensus that radicalism must be made relevant to the professional's daily transactions as counselors, group workers, organizers, educators and administrators. The following chapter will review the "radical practice" debate as reflected in the journal's own pages; analyze the experience of the study's subjects, as reflected in interview data, with implementing "radical practice"; and, assess what political meanings and social impact can be attributed to subjects' engaging in such practice.

A. The Debate on "Radical Practice" in the Journal

Along with articles on radical theory and social policy, labor organizing, and client struggles, Catalyst devoted a considerable amount of space to articles on therapy,

counseling, and other forms of practice. The author estimates that more than one third of all published articles have been on "radical practice." If articles are identified by their methodological focus, there are far more articles about radical therapy than other modes of practice (articles on planning, research, education, and organizing were published infrequently).

A review of the many practice articles suggests only one point of consensus; in comparison to some of the most anti-professional tracts of the late 1960s in mental health (such as the early issues of the Radical Therapist), there is little tendency on the part of the authors to disparage social workers or mental health workers as being solely social control agents or instruments of repression. Other than the acceptance of the role of social service professionals, and a legitimation of their presence on the Left, there are few other points of consensus. Essentially, the debate over the efficiency and relevancy of therapy and counseling, can be summarized by three viewpoints: (1) Many articles on "radical therapy" asserted that counseling guided by radical values is a necessity to counter other ostensibly 'non-political' techniques which are actually politically conservative, and that if practiced correctly, counseling can have a liberating effect as people would come to experience less personal alienation and feel more empowered to challenge the "system" (2) A number of articles and letters in the journal explicitly challenged the

emphasis on therapy or other practice interventions as a diversion from more important macro-level tasks and strategies of concern to the Left and (3) A few articles, which while supportive of the idea of radicals exerting positive influence over clients through therapy or other practice, suggested that the context of service delivery or the political environment were critically important to success and distinguished among the different types of "radical practice."

A large number of articles supported the practice of clinical work by radicals by linking oppression at the personal level with the experience of alienation under capitalism. The separation of the "personal"from the "political" was an arbitrary artifact of capitalism which the therapist/practitioner could help bridge by helping individuals, groups, and communities discover the roots of their own oppression. Ann Sparks in arguing for the use of Gestalt therapy in Issue I suggests this link:

> How is restoring our best human potential politically relevant? Our social structure can only be changed by people who will not tolerate exploitation, compete individualistically or ignore the fact that individual well-being depends on the general well-being. People who experience themselves and their lives vividly, who feel secure in their capacity to assimilate experience and grow, do not need to compete. They can recognize their frustrations and they can take risks. People who are not aware of their alienation, who hold back their anger or isolate themselves intellectually, cannot take a stand...(Sparks, 1978, p. 96)

In later issues of Catalyst the rediscovery of the work of Bertha Reynolds and other left thinkers in social work practice(see particularly, Schwartz, 1981; Cullen, 1983) as well as the accumulated years supporting the legitimacy of the social services led to formulations such as that of Ann Withorn, a prominent writer in radical social services, who called for a "soft left" approach to politics, one which supported services in its own right and is unembarrassed by its support for counseling and other services:

> However, we also share a 'soft left' understanding of our work...We have seen that, on an individual basis, a disciplined, caring, egalitarian, antiracist, and antisexist practice can help people. We have experienced the joy that can come from working with people to help them change their lives. We know that sometimes good day care, respectful counseling, or honest social supports can help individuals have more hope for themselves, reach some substantial goals, and make some real personal and social progress. Just as we cannot deny our overall social analysis, neither can we ignore this experience which suggests that human services have the potential to effect a desirable social good...(Withorn,1982, pp.21-22).

In a number of different articles and commentaries published in the journal, other authors took issue with what was viewed as a broad-brush, rather vague support for 'radical practice,' which was not operationalized politically in such a way that a coherent left-wing strategy would ever emerge from such a process. A detailed critique of some of the "radical therapy" supporters appears in a letter by David Weingord which critiqued a 1978 conference

of radical therapists:

> At the conference I attended...radical therapy was a personal experience and there was almost no discussion of organized politics. I found...the tendency...was for interpersonal relations to dominate the larger notions of politics...(there was) no particular theory as to how socialism arises and radical therapists' role in it. The closest thing I could surmise (in their theory) was a 'socialism in family by family' approach. In other words, they approach socialism by creating egalitarian families and non-sexist, non-racist, and non-anti-working class children. Or as Carl Boofs has described it, as a complete prefiguration of socialist interpersonal relations...Another problem of radical therapy is that its values can be extracted from its ideological content or long range strategy. One can like the mode of therapy but have little interest in the formation of a socialist society where the material basis for sexism, racism, and non-egalitarianism no longer exists. Radical therapists do not have to see socialism as part of their purpose. In other words, working at egalitarian relations and becoming powerful persons (the technique of radical therapy) is developed outside the context of confronting capitalism in its institutional, political, and economic spheres..."(Catalyst, 1979, 1:4, pp. 146-47).

Perhaps the strongest attack on the radical therapy was Marlene Webber's article in Volume 2:2 (1980) in which she attacks many of the 'new radicals' of the 1970s associated with the radical social service movement as being "reformist" to the core. On the need "for personal change and societal change," she argues:

> Either openly or more covertly, much of the literature in question assigns to personal transformation a key role in progress toward the new society...This search for individual solutions to social problems is perhaps best represented by

> Charles Reich's 'Consciousness III' where he calls for a personalized war on 'the plastic artificial quality of everything; plastic lives in plastic homes.' The most overt expression of this shop-worn liberalism is expounded by (Jeffrey) Galper: (quotes Galper)... This passage is rich in anti-socialist content. The most pernicious suggestion is the call for individual change, to create 'revolutionary change from within us,' etc...Marx profoundly observed that '...It is not the consciousness of men that determines their being, but, on the contrary their social being that determines their consciousness.'Change in individual consciousness is not a question of some individual deciding to exorcise the demons of capitalist thinking from their world view-this is not the spawning bed of social change...The question of achieving socialism is thereby reduced to one of mysteriously motivated attitudinal change independent of social class among 'all of us.' Somehow socialism is to emerge from this soul cleansing!..." (Webber, 1980, pp.60-61)

Several of the most sophisticated articles on the practice of therapy and social work attempted to relate the dilemmas of such practice to the political environment. Arthur Maglin's article in Issue III and William Caspery's article in Issue VII, while supportive of radical therapy, warned that the overall political environment was a key variable in what practitioners could achieve:

> ...As powerful as therapy can be, it is seldom enough to offset the weight of the culture. If the political environment of the nation and the immediate subculture of the client is moving rightward, then the radical therapist's job will be a tough one indeed...(Maglin,1979, p.76)
>
> All of this (radical therapy) presumes a long gradual building of a larger movement...(Caspery, 1980, p.36)

Secondly, articles such as Maglin's attempted to

differentiate possible goals and strategies of practice which are often subsumed under 'radical therapy.' Maglin describes three types of radical therapy: a "defensive" radical therapy, an "aggressive" radical therapy, and a "social" radical therapy (Maglin, 1979, pp. 69-79). "Defensive" radical therapy is aimed at helping clients survive the oppressive system and at helping them cope with alienation; it does not aim at specific changes in individual's political consciousness so that clients become socialist or radical. Maglin identifies "defensive" practice as the practice which is usually used with "non-radical" clients and in social agency settings. "Aggressive" radical therapy, on the other hand, "holds to the notion that people can (and perhaps ought to be) radicalized through the therapeutic process"(p.75). Maglin identifies this approach with a self-selection process in which clients who are already 'radical' are the primary recipients of such counseling and are primarily seen outside of the established agencies. "Social therapy" is not really counseling, but the tendency of mental health professionals to use their positions to organize politically and change people's consciousness through collective activity rather than rely exclusively on individual treatment.

As with other debates within the journal, there was no resolution as such to the "radical practice" debate. If the content of the journal is analyzed in terms of its thrust, there is certainly little emphasis on "aggressive radical

therapy" approaches after 1980. Of the articles on practice, the tendency was to either describe techniques aimed at particular "special populations" (such as gays and lesbians) or to emphasize the tradition of Reynolds and other progressive social workers, who while politically leftist, practiced within the traditional frameworks of Social Work theory. This trend seems consistent with the overall downturn in the 'radical therapy' movement in the last decade, as well as the location of most of the Catalyst Collective (and its published authors) in "mainstream" agencies or academia, rather than in alternative settings.

B. The Self-Conscious Ambivalence of Subjects on Radical Practice:

There were many contradictions, as there are in any analysis of conversations, in the subjects' own expressed views of 'radical practice,' and to what extent they feel their daily work is "political." On the one hand, as compared with employee organizing and client organizing as described in Chapter 9, virtually all subjects identified ways in which they tried to integrate their radicalism into their jobs as therapists, counselors, supervisors, administrators or teachers. Yet all subjects, including those previously identified as "mediated," mused that they were not sure there really was a "radical practice" per se, and that perhaps this formulation was bounded in the headier days of youth and the New Left:

(Rita, identified as "mediated"): I don't know. (pause) Earlier on, I would have said 'yes, there is a radical practice.' (The) older I get, the more experienced I get, I'm not jaded, but the sense of what's possible and not possible, I suspect its like working outside the system (pause) What can you do that's not inside the system?...

(James, identified as "critic"): (I) used to think there was something called radical practice, more recently I've been much more dubious about the possibility of it...being an administrator it's extremely difficult...

(Interviewer): What about radical therapy? Do you think there's such a thing?...

(James): (I) suppose so. Yeh, in subtle ways. But then in other ways (even radical) therapists push toward mobility. But in terms of values, yes, they could have an effect. But when you build an agency around this (radical therapy), you get all the constraints of society. You begin to mirror the values of the larger society and (its) harder to avoid the pressures that bear down on you cumulatively. Maybe its possible if you had a very small alternative agency...

Generally all subjects, though particularly the "critics," were self-conscious that their daily practice, even when described in radical terms, was not exactly what they thought of as "revolutionary." The majority of the subjects used the phrases below to distinguish their daily actions as social service workers from other radical activity:

This isn't exactly bringing the revolution, but I try to...

I don't know how <u>radical</u> this is, but...

It's no revolution, but within limits, I...

Importantly, the above statements represent not just the guilt common to radicals which was commented on earlier, but the high degree of political self-consciousness of the subjects. Even the most professionalized of the subjects, and least conflicted about the social services, were well aware that their roles were limited and that "radical practice," as compared with militant organizing or political action would not bring about great social changes. The difficulty in measuring outcomes is noted by Rita:

> I feel like this (her private practice therapy) is radical. But what is radical? Its the question of judging the outcome, how do you do that? How can we measure at all whether these people have become active after therapy or whatever. Or if they're more conscious, is that radical? Or vote differently? I don't think we really know...

A key finding of the study is that while subjects had integrated their politics into the daily practice of counseling, teaching, and administering to a far greater degree than they had in the areas reviewed in Chapter 9, there was indeed, no way of measuring such practice in terms of "radical outcomes." This is primarily true because the practice of 'radical' therapy, teaching or administering was limited primarily to what Maglin would describe as "defensive therapy" or what Weingord identified as 'prefigurative.' That is, with a few exceptions, subjects focused on the micro level of personal transformation <u>in isolation</u> from an organized left-wing movement in which

clients or students or employees could then be urged to join a political group, party or cause or could even be identified as "radicalized" in any formal or even informal sense.

The following section attempts to typify three approaches to daily social service practice in terms of the political nature of outcomes. Importantly, the occupational role of the subject was less critical to this typology than the old micro/macro divisions might suggest. That is, therapists, educators, and administrators were all subject to constraints/limitations in their work which apparently cut them off from organized political "aggressive" radical practice. However, the employment setting in which the subject worked did have a key influence on how overtly "political" the subject was in their practice. The author draws on interview data to suggest that primarily the subjects operate in the 'prefigurative' realm; a number of subjects, particularly those previously identified earlier as 'critics,' operate in a "middle range" of practice in which at times the content of their work allows them to express political beliefs and influence clients/students towards radicalism, but, still such practice takes the form of guerilla action to avoid repression; finally, one subjects' comments will be noted which borders on an integration of 'aggressive' or more explicitly politicized practice into her daily work.

C. Radical Practice as 'Prefigurative Politics'

Maglin's terminology of "defensive therapy," while of interest, is too limited to capture the nature of 'radical' daily practice. For subjects perform in work capacities other than therapists, and "defensive" implies solely a survivalist orientation. Rather, the study's subjects do share a positive vision which is greatly a result of the influence of the New Left and the Women's Movement. Wini Breines (1982) captures some of the nature of the personal-is-political politics of the generation in her book on the New Left:

> The notion of community is integrally connected with prefigurative politics. The new left sought community as it sought to unite the public and private spheres of life. By community I mean a network of relationships more direct, more total and more personal than the formal, abstract and instrumental relationships characterizing state and society...In saying the new left sought community I refer not only to the desire to create a sense of wholeness and communication in social relationships, but to the effort to create non-capitalist and communitarian institutions that embodied such relationships, for example counter-institutions. In this sense, prefigurative politics, by attempting to develop the seeds of liberation and the new society prior to and in the process of revolution through notions of participatory democracy, often grounded in counter-institutions, meant community building...(pp.6-7) (author's emphasis)

While the subjects did not succeed in building counter-institutions or total participatory democracy anymore than the New Left or Women's Movement has succeeded in

transforming modern America along such lines, the strong impulses towards egalitarian relationships, non-oppressive institutions, consensual and collective decision-making, and the "Great Refusal" (Breines) to take part in 'immoral' or 'elitist' acts characterize the subjects approach to counseling, administration, supervision, and teaching. The distinction made within the population; "mediated" or "critics";refers to the perceived sufficiency of such a prefigurative approach as a total political agenda, rather than a disagreement on the need for such practice.

Concretely, prefigurative politics characterizes the subjects' practice as follows: (1) A desire on the part of subjects to minimize formality and social distance between counselor and client, teacher and student, and administrator and employee, to make these relationships more egalitarian and less oppressive (2) A vision, particularly striking on the part of supervisors and administrators, of non-hierarchical leadership with a desire for consensual decision making among small staff groups (3) An approach to practice, most notable in the counselors, which seeks to combat sexism, racism, classism, ageism, and heterosexualism as well as undermine oppressive family relationships (4) A sympathy and preferential treatment for oppressed and excluded groups as clients or employees (as noted earlier in the desired population groups for practice) (5) A refusal, usually undramatic, to implement some policies or directives which are contrary to humanitarian and democratic procedures

(6) A vision of family, work, and other institutions which, for at least some subjects, transcends normative societal notions allowing for encouragement of clients to break away from proscribed aspects of the work ethic and typified family patterns (7) An attempt, not always successful, to network among those leftists in the professions for assistance to clients or to students (8) An attempt, often surreptitious, to support unions or progressive groups in efforts at publicity.

Generally, the subjects' practice does not transcend the prefigurative realm because of the lack of overt political organizing or association with the Left in the workplace and within the profession. Typically, a subject came to the profession and to a practice style with an interpretation drawn from Left experience, but the subject continued to apply and justify such work while employed in a traditional agency setting and without an ongoing Left reference group. For example, Monica, in describing her social work school experience and the integration of politics and Social Work, provides a classical left Social Work defense of clinical work:

> (I) saw that certain groups didn't get involved in the Left. I mean working class people, others, they were so busy struggling with the day-to-day life stuff. You know, single mothers with three kids. That gave me the realization that if someone is feeling abused and exploited by a pathological, symbiotic relationship with a mother, they're not going to go out and fight back and get involved in (the) real world. It became clear to me that

> empowering people in the interpersonal (realm: author) gave them the ability to take the next step...

Yet later in the interview (and in the chronology of her life), Monica's description of her practice, while again justified by the overcoming of "pathology" to fight oppression, takes the form of rather traditional social work practice with agency clients which does not reach the point of overt politicization. The examples provided, such as her ability to overcome the social distance norms of her agency and the profession to give out (as a therapist) toys and gifts at Christmas to her clients, do not appear to Monica as very political either:

> I guess I'm not giving a good answer as to what radical social work is...I would like to see a different political and economic system in (this) country, but I guess I don't get to play that out in my actual work. (I) do that by working with Catalyst and other kinds of things...

Brenda, in her role as a supervisor and director of a small program within a child welfare agency, feels her role with the agency allows her to have more of a radical impact than as a social work counselor:

> I'm a much more effective advocate for workers and clients in this position. That's the way I've organized the program...as an administrator I've been able to re-structure the salaries. We have juggled the budgets to move up the pay of the lower workers. So I feel very much a worker-advocate in relation to the agency. (I) make sure the staff understands that the forms and statistics and all this, while necessary for

> funding, are not key, but client treatment(is). And we operate as a team, we share the decisions. And we've led the agency away from this narrow intrapsychic stuff... I think this is much more useful in working with poor families...

Yet, Brenda does not link the treatment of staff, client practice philosophy, and cooperative work arrangements with a broader macro-level leftwing politics. When asked if she identified with the Left, her response appears to reflect an anti-organizational, somewhat anti-traditional politics, personal sense of radicalism:

> I don't know. I've never been very theoretical. I guess I'm certainly cynical about the major political problems, cynical about what I read in the papers. But I'm not interested in organized groups. Its more a way I organize my thinking. In some ways, I'm a radical leftist, particularly in the way (I) continue to deal with people personally and in my work experience...

In terms of the debate on "radical practice," the radicalism of the subjects, particularly the "mediated" group who tend to remain only at the prefigurative level, is both unfairly and fairly criticized by its detractors. The radical practitioners <u>do</u> have a vision, not merely a 'defensive' posture, and they do attempt to implement humanistic, egalitarian practices which on a day-to-day personal level can be said to prefigure a liberatory society. However, to those active on the Left, particularly Marxists, who would hope radical professionals would link themselves and their clients/students/employees to an organized Left and other agencies of change (such as the

working class), their work is clearly limited in that they lack organic ties with class forces and macro level political strategies that could result in major social transformations.

D. "Middle Range" Radical Practice

For many subjects studied, particularly those previously labelled as "critics," prefigurative politics, while also describing much of their day-to-day work, constitutes a frustration because of its lack of "impact" on the macro-level and its lack of connectedness to major societal events. Several subjects provide examples of how radical counselors, administrators, and educators can bring forward to clients/students some elements of leftist thinking; yet for those practicing in this "middle range," such activity is frequently also veiled and subterfuged, not closely linked with explicit mention of the Left gua specific groups or causes.

Occupational location, often itself a product of self-selection, plays a key role. Agnes, like Monica, works as a counselor and graduated from the same School of Social Work. Yet Agnes rejects a strong identification with the profession and a strong upward mobility drive. By practicing in a public correctional system and holding a critical perspective, her focus is not on alleviating pathology, but in exposing the "system," a perspective somewhat closer

(though not the same) as "aggressive therapy." For example, Agnes is struck by the opportunity to validate to poor and working class people that the system does not work:

> They come to court, you know, they plead, see how the evidence is misused, how the lawyers don't help. They are amazed, 'They couldn't have found me guilty!'they say. Or 'that's not right, that's not fair!' Or they say 'This court system is not fair...why isn't it?' The kind of progressive work I can do in the system is very simplistic. You need to validate their experience. Help them fine-tune the perception. Deal with issues of class and race. Yes, the world is out to fuck you. Speaking the truth is powerful. Because they still want to think the system is fair. They still, no matter if they're poor or Black or Hispanic think things will be fair. And if I don't say it, I don't know who else in the system will. The correction officer won't, the judge isn't, the police officer isn't. You have to say its a horrible classist, racist, sexist, nasty system. It doesn't give a shit. It's a game...

While such a counseling approach-which aims to provide clients with education and also a sense of the structured alternatives open to them as poor and oppressed participants in the criminal justice system- does not imply major political conversions, it does promote more explicit discussion of the left critiques of particular elements of the system and of race, class, and gender.

Educators are particularly able to supplement the prefigurative political role with more overt leftist thought <u>when</u> their professional discipline is within the macro-level, particularly, the social sciences. For example, James, in teaching about social welfare, and Naomi, in

teaching about health policy, are able to provide broader perspectives to students, but again 'radical education' is still limited by the need to mediate radicalism through departmental constraints and student opinion, so as not to appear to be politically proselytising. Naomi cites her ability to bring in political issues to the discussion of health care:

> The perspective I give students is political. (One) can't talk about (the) health care industry, I mean, the basic issue of organizing health care, is equity, financing, access, quality of care, a national health insurance. And it every course it comes back to politics...

However, as compared to an "aggressive" practice approach or one which links education to the Left, Naomi is constrained to a middle range practice:

> I have a political perspective (pause) but its not the most heavy duty kind of stuff. (I'm) not going to stand up and say, 'hey, I'm a socialist and this is what should be done.' Even in the labor policy (course), you can't get up and say, 'Let's talk about workplace democracy.' I wouldn't bring it up that way. It's built into the course...
>
> (Interviewer): What are the constraints? Are there reasons you can't be more open...?
>
> (Naomi): Yeh, I guess its the students primarily. They're not liberal, (they're) either apolitical or conservative. They're socialized into the Business School. You have to push them to see how maybe some of these things are in their interest...

E. The Possibility of Aggressive Radical Practice:

There was a particular absence of the model described as "aggressive radical therapy" by Maglin, or of a "radical practice" which closely linked radical ideas on personal issues and institutional relations with specific leftwing political objectives. Notably, the two subjects who most exhibited the ability to 'practice radically' and openly link some of this work with left politics and causes were in "movement" organizations, where their employer provided support for such activity. Barbara, was clearly in a Left environment (the Foundation), and to a degree, Jacqueline, in a labor union, could do some organizing/planning work with a clear left bent.

Much of Jacqueline's works as a union representative involves handling the grievances and arbitrations of public employees. As with other subjects, Jacqueline mediates such work in prefigurative political terms, as assisting people in need on a daily basis. However, she also feels a need to transcend it:

> It feels comfortable to me, I guess, because its working class people and then politically I'm comfortable because I feel I'm working to service the needs of working people... It's kind of rewarding. (But I) also feel the need to develop people's political consciousness and that comes from other stuff, from the Central American work I do in the union and so forth...

Jacqueline supplements her daily grievance work and other direct job duties by working extensively in the Union to politicize members around Central American issues as well as women's issues and other political causes. To this degree, she is able to move at least some union members from their individual problems ('grievances')to a focus on major political issues which expose them to a leftist analysis and the possibility of political activism and group membership. While Jacqueline hardly sees her own role as special, she was one of the few subjects to both link her direct work with a broader cause, and also to not identify herself totally with her current employing agency. While some subjects tended to associate themselves with the positions of their own employers, particularly unions, Jacqueline disagrees with the Union:

> You look around and see these labor leaders and they're pretty conservative really. They're afraid to have a vote. They'll say, 'oh this, Central America, whatever, its too controversial.' I really don't see them as the leading edge of any revolution in this country...I don't totally identify (my) whole self with this. I mean with being a professional labor person...

While Jacqueline herself is somewhat skeptical as to the union's leadership, in actuality, the leftist beliefs of her immediate superiors, including the chief local officers of the Union, permit her to spend the time on issues many union leaders would consider not related to day-to-day work

and to allow her the political freedom to proselytize while the leadership protects her. In fact, one gets the sense that the leadership's very lack of courage to bring issues to a membership vote, cited in Jacqueline's quote above, sustains their desire to help other leftists in guerilla fashion help influence opinion behind the scenes. Despite the limitations suggested by Jacqueline, the ability to involve radical political issues and groups in her work, suggest the special nature of certain job locations for political activists.

F. Evaluation of "Radical Practice":

Assessing the impact and social/political meaning of the subjects' daily work is extremely difficult. Like Catalyst's call to support "client struggles," the support of "radical practice" was at a high level of abstraction and lacked clear agreement on what social service professionals should actually do with their clients/students. If the prescription of "practicing radical" is seen as a refusal to participate in elitist, racist, sexist, and classist practice, then, like "the Great Refusal" that characterized the New Left, the subjects have probably strongly followed their principles. If "radical practice" is defined as "defensive therapy" or as a prefigurative politics which provides a humane, egalitarian professional relationship to clients in need of service or students seeking education, again the subjects have admirably carried out the journal's

prescriptions. Unquestionably, compared to the subjects' detachment from employee militancy and client organizing, the question of integrating radical precepts into daily work as therapists/counselors, teachers, and supervisors/administrators remains very much alive to the subjects studied. However, the subjects' own discomfort (particularly those identified as "critics") with these limited roles suggest a high awareness of possibilities for a more overtly leftwing politicization in their work as counselors, teachers, and administrators. In this respect, then, the subjects themselves appear more likely to evaluate their practice in terms of the visions of "aggressive radical therapy" promulgated in the late 1960s/early 1970s.

Another important aspect for evaluation is to what degree these subjects and Catalyst as a journal succeeded in the goal of "developing alternative...practice models"(Catalyst brochure, 1977) or of transforming the practice of the professions. The difficulty here is that while many subjects had integrated into their daily work a sense of egalitarian relationships with clients/students, a non-hierarchical approach to supervision and organizations, a consciousness of race, class, and sex, these changes were also being integrated in the established curriculum of the professions themselves by the mid-1970s, particularly within Social Work. It would be theoretically unsound to compare the practice of these subjects with a "straw man" of the

distant psychoanalyst or an authoritarian teacher which would be only a caricature of reality. While indeed there may be plenty of authoritarian teachers, supervisors, and therapists, and, certainly, many who are classist or racist or sexist, the general training within the social service professions have changed significantly in the 1970s.

Social Work, for example, moved from a primarily intrapsychic expert-client paradigm of social casework in the early 1960s to a focus on mutual "contracting" between client and worker by the 1970s with a great deal of curriculum focus on the social environment; class, race, and sex. Additionally, many professional schools, in theory at least, also adopted (or co-opted) elements of alternative organizations to the social services. As noted previously, a devolved, de-bureaucratized structure of social service provision has been widely adopted as a model for service delivery, and often is what is taught in planning and administration courses.

While many of the above changes in the theory of social service provision and the practice of Social Work can be criticized for their incompleteness and even cynicism at times, the key point is that, like the coalescence of the Rank-and-File Movement with the Functionalist School in the late 1930s (see, Spano, 1982; Wagner, 1986), Catalyst as a journal and the subjects as individuals appear to have trained at the very time that social service and mental health practice were significantly changing. Radicals in

Social Work had a strong impact on such changes, particularly the criticisms made by major faculty figures who attacked the earlier paradigms.[1] In dialectical fashion, as the professions changed in some ways, the radical critique no longer appears as marginal, and can be successfully integrated (as several subjects noted) with current Social Work practice theory.

Similar changes have occurred in other modes of practice. The student movement's cogent attacks on education, the "relevancy" issue, and the critique of "cold, distant" bureaucrats and educators has certainly led to profound changes in teaching, particularly at the university level. Within administration and supervision, the literature of the liberal disciplines like Social Work, Education, Public Health, and Nursing, for example, have developed specialties in management and administration which seek to distinguish themselves from M.B.A.s and other managers on the very grounds of their humanitarian tradition, sensitivity to values, and to clients' rights. Because of these important changes, it is extremely difficult to argue that the subjects actual practice strategies as counselors, administrators or educators vary so much from mainstream human service professionals as to constitute a deviant subculture or an alternative model of practice.

It would appear that only at the borders of the continuum of practice principles do these subjects vary

markedly from other sincere, humanistic social service professionals. The political imperative to support the causes of unionism, institutional reform, and social movements often cause the subjects to address such issues in their practice. For some subjects, the professional autonomy of the classroom or interview room allows them to bring up political issues and focus discussion on structural societal issues that impact on individual needs. However, practice detached from overt politicization, as it appears is the case for the vast majority of the population, provides a relatively weak foundation for the development of an "alternative practice models" in the social services.

Summary:

This chapter sought to analyze the experience of the subjects with implementing the third major objective of Catalyst, the encouragement of "radical practice" in which counseling and therapy, and, to a lesser degree, teaching and administration, could be performed in a radical fashion. The author reviewed the articles in Catalyst itself to suggest the diversity of opinion within the social service Left on the question. Some authors felt clinical work could be liberating to clients and highly political, if practiced in a certain fashion or if performed by radicals. Others strongly disagreed, and saw leftwing social service professionals as deluding themselves that individual change would produce any major political results. Other authors

took a middle ground, which defended "radical therapy" or other forms of practice, but noted its limitations and diverse interpretations.

Subjects expressed a great deal of similar ambiguity when describing their own practice as counselors, administrators or teachers. Almost all of the subjects sought to integrate their political views and values into their work, and in that sense were generally sympathetic to a "radical practice" in the social services. On the other hand, the subjects were extremely self-conscious about the limits of their work, and that individual actions were not particularly advancing "the revolution" or major social change.

The author, borrowing from articles by Maglin and on the New Left, divided the types of radical practice into a "prefigurative" political practice; a "middle range" practice; and an "aggressive radical therapy" position. This typology was focused on the degree of overt political outcomes which subjects hoped would result from their work as counselors, educators or administrators. Generally, most subjects practiced in a prefigurative realm of politics with strong loyalty to radical values, but abstracted from overt attempts to politicize clients/students. The subjects' focus tended to be in areas such as the personal oppression of family relations; manifestations of sexism or racism or homophobia on individuals or groups; and on the problems of

decision making and hierarchy in organizations. Some subjects were able to, on occasion, due to the nature of the employment location and ideology (particularly "critics"), practice in a more "middle range" in which more clearly enunciated left agendas could be brought into counseling, administration or teaching. However, such practice also did not approach an "aggressive" radicalism, as subjects primarily brought concepts into class or strategies into administration which were covert; fighting a guerilla political battle. The lack of aggressive political practice was noted.

The author notes the difficulty in evaluating the success of such practice and of measuring its outcome. Further, the changes in the professions in the post 1960s period suggests a further complication as many of the perceived points of radical rebellion have been somewhat mitigated by at least rhetorical changes, and, in some cases, genuine theoretical and paradigmatic shifts in the professions since that time. The author notes that ironically the impact of radicals in changing professional paradigms, particularly in the liberal professions such as Social Work, has diminished what appeared to be a major divide between the Left and the "established elements" of the professions. This further complicates the development of a "radical practice" separate from the professional schools and theoretical models.

NOTE:

1. The paradigm conflicts and resulting changes are the subject of Wagner (1986) in which the author develops the idea that leftists thinkers in Social Work serve as a major bridge in paradigm shifts. In the 1960s, the critical works of people connected with Mobilization for Youth in New York City including Richard Cloward, Frances Fox Piven, George Brager, and Charles Grosser, and many left-leaning groupworkers like William Schwartz had a major impact on both the psychiatric focus of the field and the development of new community organization, generalist practice, advocacy, and planning paradigms. Examples of other major changes involving radicals include the change in Social Work's Code of Ethics in 1969 to place client need above agency/employer need; the forced acceptance of BSWs into the professional association in 1970 led by many on the Left; and the development of new theoretical practice models such as ecological and systems theory approaches (see Germain & Gitterman, 1980; Meyer, 1976). While none of the demands of radicals or the social movements of the 1960s were, of course, ever met in full, the history of Social Work suggests that leftist and left-leaning segments of the profession serve as a bridge between client (poor and working class) unrest and the legitimacy of the profession. Many theorists who surfaced as important figures in the 1960s, were not always explicitly identified as Left, but often had a history of prior association; for example, some were victims of McCarthyism in the 1940s and 1950s.

CHAPTER XI:

SUMMARY: TOWARDS A POLITICAL ECONOMY OF RADICAL PROFESSIONAL MOVEMENTS

The following chapter will seek to theoretically analyze the previous two chapters in relation to the apparent failure of the subjects to apply the more militant prescriptions of Catalyst in their worklives as social service professionals, particularly in the 1980s. The change in the nature of "radical professionalism" from a highly oppositional, anti-authoritarian movement in the 1960s to a somewhat more "loyal opposition" within the social services in the 1980s will be suggested to represent a "professionalization of radicalism" which allows subjects to become paid experts, occupying or seeking to occupy, "radical labor market shelters"which allow for the maintenance of radical political ideology mediated by liberal social service and other employers. The author situates the apparent contradiction of the strong political ideological consistency found in this study (see Part II) with the apparent weakening of militant activism, in terms of both the social structure and historical trends in radical professionalism as a social movement and as adjunctive to other social movements.

A. Explaining the Decline in Subjects' Militancy:

Chapters 9 and 10 suggested that the major goals of Catalyst: employee militancy, client organizing, and

'radical practice' on a daily basis; were experienced by subjects as enormously difficult precepts to apply in their own personal careers as social service professionals in recent years. Most subjects were no longer actively engaged in employee organizing or in supporting such efforts nor involved with client organizing, and few expressed much self-conscious identification with these activities when asked to describe their recent pasts. While 'radical practice' remained a somewhat more "relevant" concept to the subjects, there was a widespread feeling of failure among many subjects about actually practicing professional work differently from non-radicals, and the author's own evaluation suggests that, indeed, the differences between 'radical' and 'non-radical' work on the micro-level of "practice" are subtle. The author concludes that the work experience of subjects has been greatly subversive of earlier political objectives of Catalyst, and that the perceived failures of subjects to apply these precepts has probably itself been a factor in the decline in membership in the collective in the 1980s and possibly of other radical groups in the professions.

When analyzed in conjunction with the historical review in Chapter 2: the decline in membership in the Catalyst Collective beginning in the 1980-81 period; the decline and even disappearance of many radical professional groups in the social services like R.A.S.S.W.; and the changed

relationship of radical professional groups to the "mainstream" professional community; it is clear that the 1980s represent a downturn in 'militant' radical professionalism as a social movement.

One easy and sweeping conclusion made by study participants, and at times by social scientists, is to simply associate the decline in militancy with the a "change in the times" caused by the conservative political domination of the 1980s by Reaganism. In a more sophisticated fashion, many would argue that middle class or professional radicalism is reliant on social unrest and social movements extant at the lower end of the social structure for its existence. Without minimizing the relationship of radical professionalism to the macro-level political changes in the last two decades, the author suggests that leaving the question of radical professionalism simply at that is overly deterministic. First, it fails to answer the question of how "the times" get to be "conservative" to begin with. Indeed there are many constraints and limitations on radical professionals, but similarly there are major social constraints on the poor, the working class, Blacks and Third World populations, women, ad infinitum. We could conclude in circular fashion that in a time of political conservatism and repression, no group can afford to take militant action, therefore, blocking any possibility for social change.

Secondly, the complete reliance on the link between

social unrest by the poor and working class and professional radicalism is problematic. It denies the possibility of treating professionals (or radical students) as social actors in their own right, seeing them as "acted upon" rather than self-conscious. Further as so called 'middle class' radicalism played such a prominent role in the social movements of the 1960s and 1970s, particularly the New Left, the student movement, and women's movement, but also in the original leadership of the civil rights movement, the argument fails to account for millions of participants in social movements. Finally, if sociological theory proposes special constraints on professionals or 'middle strata' radicals, than these constraints need to be clearly studied and specified. Otherwise, no analytic understanding is possible of how radical professionals differ from autoworkers, truckers, welfare recipients or salespeople in the manner in which occupational structure and social movements affect their potential for radical social action.

The author will explore two areas which elucidate the complex interaction between social movements, the occupational structure, and the political economy. First, the author suggests that the particular occupational movement of radical professionals differs from other social strata in the possibility of encapsulating radicalism within an occupational and organizational setting which limits militancy, while sanctioning intellectual radicalism or

liberalism. Secondly, by reviewing the stages of radical professional movements between the 1960s and 1980s and comparing them with the 1930s-1940s, the author explores how social movements of middle strata radicals are both bound by, and have degrees of relative autonomy from other social movements.

B. The Occupational Structure: The Movement to 'Program Professionalism'

In his 1956 book, Intellectuals in Labor Unions, Harold Wilensky identified a type of labor union employee who came to see his union as a vehicle for the promotion of "his strongly held ideas." He sought to "combine his high professional identification and desire for full utilization of his professional skills within his area of specialization" (p.138). While for Wilensky, such a "type" was closer to a technician than a radical or was a de-radicalized 'missionary,' we propose, along with such authors as Zald and McCarthy (1975) that there is no such necessary dichotomy. Rather than professionals necessarily suffering from "ideological co-optation" or "desensitization" in their organizational work as suggested by Derber (1982), we can view 'program professionalism' as both encapsulating and limiting radicalism.

As has been noted throughout this study, the occupational conditions which separate radical professionals, at least in the social services, from their

counterparts who are autoworkers, businesspeople or welfare recipients, are the strong personal needs and goals of radicals in the professions to seek intrinsic satisfaction from their work which is viewed as complementing their ideological views ("radical labor market shelters"). These radical social service professionals, with some exceptions, locate the nature of political action in terms of a professionalized radicalism in which a particular form of radical activity or advocacy is both paid for and sanctioned by their job. This professionalized radicalism produces a certain type of radicalism only, encouraging certain activities, but strongly discouraging others, both on and off the job.

Positions as faculty members, as therapists or supervisors in social agencies or as administrators of movement organizations, provide both a high degree of perceived autonomy and a forum for these subjects to become experts in functionally specific areas of radical politics. For example, James and Rosalind, as well as Renee, are becoming experts in homelessness; Josie identifies much of her work with the 'housing movement'; Sam and Howard have become experts in the 'labor movement'; Rita's current position allows her expertise in a chronic disease; Richard is becoming expert on drug abuse; and Martin on the use of self-help groups and professional models. This professionalization of radicalism does have dramatic implications for how "radicalism" is expressed and what

meanings "radicalism" or even "activism" comes to have to the subjects.

On the one hand, being an academic expert on homelessness or a labor movement official provides a forum for radicals to legitimately address a broad audience, often filtering in radical and even Marxist critiques of the issues at hand, and often changing the discourse within academic, labor or even public arenas of debate. However, these roles carry severe limitations which affect both on-the-job activity and off-the-job activism. These limitations often serve as only a subtext of the interviews. That is, because the subjects were generally socialized enough to their occupational roles and the expectations of what a professional career could offer, the constraints of their jobs were primarily a "seen-but-not-noticed" background for the interviews. Richard, at one point, comes close to distinguishing the types of radicalism:

> I haven't felt restrictions on (my) political activity from work. I still can be active, there isn't repression. But I suppose, if I was organizing (in employer's) backyard that would be different. Or if I was raising the banner of an overtly Marxist group. Or if I was challenging their authority directly...

An important distinction then is the ability of the radical professionals to autonomously influence clients in the interview room, students in a class or public audiences on a subject of major interest, and the type of oppositional

activity which Catalyst suggested to its readers. The latter activity which would "rock the boat" of the employing agencies include direct challenges to employer authority, major challenges to professional associations and other bodies, the incitement of client activity in opposition to agency policy or the association with certain leftist political groups which would be viewed with discomfort (or worse) by the employers or profession.

It is suggested that outside activism is equally bounded by the constraints of professionalized radicalism. This is difficult to "prove" per se because of the vicissitudes of political activism and the self-consciousness of subjects which already tends to have eliminated some potentially militant activity from consciousness (i.e. subjects generally were not attracted to what they regarded as 'orthodox' parties or groups and would presumably regard certain forms of militant activity as unwise or "ultraleftist"). Again because of the self-conscious elimination from consideration of certain militant tactics and radical actions, the unnoticed context is one of a "goodness of fit" between most expressions of radicalism on the part of the subjects and the general political environment of the most liberal elements of the social service community (as well as the trade union movement). That is, professionalized radicalism of the 1980s tends to mirror on a micro level the Popular Front of the 1930s-1940s (see below).

For example, Sam's union can permit public calls for different policies on Central America or on racism and sexism, but neither Sam nor his union would suffer open challenges to the authority of the leadership on contracts, nor does his Union have a good record of tolerating overt Marxists or militant troublemakers; Renee's position with an agency for the homeless permits radical statements on particular issues as well as some innovative practice and policy ventures, but responds hostilely to employees who challenge the authority of its leadership, nor is it clear that radicalism that was not functionally related to its mission would be tolerated if it threatened funding sources; Rosalind's university permits autonomy in the classroom and even her membership in outside groups which identify with a Social Work left, however, it would be clearly hostile to an implementation of left politics which challenged the school's authority over its students or employees or which challenged the basic paradigms of its teaching.

Zald and McCarthy (1975) comment on the capability of organizations, including movement based and social service organizations, to allow for a high degree of dissent and liberal to radical beliefs. They challenge Mills (1956) on his pessimistic pre-1960s view of organizationally bound employees as serving the status quo. But, importantly, Zald and McCarthy distinguish between intellectual dissent and liberalism/radicalism and revolutionary action:

> But dissent is not revolutionary activity and rhetoric. At the same time that modern institutions provide the opportunity for dissent, they shape and narrow the dissent. Both inside and outside the university, reform rhetoric and activity are an accepted mode. Revolutionary rhetoric rarely finds wide acceptance. Organizational attachment requires the moderation of dissent, and those intellectuals who violate this norm find themselves at odds with the very institution which allows widespread reform dissent. In this sense Mills is correct: radical dissent is unlikely among organizationally attached intellectuals...

We suggest that high mobility and the increased availability of movement positions as well as "mediating organizations" positions in the social services which grew out of the 1960s movements, creates an occupational culture of a markedly different kind from the early positions held by most subjects in welfare departments, psychiatric institutions or child welfare agencies. The very achievement of a modicum of ideological complementarity between employee and employer constrains militant activity. Subjects survive as radicals in the professions by tempering oppositional activities at the workplace and by avoiding external political activism which would endanger their legitimacy. It is suggested that it is not a mere fear of retaliation, though this is an important factor, but also the high absorption of time and energy by the "expert" radical roles of this population which serves to limit outside activism that is not functionally related to the subjects' area of expertise and that is not within certain bounds of political

discourse permissible within the left-liberal boundary of Social Service work. This movement from the 1960s to 1980s is quite similar to encapsulation of militant leftists in the 1930s in the bureaucratic offices of the New Deal (T.V.A., N.L.R.A., etc.) as well as in trade unions, social services, and academy. In a sense the conditions for an alliance with liberalism which existed for the Communist Party and other left organizations in the 1930s returned once again by the 1980s. Part of the historical decline of the conditions for an anti-professional, anti-authority ("the negative class consciousness" cited by Ehrenreichs) movement in the professions, is the successful employment of leftists in positions in the legitimating organizations of society.

C. Historical conditions for Radicalism in the Professions:

We have suggested early on in this study, that one of the problematic features of the sociology of the professions has been its tendency to freeze professional status and its ascribed ideological effects. Sociologists have labelled professionalization as a conservatizing force; and to a lesser degree have viewed professionalization as a radicalizing force. Similarly, within the literature of Social Work, theorists have ascribed radical or conservative implications to the process of professionalization. While Part II of this study certainly suggests that the presumed

conservatizing force of professionalization is not supported, in general, broad generalizations about the professions or even the social service professions tend to be ahistorical in nature.

By comparing the experience of radical social service professionals in the 1960s-1980s period, including the experience of our subjects, with the conditions that led to, and the experiences of radical professionals in the 1930s-40s we can both postulate some elements of consistency between the movements, and suggest important distinctions between radical professional movements and the broader social movements with which they are connected.

Rick Spano's (1982) history of the Rank-and-File Movement in Social Work is one of the few histories available, not only of radical social workers, but of a radical professional movement. Spano's work divides the history of the radical social service unions, its journal (Social Work Today, 1934-1942), and its associated groups (discussion clubs, practitioner groups, etc.), into three periods. While indeed radicalism in Social Work was closely linked to the overall rise in radicalism in the early 1930s, particularly the Communist Party U.S.A., it also followed some unique and autonomous historical vectors. In the early period of a beginning radicalism, identified by Spano as 1926-1934 (the "incipient period"), considerable anger and militancy grew among social workers (as well as other professionals, such as teachers, librarians, pharmacists)

who were beginning to experience widespread cutbacks, pay cuts, and unemployment. Additionally, of course, social workers were among the first exposed to the massive immiseration caused by the Depression. In areas like N.Y.C., the relative sophistication of the workers, their Jewish ethnicity, and the beginning influence of the C.P.U.S.A. are cited by Spano as leading many social workers to Marxism. However, a review of Spano's material indicates that in this period, the radicalism of these professionals was not aimed at a profession. Rather social workers fought to unionize, fought along with "clients" as tenants or demonstrators themselves, and were not distinguishable as their own social "movement."

The founding of Social Work Today in 1934, as well as a consolidating convention that year of the many discussion groups and radical unions in social service, led to a distinguishable radical professional movement in Social Work. Spano locates the highpoint of this movement in the two year period between 1934-1936. In these years, Social Work Today and its leaders attacked the professional leadership as failures, preached a "white collar proletarian" line, and attempted to draw the Social Work field to the left.

In reviewing the content as Social Work Today, as well as the actions of its leaders and associated unions and other groups, Spano detects a major change in the post 1936

period. The journal and its leaders began cooperating with the professional associations and established leaders in Social Work. The journal and many RFM leaders began to ally with a particular practice technique of social casework, the Functionalist School. The journal began to pay increased attention to social work practice, no longer suspecting it was merely reformist or only applying "bandaids." Strong support for the public services was a cornerstone of the groups, with a decreased criticism of social welfare as an institution. Spano attributes the major changes in the RFM as follows:

> By 1936, some of the conditions that led to the emergence of the Rank and File Movement were altered. Social Insurance, however meager, became a reality with the passage of the Social Security Act. The Wagner Act guaranteed labor's right to organize which was especially significant for the Rank and File Movement. Public social services, in which most rank and filers worked, were now firmly entrenched in the federal government. Thus, most rank and filers were no longer outsiders who had no investment in current social institutions, but rather an integral part of the emerging governmental response to poverty. Further, where they saw themselves as 'temporary' recruits in social work during the early 1930s, they now (saw) themselves as permanent members of social work, thus they were concerned with developing their professional skills. These factors, along with the rise of Fascism on the international level, contributed to the transformation of the Movement from a radical to a reform 'cause' model...

The author proposes that drawing on the interviews of the subjects, as well as the available literature on the radicals-in-the-professions from the 1960s on, that a similar three stage model can be constructed for the 1960s-

1980s period.

Beginning in the mid-1960s, student and young "middle class" activists first became drawn to "new working class" theories as a political concept. But while the European theorists (Gorz, Mallet, etc.) firmly located their analysis of the white collar/professional proletariat along Marxist lines, the dominant New Left perspective used the "new working class" theory to justify viewing students as a agency for change. Since the working class appeared to many young leftists as "having sold out," new agencies for change were primary. So while the radicals-in-the-professions movement can be dated to as early as 1965 (and certainly to 1967 when S.D.S. held the first Radicals-in-the-Professions Conference), the strong militancy of the late 1960s and early 1970s were analogous to the 1926-34 period discussed above. New Left and other radical social workers strongly involved in the civil rights movement, the anti-war movement, and welfare rights organizing, mounted what was, perhaps, their most militant attacks on "professionalism." However, it was generally an attack from <u>outside</u> of the professions. That is, both the subjects interviewed in this study, and, as far as can be determined, other social work activists of the late 1960s, acted primarily in concert and on behalf of oppressed client groups and external causes (e.g. the Vietnam War). They did not identify as professional social workers, did not join associations or

read journals, and did not attempt to strategically "bore from within" the professions in an attempt to change them.

There is little indication of well-organized left opposition in Social Work until the 1973-74 period. It was these years that saw the development of a beginning literature on radical social work, a beginning organization of Left social work groups (like RASSW in N.Y.C.) and an increase in other oppositional efforts. Like the Rank and File Movement in the 1934-1936 period, radical professionalism could not be identified as a separate social movement until it, on the one hand, associated some importance to the role of the professions in society and the importance of professionals-as-workers, and, on the other, developed its own critique, particularly linked to Marxism, which was hostile to the Established professional leadership. The 1973-74 period not only represented the "growing up" of many New Left students, but most importantly a severe economic recession followed by a severe budget crisis in state services. The subjects studied, as well as other radical social workers, began for the first time to see their own futures as threatened and their own work "proletarianized." At the same time, they saw an opportunity for increased radicalism within their own professions.

It would appear from our limited evidence: the rise and fall of many small groups of radical social workers (RASSW, URSHW, Chicago Alliance of SSW, Philadelphia Radical Human Service Workers, etc.); the decline in Catalyst's membership

and subscriptions; and the major change suggested in this study in the population's own oppositional activities; that this period may have ended around 1980-81. Like the post-1936 period, the Eighties has seen a continuation of radical groups in Social Work and related professions, but with less of an oppositional focus. Both individual radicals and the small organizations of radicals have been far more amenable to alliances with the liberal leadership in the social services; have focused on diverse areas such as practice and foreign affairs rather than on militant oppositional activity in the workplace or with clients; and, like the post-1936 Social Work Today leaders, many individual radical social workers have achieved significant status mobility into academia and administration.

While both movements were intimately related to societal social unrest, the specific nature of the radicalism within the social service profession were dictated by the following: the youth of the movement's members; the relative low income, status, and hierarchical positions held by the members; both the reality and the perception of blocked mobility of the members; and the response of the professions' own leadership to radical demands.

The cadre of both the RFM in Social Work and the many radical social work groups of the 1960s/1970s were overwhelming young (20-30) new entrants to the field. As

Spano indicates, the social workers of the early RFM had little or no conception of themselves as professionals or even as necessarily permanent employees within the welfare state. Similarly, our interviews have indicated, and they seem consistent with studies of the New Left, that the young entrants to social service type jobs were hardly careerists in the 1960s-1970s periods, were unsure of their vocational interests, but rather viewed themselves simply as "doing good." For many young leftists of the 1960s and 1970s, jobs as organizers or caseworkers were to have been a way station to other careers; while to others the lack of commitment represented an ambivalence about partaking in the "system" altogether.

In addition to youth, the RFM and the late 1960s/1970s radical social workers shared a low status, income, and power position. As Spano notes, the RFM were overwhelmingly welfare caseworkers and other low level public employees, many of whom were not even eligible for membership in the professional associations of Social Work. While the radical social workers of the 1965-80 period were not quite as clustered in the very bottom of the income levels of Social Work, they again were primarily line social workers without administrative or supervisory authority and without faculty, private practice or other high status positions. Primarily they occupied jobs as public sector caseworkers or as low status child welfare, hospital, community action or settlement house workers.

The low status position of these social workers in the 1926-1936 and 1965-1980 periods significantly confronted realities of blocked mobility. Most obviously, the Great Depression led to the first widespread left analysis of at least some professionals as "proletarian" (see Lewis Corey, 1935; analyses of Edouard Lindeman and Mary Van Kleeck, see Spano, 1982 and Fisher, 1980). To young social caseworkers who faced low pay, poor working conditions, and a future of little apparent advancement, self-conscious working class status was not mere rhetoric. While the economic situation of the 1960s and 1970s was quite different, at first blush, for young professionals there were similar interpretations. Even in the prosperous 1960s, there was a beginning awareness that the elite free standing professional and managerial positions which many college educated youth had trained for were both declining in number and being reduced in status. Much of the student revolt can be interpreted in this context. For example, a close reading of Kenneth Keniston's interviews with New Left youth in 1967 indicates that these so-called "privileged" youth were aware they faced a future in the "bureaucracy" in which a regimented 9-to-5 day awaited them. Somehow unrecognized in the much of the analysis of the New Left was the fact that most of these youth would not be businesspeople or even doctors or lawyers, but relatively low level white collar, professional, and technical workers.

The oppositional militancy within the professions as expressed through unionization and specific challenges to the leadership of the professions gained particular salience after the 1973 Recession and the ensuing fiscal cutbacks in the social services. That is, the mid 1970s radicalism in Social Work was greatly stimulated by the economic crisis which affected the public and private social services. The interview data which suggests that subjects felt "proletarianized" in low paid positions with little future reflected to some degree an accurate assessment of the conditions for Social Work in the 1970s. To another degree, the self-consciousness of "proletarianization" suggested the widespread feelings of blocked mobility that the "baby boom generation" confronted in their mid 20s and early 30s faced with tremendous competition in fields such as social work and teaching. For while there were jobs, those with high autonomy and prestige were highly fought over, and jobs such as low level casework or public school and community college teaching hardly fit the "baby boom" generation's image of "professional" labor.

While it is not argued that radicalism in the professions can be solely ascribed to economic conditions, the author suggests that there has been a significant lack of attention to the state of professional employment markets when analyzing the radical social movements among the non-industrial working class in the U.S. While a great deal of sociological analysis utilizes data on market fluctuations

to explain the trajectories of working class radicalism and trade unionism, there has been far less research in this area among professionals. Clearly one chief cause for the diminution in oppositional radical activity in the 1980s among social workers has been a revival in the ability of 'baby boom generation' professionals to advance within the social services. (This, of course, interacts with a process whereby frustrated and blocked professionals leave to other fields; therefore leaving behind the more professionally secure and successful, as the radicals' leadership). As indicated throughout this study, despite their own predictions, these subjects have achieved significant mobility, both in terms of income, and, perhaps more importantly, in terms of status as many enter administrative, supervisory, and faculty positions as well as more autonomous clinical job titles and positions. In a similar fashion, the leadership of the RFM and Social Work Today achieved a fair degree of mobility as well by the late 1930s. Many of the leaders themselves became faculty members and administrators. The permanent construction of a public social service system provided increased social service positions, not only for "line" caseworkers, but for administrators and supervisors, and a significant growth in educational programs and grants to obtain degrees followed as well.

The author does not argue that the mass of social

workers follow the exact career course of the small number of subjects in our study or of the numerically small leadership of Social Work Today and the R.F.M. The mobility of these individuals is indicative of improved economic conditions which do affect the potential followers of radical leadership. That is, while most readers of Social Work Today could not become academics or administrators, the general economic trends were upward for social workers in the post-1936 period. Similarly, while the readers of Catalyst may not follow the exact career trajectory of our subjects, the recent employment trends have been in the same direction.

Finally, a historical analysis of radicalism within the social service professions would be incomplete without noting the profound influence radicals have had on the profession as a whole; in dialectical fashion the very attacks launched by radical critics tend to be absorbed into the "mainstream," often providing a further basis for an alliance between liberals and radicals. When radical critics attacked the profession of Social Work in 1932 or in 1965, they confronted a profession, which while politically liberal in its leadership and orientation, was in both periods wedded to a narrow psychiatric paradigm. In both periods, despite massive poverty and social unrest, the employment market structured in part by the profession was privatized and aimed at a middle class population at least at the most prestigious and professionalized ends of the

field (as Cloward & Epstein, 1965, argued social work "had disengaged from the poor"). The professional leadership had become apathetic to what radicals would call Social Work's "mission," as the professionalization project of upward mobility became their primary concern.

While it would be hard to argue that the RFM/Social Work Today or the New Leftists of the 1960s were the key influences on changes in the professions (obviously the Depression, the War on Poverty, and the social unrest and government pressure on the professions in both periods were crucial, see Wagner, 1986), both revolts represented the filtering of social unrest at society's base into the profession and, as such, had far more power than their numbers would suggest. That is, when the RFM spoke about services to the poor or the influence of the environment, they were speaking for masses of unemployed clients with the power to de-legitimate Social Work. Similarly, the attacks on the profession in the 1960s particularly, represented the force of militant Blacks and other minorities who were becoming an increasing proportion of Social Work clients.

Spano's notes that some of the key issues that the RFM fought for were met by New Deal. Most obviously the passage of Social Security and the Wagner Act changed the political situation. However, he fails to analyze at length (though he suggests it) the evidence that the profession had absorbed much of the critique of its opponents. In addition to

legitimizing the field of practice associated with the radicals (primarily the public sector), paradigm shifts within the profession's theory allowed for the more socio-environmental analysis of the Left to (re) enter Social Work. While Functionalism never replaced the more analytic theories among the elite clinicians, social work education changed significantly, and the theoretical works of the 1930s and 1940s stressed an agency based practice which was closer to the RFM's views.

The 1960s-1970s attacks on professional leadership and paradigms also had dramatic effects, some of which were noted earlier. The vast growth in services to the poor; the legitimation of community organization, social advocacy, planning, and social action as "methods" in Social Work; the changes in the Codes of Ethics of NASW; the major paradigm changes in the teaching of Social Work and its theoretical bases; and the major changes in the structure of service provision itself can be listed as just some of the changes in the profession. As I have argued elsewhere (1986), the profession's ability to absorb radical critiques is a similar phenomenon to the response of the State to social unrest through reform, and is closely related. Because the reforms are not rooted in the key structural areas of capitalism, the "problems" and "issues" raised by radicals are never resolved, and, after unrest dies down, the problems remain present. On the one hand, reforms dramatically alter the political structure of both State

services and the professions as mediating bodies; on the other hand, because market forces are left unchanged, within a number of years radicals observing the structure can identify the same "problems." I have argued that the new paradigmatic "unity" in each period is a "pseudo-unity," since reform does not change the predominant market direction of the professions in any long term way (e.g. within years of the changes in Social Work, the field can develop a burgeoning middle class clinical market while social work with the poor declines, etc.).

Nevertheless, the ability of Social Work to serve as a mediating institution and to absorb radical critiques, itself eventually weakens the identity of radical groups within the professions. As the structure of social agencies and institutions reform and the profession opens up to new practice, radicals come to obtain mobility within the very structure of the social services. This allows the attainment of "labor market shelters" and the growing identification with both employers and the social service field. There is naturally a close relation between the absorption of radicalism at an employment level, and the macro-level ideological struggles of the day. The late 1930s radical social workers came to see their key enemies as "the economic royalists" who refused to recognize unions and oppose fascism; in comparison, social service and liberal leadership were allies in the fight against fascism and

monopoly. By the late 1970s, and particularly, the 1980s, the dangers of the New Right, Reaganism, nuclear war, and foreign intervention were a point of alliance with liberal and social service leadership; the need further to defend the very concept of social services against the Right provided the material basis of a popular front.

The above factors in the construction of radical movements in the social services can be graphically illustrated below:

TABLE 20: STAGES OF RADICAL SOCIAL MOVEMENTS IN THE SOCIAL SERVICES

I. Professionals as adjunctive to other Social Movements:

Time Periods: 1926-1934; 1965-1974

"Membership": Pre-professionals and clients; not organized within an actual professional structure

Ideology: Militant attacks on the profession from outside; struggle in the interest of clients is key (e.g. the early Depression battles over eviction and relief; the 1960s battles for welfare rights, community control); minimal degree of self-interest and self-consciousness as professionals; minimal concern re: "practice" as an issue; period of highest "negative class consciousness.

II. Militant Radical Professionalism:

Time Periods: 1934-1936; 1974-1980

"Membership": Young professionals (and pre-professionals) organized at workplace and within the profession to to challenge the dominant segments of the profession

Ideology: Professionals develop 'self-consciousness' of importance of professional leadership and hegemony; self-interest as workers; the critique of 'proletarianization' is key; beginning interest in 'practice' concerns; increased energy placed upon changing professional paradigms.

III. Absorbed Radical Professionalism:

Time Periods: post 1937; post 1980

"Membership": Increasing professionalized membership in radical groups; detachment from lower echelons of profession and the non-degreed. Loss of some radicals to other professions, occupations who have not been successful in the labor market.

Ideology: Less critical of professional leadership; open to alliances with liberals; foreign policy, defense against the right-wing and "radical practice" as key issues; decline in critique of proletarianization and decline in client organizing; radicals move toward intrinsic job satisfaction through achievement of labor market shelters and increased identification with employers.

As the table above suggests, these movements were not isolated from the general direction of the 1930s movements (the Communist Party and other left-wing organizations and the flow of labor unrest and unemployed councils) or the 1960s movements (civil rights, the student and anti-war movement, etc.). However, despite its boundedness by these broader social movements, there are autonomous directions which emerge in movements of professionals in social

service.

One important difference was the effect of the Popular Front on the Rank-and-File Movement and other radical social workers. In other social strata, such as the blue collar workforce, the Popular Front did not correspond to a downturn in militancy. While Communists and others cooperated in union organizing with established leaders, the direction of these social movements were still towards increased militancy and politicization. In the professions, and particularly in Social Work, the movement of the 'mainstream' leaders to support some of the leftists agenda as well as the upward mobility of the constituency of the movements, made militancy rare after 1936 (see Fisher, 1980; Spano, 1982). A further reason for decreased militancy was the intent of many radicals to use their organizational positions (such as social service) as a base to do other more importantly regarded movement work (e.g. foreign affairs such as the Spanish Civil War effort; support for the C.I.O.).

In the 1970s, economic conditions were primarily responsible for the movement of radical professionals taking a different turn than the social movements of students, minorities, and the poor. While the early to mid-1970s saw a general decline in militant activism among significant sectors of the population, the Recession of 1973 and the state budget crises that followed, along with the growth of Marxist and other radical influences, led to increased

militancy in the social services for a period of years. Obviously such militancy, could not be sustained under the constraints of the occupational structure discussed throughout this study, and with the decline of other social movements which radical professionals shared commonalities (student movement, New Left, Black militancy, etc.).

These important divergences in radical professional movements in the social services are important in framing future studies of radical movements. Rather than a reduction of radical professionalism as only a reflection of other social movements, such movements develop an important life of their own. The key variables are suggested to be the political economy of the profession itself, i.e. the possible mobility available within the professional job structure, and the paradigmatic basis of the profession i.e. whether the dominant professional paradigms can accommodate the dissenting segments in the field.

D. The Relevancy of the Study to Other Professions:

The above analysis suggests the need for further research which in a comparative fashion analyzes the political economy and history of radical social movements in other professions to note their similarities and differences. Do the stages referred to above apply to radical teachers, physicians, or attorneys? Or are there specific features to either social service professionals

themselves or to the social services as a legitimating function under capitalism that shape the contours of such movements?

The author believes there are many commonalities to the experience of these radical social service professionals, and other radicalized professionals in the 1930s-1940s and the post-1965 period. Clearly the youth of the radicals, the relative low status within their professions (e.g. the clustering of radicalism among physicians in groups of interns, residents, and young employed physicians), and the effect of economic conditions within the occupational structure (e.g. the attraction of teachers, pharmacists, librarians to radicalism and unionism in the 1930s; the development of a "working class" identification by some radical professors, planners, and even physicians in the 1970s) can all arguably be applied to other professions. Obviously, the social unrest in the professions was not clearly bounded. In the 1930s, social unrest affected many lower level professional groups, and, consciously, they sought through unionization and radical demands to unify with each other rather than uphold rigid professional boundaries. In the 1960s-1970s, there was a close association between some of the myriad groups of radical planners, social workers, psychologists, teachers, and doctors. Further, as we have seen throughout the above study, the very broadness of what the "social service field" has been defined as encompassing, suggests a broad view of

radical professionalism: this study itself has included therapists and counselors; organizers, planners and administrators; labor union professionals, sociologists, and health policy experts. While we have touched on some of the particular constraints of occupying high level positions (such as administration), in general, radicalism in the broadly defined social services was not restricted to any one occupational function such as counselors or educators or organizers or planners.

On the other hand, unique features of the social service labor market must be noted. First, of course, Social Work as an ascriptive label for an occupation suggests a low status profession. While as we have noted, the subjects have achieved considerable mobility as administrators, supervisors, therapists, and faculty, and M.S.W.s do achieve significantly higher incomes and positions than may be publicly acknowledged, the very identification as "social worker" locates this group at the lower status level of the "professions." Most of the historic reasons for this low status (female composition; stigmatization of work with the poor; etc.) have been noted elsewhere. The key point to be added here is that the very vagueness of the boundaries of Social Work has continually caused both employment competition and status diminution. Of importance to radicals, the presence of hundreds of thousands of low paid non-degreed workers in the social services as well as less

than Masters level trained "social workers," makes a "working class" identification more possible. Like nursing and teaching, social work suffers not only from low public esteem, but from the continual ability of employers to split up and parcel out their work. The presence of many thousands of employees with relatively low pay and status no doubt creates an easier interpretation for a "proletarianization" argument. For while some radicals have argued that physicians are being "proletarianized," (see McKinlay, 1982) the social basis for these conclusions often are speculative (increased technologization and computerization; diminished autonomy in the future) rather than based on current realities.

Secondly, the social services' ability, and perhaps functional role under capitalism, to absorb social unrest through reform, suggests a unique feature of Social Work radicalism. While one can argue in broad terms that all professions respond in some manner to periods of social unrest, radical or even reformist professionals have had a limited, if any effect, within private industry (e.g. accountants, engineers, scientists). Since the public sector services in which many social workers are employed are so crucial to the legitimacy of capitalism and its ability to mediate social unrest, a strong case can be made for the unique position of public sector professionals from which to influence events. In this sense, both the general liberalism of the social service professional leadership, and the

vulnerability of the social services to criticism, encourage radical and reformist demands within Social Work.

Since we have suggested in our study that social service professionals come to their careers with a "missionary zeal" to service, there are clearly unique features to this profession which attract radicals, and, in certain periods, produce them. While this fact stands in clear contrast to engineering or accountancy, the questions that cannot be answered without further research relate to other "liberal" or "helping professions" such as teaching, medicine, nursing, and law. To what degree do these professions attract or produce radicals, and to what degree are their occupational structures permeable to reform and radical movements?

E. Concluding Discussion:

It might appear at first glance that some of the conclusions drawn in Part III of this study conflict with the analysis provided in Part II of this study; after all, in analyzing this group of radical social service professionals as individuals we suggested that radical ideological commitments appear more stable than professional loyalty, while in analyzing the actual activities of this population in relation to the collective goals of this social movement, we found that radical militancy was low. While the two sets of analyses have different emphases, it is suggested that not only are the parts of the study not contradictory, but they may serve to clarify several theoretical concepts often used imprecisely in the literature on work and occupations and in political sociology. The need to differentiate between professional identification and occupational/career socialization; between radical political ideology and radical political activism; and between oppositional militancy and radical expertise; is strongly suggested by this study.

There is a tendency in the literature of both of the sociology of work and occupations and of much of radical sociology to associate professionalization as a process and the attachment to the ideology and symbols of professionalism with the more generalized processes of

upward mobility and career attachment. As this study has suggested, it is possible for individuals to undergo professional socialization and hold relatively established "professional"positions while being detached from the symbols and ideology of professionalism. Yet at the same time, these individuals maintain a strong normative commitment to their careers, and for the most part, to the goal of upward mobility. Careerism as a predominant objective and a major constraint, subjectively and objectively, to radical action, can prevail without a high degree of professional loyalty or attachment. If either force, professionalization or careerism, is conservatizing, there would seem to be a stronger case for careerism. These subjects, whether strongly professionally identified or not, and whether focused on mobility within social work, teaching, union work, movement work or business, were strongly tied to occupational positions and objectives which mitigated against oppositional militancy. Further research on the effect of upward mobility and career attachment on both political ideology and activism, separate from the issue of professionalization, would be of interest in further exploring these concepts.

We have noted earlier the important distinction between radical political ideology and radical political activism. This point bears on the question of professionalization as conservatizing or radicalizing. It may be that those who argue professionalization is conservative or co-optive are

interpreting political radicalism as reflective of political activism rather than political ideology. Some who argue professionals or the intelligensia are radical, border on using only ideological/subjective interpretations (like Gouldner's critical speech community) and therefore exclude actual political action from analysis. By separating these important variables, we can conclude that neither upward mobility or professionalization is a conservatizing force in relation to political ideology; however, occupational attachment, at least of the kind noted in this study, may be a barrier to radical political activism.

In this light, it is important to distinguish between the radical oppositional militancy which characterized the subjects in the early periods of their careers and the radicalism inherent in their current expert roles. As a reflection of part of a generation of New Leftists, many have moved from being activists to a clear position in the intellegensia. While there has been much written about intellectuals and politics, there has been little exploration of the possible roles of both intellectual labor and the institutions of social services in mitigating against militant oppositional movements. Further research in this area would be useful in not only testing the accuracy of this finding, but in gauging its significance. While this study analyzed a relatively small population, thousands of people affected by the New Left and other social movments of

the 1960s went into careers in the human services as well as in teaching, union work, etc. To what extent was this process of locating a career in areas which seemed to embrace aspects of radicalism actually subversive of more militant goals and potentials of the late 1960s movements? Rather than assume professionals or intellectuals merely follow "the times," it may be that these many thousand personal career decisions themselves had a major impact on the political events of the last two decades.

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