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ANTLER, Stephen, 1937-
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City University of New York, D.S.W., 1977
Social Work

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THE PROBLEM OF ADOLESCENT RUNAWAYS: A PROJECT IN POLICY ANALYSIS FOR GRADUATE SOCIAL WORK STUDENTS

by

Stephen Antler

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

1977

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

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Abstract

THE PROBLEM OF ADOLESCENT RUNAWAYS:
A PROJECT IN POLICY ANALYSIS FOR
GRADUATE SOCIAL WORK STUDENTS

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The project described in this report was developed in order to test a unique method for educating graduate social work students in basic policy analysis skills. The program, conceptualized around the goal of developing an understanding of the problem of adolescent runaways and the social services and social policies which affect them, ultimately emerged as a course on the nature of the adolescent experience in American society and the social policies which largely structure the adolescent period. The problems of adolescent runaways were conceived as similar to those of all youth, though runaways experience greater deprivation since their behavior precipitates legal intervention.

In developing the course, several factors were emphasized. First, that an understanding of practice had to proceed from an agreed-upon value conception. Second, that insights from history, philosophy, sociology, political science and economics were essential to understanding the structural position of adolescents and particularly adolescent deviants. Third, that the content of the analysis had

to include all aspects of the adolescent milieu; hence the family, schools and peer group, the legal structure and the courts were viewed as central. Fourth, the program compensated for the reality that agency-directed field work and supervision limits the capacity to teach social policy criticism. Therefore, the field component of the course was conducted within the class context rather than through field placements which might have prevented the requisite intellectual freedom deemed desirable.

Finally, the project developer assumed that the students engaged in the course were adult learners, self-motivated, self-directed and experienced in their own learning styles. Hence the principles of andragogy were applied to course design and planning. A workshop format allowing maximum individual participation was selected. In contrast to most other reported social policy courses, a group enterprise was encouraged since all the students worked on and contributed to an understanding of a single policy question: the problem of the adolescent runaway.

Acknowledgments

The work on this project was first conceived during a doctoral seminar conducted by Dr. Harold Lewis. Dr. Lewis' help in planning and preparing the dissertation proposal and outlining the work to be accomplished was invaluable. I am also grateful to Drs. Harold Weissman, Irving Weisman, and Eugene Shinn, who served as members of my committee and offered continual support and understanding. Drs. Harold Weissman and Irving Weisman greatly assisted me in unraveling the theoretical threads which emerged from the project and were unfailingly generous with their energy and intelligence on this as well as on many other matters on which I have sought advice. Dr. Shinn's sisyphean patience and willingness to meet on weekends was an indispensable element in the planning and execution of the program evaluation. I feel greatly in his debt not only for his help in preparing this document, but for motivating me to develop further research and evaluation projects. Dr. Charles Guzzetta also offered helpful comments and assistance on early drafts of the dissertation and has been an invaluable colleague and friend. His flexibility, support and encouragement have been important features of my own very positive feelings about the Hunter College School of Scoial Work. Finally I would also like to acknowledge the help of (Dr.) Myron Hulse, the Jewish Mother, general factotum and one-man informal support network of the doctoral program. His interest and concern for students and unfailing good humor facilitate a light-hearted

tone for the entire program that no doctoral student can fail to acknowledge or appreciate.

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Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

I. Introduction

Contemporary social work, despite its historic concern for the disadvantaged and intimate identification with social reform, has in the past few decades become increasingly identified with the maintenance of existing institutions and the control of deviant groups. Kahn, for one, has observed that the consequence of American social work's emphasis upon services designed to insure individual and group adjustment has promoted the profession's image as one of concern for promoting adjustments to social institutions. This emphasis, he claims, prevents recognition within social work of the need for the profession to constantly accommodate its functions and processes to new social contexts.[1]

In few arenas of practice is the need for continual re-evaluation and renewal of social work processes and functions as pressing as in work with adolescents and juveniles. For it is these groups which frequently manifest the earliest evidence of changing values and mores which will rapidly overtake other groups.

The project described in this thesis was designed to stimulate the capacity for change and critical exploration in individual practitioners through the conscious use of educational strategies designed to encourage a process of learning and inquiry about the purposes and strategies of practice. The method utilized, a workshop in policy analysis, focused

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[1]Alfred J. Kahn, "The Function of Social Work," Issues in American Social Work (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1966).

on the problem of runaway youth, a particularly vexing and apparently new social problem currently occupying the attentions of the makers of public policy.[2]

Study of this specific problem offered the opportunity to engage practice and policy problems relating to a population whose responsiveness to social change is immediate and often socially threatening. Adolescents, occupying the threshhold between childhood dependency and adult independence, are a source of more than marginal concern to a culture worried about its future and frightened by its present. Adolescents ambivalently represent both the hope for tomorrow and the fears of social breakdown and violence occurring today.

In working with this population, a social worker requires the ability to understand the nature of rapidly emerging new values and the capacity to accommodate practice to new conditions. Since these changes occur constantly the competent practitioner must exhibit the ability to continue to learn, question and adapt throughout a professional lifetime. While these attributes should exist in all students before entering a profession, many do not possess the habits of learning and questioning needed. Nonetheless there is much that can be done during graduate training to encourage and nurture the desired attributes.

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[2]See, for example, U.S. Congress, House Committee on Education and Labor, Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention and Runaway Youth. Hearings before the Subcommittee on Equal Opportunity, 93rd Cong., 2nd Sess., H.R. 6265 and H.R. 9298 (1975).

Jerome Bruner has observed that in a period of rapid change the capacity to continue to learn is essential.[3] This can be accomplished, he believes, by stressing the fundamental structure of subjects, the interrelatedness of ideas which affect a problem or condition instead of dates, facts or techniques. Thus by bringing together related theoretical perspectives from many disciplines the learner is enabled to perceive the importance of many concepts in understanding a condition or problem. The requirements of social work education are particularly suited to this model of education as social work's social problem orientation encourages an educational approach, requiring integration of knowledge from many related disciplines, in order to develop appropriate strategies for helping resolve individual problems.

Despite this apparent freedom to explore knowledge, develop facility with abstract concepts and innovate new solutions, social work education has instead directed its primary energies to education which is directly related to the acquisition of basic interpersonal practice skills. Its literature is replete with examples of criticism of such an approach, and for at least a decade, many social work educators have decried the short-sightedness of emphasizing casework skill acquisition, while neglecting the purposes to which these skills are placed. Thus while knowing how to help, many professionally trained social workers have little insight into the purpose of practice. The central question of

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[3] Jerome Bruner, The Process of Education (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1958).

goals is seemingly explained by alluding to social work's responsibility to help those in trouble while neglecting the critical step of defining the social objectives of the help which is offered. Similarly, possessed of a skill, the tendency of social work (and other professions) is to apply the skill willy-nilly, without regard to the nature of the problem or condition to which it is directed. Thus follows social work's well-known propensity to consider most problems as mental-health-related, a result of insufficiencies within the individual rather than forces within the society. Hence the purpose of practice often is to foster change in individuals, rather than changing the social situation which may have stimulated the problem or helping the individual surmount the social obstacles placed in his path.

The dilemma of the adolescent runaway or home-leaver, the subject of the policy analysis course which is the substance of this project, offers a particularly vexing example of the professional problems which social work must address to develop more relevant approaches to populations requiring help. Consequently a course focusing on analyzing the social policies which affect adolescents who leave home provides an excellent opportunity for drawing upon knowledge from many disciplines in order to more fully understand the texture of the practice required to help youths in trouble. Simultaneously such an educational program should also promote understanding of the larger social welfare context in which social work practice is enacted.

If social work professionals are to develop the skills

required for comprehending and analyzing the many purposes and contexts in which practice is enacted, it is essential that they have a thorough grounding in policy studies. Yet there are many difficulties in defining the nature of social policy, its content and boundaries. Additional problems are encountered which are related to the structural arrangements which characterize social work schools, particularly the partnership which exists between schools and social agencies providing practice supervision. Finally the perspective from which policy analysis should be taught, and the disciplines from which insight is drawn are themselves issues upon which there is little agreement. This chapter will conclude with some reflections on these questions.

II. Defining Social Welfare Policy

1. Social Work Education and Social Policy

The study of social policy is critical to the practice of social work practitioners. Yet one analyst has noted, "The fact that the direct service practitioner's major functions are remote from the final decision points in the process of policy formulation tends to make many students feel that the requirement to take courses in social welfare policy is somewhat of an affliction. The direct-service practitioner is more inclined to concentrate on the development of interactional skills, on learning how to conduct himself as a professional."[4] This educational dilemma, in combination with

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[4]Neil Gilbert and Harry Specht, Dimensions of Social Welfare Policy (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1974), p. 13.

other factors concerning the manner in which practice skills are learned, increases the difficulty of introducing students to social policy analysis despite the observation that it "is central . . . it shapes the forms of practice that professionals are called upon to use and determines the client systems to be served."[5] This suggests that introductory education for social policy must adopt forms which are at once comprehensible and manageable by novice learners, and must focus on events and situations related to concerns experienced by students in their practice.

A variety of definitions of social policy are applicable for this purpose, though those that are broad and encompassing appear to be most useful. Rein, claiming that social policy is concerned with choice among competing values, offers perhaps the broadest definition. "The study of social policy involves the interaction between values, operating principles and outcomes."[6] Martin Titmuss chooses to define social policy as philosophically purposive when he states it is "the study of a range of social needs and the functioning in conditions of scarcity, of human organizations, traditionally called social services or social welfare systems, to meet these needs. . . . Social administration is thus concerned, for instance, with different types of moral transactions, embodying notions of gift, exchange, or

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[5]Ibid., p. 1.

[6]Martin Rein, "Social Policy Analysis as the Interpretation of Beliefs," Journal of the American Institute of Planners 37 (September 1971):297-310.

reciprocal obligations, which have developed in modern industrial societies in institutional forms to bring about and maintain social and community relations."[7] Gil argues, however, that social theorists by arbitrarily excluding economic phenomena and by ". . . equating social policies with social welfare services and programs leads . . . to a fragmentary, categorical approach to the analysis and development of social policies. In such an approach specific social policies are conceived of as societal responses to specific social needs . . . rather than as elements of a comprehensive system of social policies. . . ."[8]

Underlying these definitions of social policy is the concept that each society and each sector within a society must make decisions about the programs and services it will offer, the resources it will commit and the kind of social relations it desires to maintain. It is these choices which constitute the domain of social policy analysis, or as Rein states: Policy analysis "is accounting for the development of public policy and explicating the choices and assumptions underlying present or anticipated programs without necessarily attempting to alter the direction of policy or make specific or detailed choices."[9]

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[7]Richard M. Titmuss, Essays on the Welfare State, 2nd ed. (Boston, Mass.: Beacon Press, 1969).

[8]David Gil, Unravelling Social Policy (Boston: Schenkman, 1976).

[9]Martin Rein, Social Policy: Issues of Choice and Change (New York: Random House, 1970), p. 9.

2. Curriculum and Social Policy

From the vantage point of educating practitioners, it would be sterile to offer a basis for conceptualizing practice and its policy determinants without simultaneously offering a value perspective from which to ascertain the most preferred actions. Though frequently implied in the sparse social work literature of education for social policy, this need is often unstated. Boehm, for example, notes, "the practitioner of a profession, even more than the citizen, needs to be aware not only of the facts, but also of the value preferences that undergird his actions. The inevitability of value conflicts, the often undetected intrusion of values into action, and the problem of making implicit values explicit so that they can be critically examined, these and other dimensions of the vast value realm need to be as much a concern of social work education as is the development and use of knowledge."[10]

Galper adopts a more aggressive "radical position" and suggests that students need "to develop a model within an integrative ideological framework" that accounts for their feelings not only about social work but also about "other broad social issues."[11] He offers such a perspective: "Social welfare legislation," he submits, "has responded to

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[10]Werner Boehm, "Social Work Education: Issues and Problems in Light of Recent Developments," Journal of Education for Social Work 12 (Winter 1976):20-27.

[11]Jeff Galper, "Introduction of Radical Theory and Practice in Social Work Education: Social Policy," Journal of Education for Social Work 12 (Spring 1976):3-9.

human needs, but has done so in a way that further strengthens an exploitative economic system through direct and indirect financial supports, and further integrates individuals into the logic of that system."[12] Arguing that these programs are destructive "in the long run," Galper advocates offering students a radical analysis of social policy which focuses on analysis of the destructive aspects of capitalism.

Loeb and Slosar emphasize a more circumscribed function of policy study, claiming that "the purpose of social work education should be to train the neophyte social worker not only to increase his effectiveness, but to decrease the likelihood of his contributing to "sociatrogenic dysfunctions."[13] These are defined as the intended or unintended negative effects of social welfare policy and programming. Unnecessary stigma, ridicule, or oppression by social welfare bureaucracies are a clear example of sociatrogenic dysfunctions.

Thursz, however, maintains that "within a two-year curriculum it is not possible to provide the necessary skills and knowledge" for social action and individual practice both to social policy and direct-service practitioners. While he concedes that direct service practitioners must be aware of the policy implications of their practice, he nonetheless argues for a sharp dichotomy between direct and indirect

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[12] Ibid., p. 4.

[13] Peter Loeb and John Slosar, "Sociatrogenic Dysfunctions: A Concern for Social Work Education," Journal of Education for Social Work 10 (Spring 1974):51-58.

practice, concluding that caseworkers should abjure social action.[14] Yelaja observes that education for social policy analysis has not focused on it as a "practice," and that many areas of government policy analysis and explanation provide a setting for trained social workers in this area.[15]

Segal, writing in a somewhat different vein, supports the notion of social policy analysis as a practice and argues for a highly technological curriculum focusing on policy science.[16] Curriculum emphasis would then be on operations research, systems theory, management theory, game theories, futuristics, decision theory and systems engineering. Segal's singular emphasis on technique, and perfunctory attention to values, social objectives, and problems of choice between competing objectives, removes him from the mainstream of curriculum thought in social work education. Building on the policy planning paradigm of Gruber, Magill focuses on "making the connection between concepts and practice" as a device for encouraging student involvement in uncovering the relationship between science and values which undergirds the study of social policy.[17]

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[14] Daniel Thursz, "Professional Education for Expected Political Action by Social Workers," Journal of Education for Social Work 9 (Fall 1973):87-93.

[15] Shankara A. Yelaja, "Social Policy Practice," Journal of Education for Social Work 11 (Fall 1975):101-106.

[16] Brian Segal, "Policy Science and Social Policy," Journal of Education for Social Work 12 (Spring 1976):36-42.

[17] Robert S. Magill, "An Introductory Policy Planning Course for Graduate Students," Journal of Education for Social Work 11 (Winter 1975):99-104.

In contrast to a primarily classroom-based educational focus, Jaffe and Patti instead focus on using the interaction between class and field as the locus for studying social policy.[18] In their program reported in 1973, they developed an integrating seminar in which students analyzed policy issues related to, but larger in scope than, the work of the agencies in which they were placed. Noting some disadvantages to this method, they disclose that practice-oriented field supervisors tended to place little emphasis on conceptual learning required for understanding social policy but instead stressed practice education and skill acquisition.

Despite the apparently divergent viewpoints represented in this discussion of social work literature on the nature of education for social policy, several generalizations are possible.

1. Education for social policy (analysis or practice) is new and untested and requires considerable experimentation and development in schools of social work. Curriculum is not yet standardized, nor is the overall place of social policy established in the curriculum.

2. Central to the study of social policy is the explication of choices and alternatives about appropriate social strategies and social actions. While some educators stress the relationship between social policy and planning, virtually

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[18]B. Jaffe and R. J. Patti, "An Experiment in the Teaching of Social Welfare Policy," Journal of Education for Social Work 9 (Winter 1973):23-33.

all support the notion that irrespective of practice objectives, an understanding of the structure, process, and content of social policy is critical to understanding professional practice.

3. Conceptualization (thinking) is viewed as distinct from practice (doing). In this view the aim of social policy courses should be to stimulate more sophisticated, open, critical thought about social programs and the place of practice in them. Students, however, resist this type of formulation as it appears unrelated to immediate concerns fostered by practice in the field.

4. Part of the study of social policy involves comprehension of the expressed value perspective and its relation to the process and outcome of the policy in question.

5. In contrast to the broad range of formulations about curriculum emphasis, or method of instruction, there appear to be considerably fewer differences as to instructional objectives where this is noted. The objective most commonly specified is the idea of learning a "process of inquiry" or "relating concept to practice" in analyzing social problems, social policies and social welfare programs, rather than "simple description." The focus is on inquiry but not on action, which is viewed as a separate component of practice distinct from the need for understanding. For Boehm, this process of awareness prevents poor social work practice, while for Galper and Patti, it promotes understanding of the

direction of needed social change.[19]

6. Content, on the other hand, should offer students a perspective which is not necessarily value free, but promotes social objectives by asking questions such as, to what extent does the delivery of services of a particular program enhance human dignity and maintain or strengthen a healthy self-image of the consumer of service?

3. The Agency and the University

Social work professional training, as Katherine Kendall has noted, "suffers the Janus fate with one head facing the academic world, and the other head facing the work-a-day world of the profession."[20] This dilemma confronts all professional education, yet it has a special importance for social work training which is totally reliant upon social work agencies to provide practice opportunities, training supervision, and postgraduate employment. If both the agency and the school had similar commitments, the problem would not be severe. This, however, is usually not the case. Meyer, for example, challenges the assumption that "schools in their educational programs and agencies in their practice programs exhibit similar if not identical commitments to the service

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[19] Joseph B. Kelley, "Educating Effective Social Workers for a Changing Society: Social Policy," Journal of Education for Social Work 11 (Winter 1975):89-93.

[20] Katherine A. Kendall, "Selected Issues in Field Instruction in Education for Social Work," in Field Instruction: Selected Issues (New York: Council on Social Work Education, 1959), p. 7.

role of social work in the community."[21]

Indeed, the contrary situation would appear to be more accurate. Professional schools based in the university are responsible for professional training, but are also accountable for advancing the state of the art and for criticizing practice as it is enacted in the agency setting, as well as for developing principles around which new policy can emerge. Moreover, as Meyer notes, "it is not the function of the university to train practitioners for practice as it is." From the agencies' perspective these university functions are often perceived as having little relevance to the requirements of day-to-day agency practice. An emphasis in the university on developing the capacity for critical practice and enlarging the policy sophistication of fledgling professionals thus may not be welcomed by agencies who perceive their program assumptions as being questioned if not condemned. Universities are not unaware of this dilemma, and it may be that many have not stressed the critical approach required for policy understanding due to an overly intimate identification with social agencies, and reliance upon their facilities.

Other factors are involved as well. Two years in a university environment dedicated to teaching practice may be insufficient for the purpose of learning and for developing the capacity to knowledgeably evaluate the conditions under which practice is enacted. The student, because he is

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[21]Carol Meyer, "Integrating Practice Demands in Social Work Education," in Betty Lacy Jones, Current Patterns in Field Education (N.Y.: Council on Social Work Education, 1969).

evaluated frequently by the agency for practice, dedicates energy and concentrates attention of acquiring those skills, rather than on acquiring the intellectual skills demanded for policy analysis.[22] To expect students to learn professional practice while also learning to understand the sometimes subtly pernicious purposes to which these skills are applied may be unrealistic if not contradictory. An additional obstacle to social policy education is suggested by the competing demands of a profession dedicated to practice with an activity requiring the perspective of the researcher. A questioning, skeptical attitude and an open, critical perspective, attributes which are commonly associated with investigators in the social and physical sciences rather than a practice profession, are prerequisites for investigating policy. A practice demands action and decision while a science encourages leisurely inquiry, proof and conditional conclusions. A practice requires confidence while a science demands uncertainty.[23] Thus the demands of education for practice may in fact be an obstacle to the type of role ideal for social workers often debated in the literature. The combined social critic-actionist and individual practitioner may indeed be a chimera, an elusive unrealizable goal for the

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[22] Neil Gilbert and Harry Specht, for example, have suggested that the direct-service and non-direct service aspects of social work should be separated. Neil Gilbert and Harry Specht, "The Incomplete Profession," Social Work 19 (November 1974):665-74.

[23] It is noteworthy that the few nationally known psychotherapists who combine both attributes tend not to come from social work. Robert Coles, for example, is a psychiatrist as is Chris Beales. Tom Levin is a psychologist.

profession which we must continue to strive for in the hopes that some practitioners may be able to integrate both aptitudes.[24]

Preparation of a course involving analysis of policy requires an awareness of personal values which provide a context for integrating and selecting insights from many disciplines. While no single perspective on value or knowledge has been adopted by the profession to serve as a guideline, it is nonetheless important for the social policy teacher to consciously clarify the viewpoint he represents which students can then debate and either accept or reject. In this section the conceptual framework used by the instructor and drawn from several related disciplines is described. Themes suggested in this section will be further developed in Chapter II.

4. Perspectives on Policy Studies

As the helping role of social workers is increasingly called into question from within and outside the profession, the need for greater professional understanding of the forces underlying this criticism is magnified. Much of it has been stimulated in recent years as a result of the expansion of public and quasi-public programs which emphasize the social control elements of social work practice. While certain settings, particularly in the law enforcement arena, have always been associated with control, the newer categorical programs as well as traditional social work services in mental health

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[24] I am indebted to Harold Lewis for bringing these distinctions to my attention.

programs have expanded the repertoire of social programs directed specifically toward narrow, troubling social behaviors. Examples of these programs are readily available: drug abuse and alcohol control, anti-delinquency programs, child abuse and runaway programs.

As social programs are increasingly directed at controlling or managing deviant behavior and deviant subgroups, the commitment to helping becomes subordinated to the larger social concern for order. Social workers, as the frontline troops of many of these programs, are then manifestly identified with the purposes of these programs. The newer categorical programs are particularly vulnerable to this criticism as they are focused on the apparent symptoms of social breakdown and tend to maintain traditional social values. Steiner, for example, commenting upon the social work role in public welfare, notes that social workers "are not translating . . . important values and goals into program realities. . . . we are in fact primarily though marginally involved in the implementation of punitive and restrictive procedures."[25]

Rein, framing an argument for a more radically oriented casework practice, criticizes traditional social casework. "The literature of social casework abounds with references to helping the marginal, deviant and mentally ill meet standards and, thereby, achieve self-actualization and fulfillment. That conformity is viewed as the road to

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[25] Gilbert Steiner, The State of Welfare (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1971), p. 4.

self-fulfillment is evident."[26]

In large measure the drive to press the clients of categorical programs into socially acceptable conforming behaviors is not the sole responsibility of social workers. It is also a consequence of American social policy emphases which have tended to avoid the development of comprehensive and universal programs which stress prevention and social integration, rather than the quarantine and certification of deviants. However, social workers in general have not received the training and insight into the dynamics of social policy which would enable them to satisfactorily critique these programs or develop appropriate practice strategies more suitable for helping the clients whom they serve.

5. Social Policy and Deviance

Because social work lacks an integrated, commonly held body of theory about desired purposes of social policies, little agreement can be found within the profession as to the appropriate role of the public sector. Heavily indebted to the values of voluntary social services, and in general sharing common social beliefs which hold massive governmental intervention in the social arena suspect, contemporary social work was late in adapting to the concept of social policy as an important framework for influencing the practices of social welfare services. Hence theory development has been relatively delayed in the United States, while there has been considerable importation of British experiences in shaping

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[26] Rein, Social Policy: Issues of Choice and Change, p. 289.

the agendas of American social policy thinkers.

Perhaps the most eloquent reporter and analyst of social welfare policy has been Titmuss. In discussing the distinctions between universal and selective social programming, Titmuss offers some insight into the dilemmas faced by welfare planners when attempting to construct models for meeting community needs.[27] His work has heavily influenced several Americans, including Alfred Kahn, whose extensive writing and advocacy for social policies stressing "social utilities" has markedly affected social welfare theory in the past few years.[28] Nonetheless these important contributions have not been universally utilized as a basis for professional action or as a framework useful for understanding problems inherent in the American style of social service delivery.

Simultaneous with these developments social scientists and social workers have increasingly begun to call into question not only social programs targeted at deviant populations but also the concept of deviance as objective reality. Commenting, for example, on the nature of welfare programming, Coser notes, "In the very process of being helped or assisted, the poor are assigned to a special career which impairs their identity and becomes a stigma which marks their

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[27]See, for example, Richard M. Titmuss, Commitment to Welfare (N.Y.: Pantheon, 1968).

[28]Alfred Kahn, Social Policy and Social Services (N.Y.: Random House, 1973). See in particular Chapter 3. "Social utilities" are defined as social programs and personal social services accessible to all regardless of income, which are available on the assumption of common need as a consequence of normal change and growth.

intercourse with others. . . ."[29] Other groups designated by the community for special attention are similarly affected. Thus, mental patients, juvenile offenders, and child abusers also obtain a "spoiled identity" in the process of receiving help through social agencies. Yet the definition of who is to receive help and which actions constitute a condition which is a social problem are essentially political decisions made without the participation of those to be helped. Horowitz, criticizing the "welfare model" of problem resolution notes that this decision has three characteristics or factors.[30] The first involves the question of whether something should be done about the condition. If something is to be done, he adds, then the public sector will be assigned to manage the problem and finally, since it is designated a social problem, it now requires administrative rather than political action. It therefore enters the purview of experts and professionals who henceforth make case decisions about the management of individuals who exhibit appropriate characteristics.

Bernard also underscores the political character of defining deviance but notes in addition the value-laden biases inherent in defining deviant characteristics. "Values are inherent in the very concept of social problems. The conditions that are viewed as social problems are evaluated by

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[29] Lewis Coser, "The Sociology of Poverty," Social Problems 13 (Fall 1965):145.

[30] Irving Horowitz and Martin Leibowitz, "Toward A Redefinition of the Relationship Between Sociology and Politics," in John Borr and Lydia Pulsifer, eds., Education and Social Change (Austin: Southwest Educational Development Laboratory, 1967).

the decision makers as bad, as requiring change or reform. The reason for coming to the conclusion may be humanitarian, utilitarian or functional. In any case a system of values is always implicit and usually quite explicit."[31] While the value system which informs the deliberations of policy makers may be attractive, these same values when translated into policy and program are often destructive to the clients who participate in the programs which ensue. For example, in the case of runaways, the explicit value orientation of public policy derives from: 1) the considerable regard our society places on the maintenance of the nuclear family, and 2) the ascribed need for parental supervision, nurturance, guidance, control and protection of children below a certain age. When translated into public policy, however, the treatment of runaways is often punitive, destructive, and lacking in regard for the subject of the policy whose behavior may be regarded as a juvenile status crime and whose future may be permanently altered by involvement with the justice system.

Practitioners exercise considerable discretion at the level of direct service provision. While bound to enact the mandate of the agency or program which is their auspice, they nonetheless can protect their clients from the more pernicious effects of policy if they are aware of these effects and committed to rectifying unfair conditions.

They can, if they are committed, also attempt to

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[31]Jessie Bernard, "Social Problems as Problems of Decision," Social Problems 6 (Winter 1958-59):212.

change policies which are unfair, and where necessary subvert those that harm the interests of their clients. Discussing possibilities for radical casework, Rein suggests, "One form that it takes is when the caseworker acts as an insurgent within the bureaucracy in which he is employed, seeking to change its policies and purposes in line with the value assumptions he cherishes. Caseworkers can act as rebels within a bureaucracy, humanizing its established procedures and policies."[32] Developing this knowledge and commitment is an important goal of social work education and informed the planning and objectives of the educational experience developed by the investigator.

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[32]Rein, "Social Work in Search of a Radical Profession," in Social Policy: Issues of Choice and Change, p. 292.

Chapter II

PROGRAM CONCEPTUALIZATION

I. Course Planning

Planning for the content of the course was strongly influenced and structured by the concerns discussed in Chapter I. Since an important objective of the course was to broaden the perspective of the student practitioners to enable them to select from a wider range of practice alternatives, the content included conceptual material which facilitated consideration of the goals of social work practice, the relationships of these goals to social policy objectives, and the ultimate effects of policy and practice on those needing help. It was expected, therefore, that by reviewing the problem of runaway youth, evidence for policy and practice revision would emerge.

These "discoveries" would occur as students were exposed to educational materials which encouraged their own learning and through small group discussion of the issues. Most importantly, the discussions would be enriched by direct exposure to the youths who were themselves affected by the policies, and the agencies which performed the services.

In this chapter, the basic conceptualization of the program and the course content will be discussed and described. Course objectives will be reviewed as well as the educational method which informed the structure of the course. This method, andragogy, will be described and related to the social work educational process. In the following chapter, the total course plan and curriculum will be described session by session.

II. The Question of Choice in Social Welfare

If social policy is too abstract to thoroughly engage the attention of student learners of social work practice as has been previously suggested, then methods must be found to make it more concrete and relevant to beginning practitioners. To make palpable the importance of social policy, the fact that all practice goals and strategies in some way reflect policy choices as well as personal preferences must be conveyed. If funding is provided to a specific set of services, one form of casework preferred over another, or one educational outcome emphasized and another depreciated, these all represent policy decisions which will have substantial impact on the goals of practice. These practice outcomes ultimately are sanctioned by the total society and the profession, and are reflective of generally agreed-upon social values.

Though all practice strategies and goals reflect social policy alternatives in some way, practitioners nonetheless have considerable personal and professional flexibility to select strategies and desired outcomes based upon their assessment of the case situation and their own personal value perspective.[1] Their willingness to consciously select options

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[1] Worker compliance in bureaucratic organizations is more an exception than a rule. Social workers as well as other employees of large institutions can, if they wish, exercise considerable discretion, frequently subverting the goals of the organization or changing its policies. See, for example: Harold Weissman, Overcoming Mismanagement in the Human Services (San Francisco: Jossey Bass Publishers, 1973), and Alfred O. Hirschman, Exit, Voice and Loyalty (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1974).

which are outside the mainstream of policy alternatives favored by their agency or to fight for inclusion of alternatives by the organization is based upon many factors. While the practitioner's values and sense of personal security are one element of willingness to argue for non-standard policies, the other is the knowledge base that is brought to their practice. There must be some understanding, in other words, of how existing policies affect clients and some sense that there is an injustice which must be corrected. Study of the social policy issues which structure practice choices is therefore essential.

In developing the project, therefore, it seemed important to include as a first step a review of the types of choices which are inherent in the selection of social policy definitions. Considerable variance exists among students of social policy about appropriate definitions and each definition carries with it a set of assumptions about the goals of public social policy intervention in human welfare. For example, should social policy redress inequality? Should it be directed toward maintaining the social order? Should it promote social development through service provision? Or should it primarily focus on the delivery of services of a residual nature? These questions have received considerable attention from the literature of social policy, and ultimately must be considered by all who provide helping services.

To further illustrate a policy choice paradigm, several readings were selected from David Gil's work, which, though somewhat advanced for beginning students, has the

advantage both of an excellent introductory section which reviews numerous alternative definitions of policy, and an outline checksheet of factors which could be used to explicate the various factors included in a policy analysis.[2] Gil's work permitted students to understand the comprehensive approach needed for understanding social policy, while the discussion of alternative definitions enriched by other materials and additional definitions added by the instructor illustrated the range of potential choices available in defining the content of social policy.

III. Factors in Policy Analysis

Gil's "Framework for Social Policy Analysis" provides a broad outline of factors which require consideration in the analysis of policy. Its unfortunate, though unintended, drawback is that it appears to provide equal weight to each factor. While the experienced policy analyst has no difficulty deciding which issues are more or less relevant, less seasoned workers may find the framework somewhat puzzling. Nonetheless the comprehensive paradigm offered by Gil, somewhat modified by the instructor, provides a useful outline for development of topics. For example, though the outline suggests a historical explanation of the *legislative* aspects of the problem, the method used for analysis of runaways focused not only on specific legislative developments, but also on the changing role of youth in the family and in the larger society. This approach demanded intensive study of changes

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[2] Gil, *Unravelling Social Policy*, pp. 33-36.

in values related to child rearing and children's rights, as well as a historical perspective on the status of youth in the family.

IV. Historical Perspectives

A historical perspective was provided primarily by Joseph Kett and several other historians of children and youth.[3] Kett's contribution in particular focuses on the idea that contemporary attitudes toward adolescents are relatively recent. In particular he provides insight on changes in adolescent dependence on the family which have occurred in the last hundred and fifty years. In the recent past, Kett maintains, adolescents, while having formal responsibility to parents similar to that of contemporary youth, nonetheless exercised considerably more autonomy in their relationship to the family.

Parents, while having the power to unilaterally exercise almost complete authority by law, were nonetheless constrained since children not only made an economic contribution to the family at a relatively early age, but also,

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[3]Joseph Kett, "History of Age Grouping in America," in Youth: Transition to Adulthood, A Report of the Panel on Youth of the President's Science Advisory Committee (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974), pp. 9-29. Also see: Robert H. Bremner, ed., Children and Youth in America: A Documentary History (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1970-71), 2 vols.; John Demos, A Little Commonwealth: Family Life in Plymouth Colony (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970); Lloyd deMause, ed., The History of Childhood (New York: Harper & Row, 1974); and Joseph F. Kett, "Adolescence and Youth in Nineteenth-century America," David J. Rothman, "Documents in Search of a Historian: Toward a History of Children and Youth in America," and John Demos, "Developmental Perspectives on the History of Childhood," in Theodore K. Rabb and Robert J. Rotberg, The Family in History: Interdisciplinary Essays (New York: Harper & Row, 1971).

particularly in agrarian communities, were more likely to be supervised by older youths rather than by parents. Youths between eight and nine and twenty-one were seen as a homogeneous age group. This arrangement changed dramatically with the twentieth-century development of age-graded classes in schools and full-year educational programs. Development of a formal system of age segregation contributed to sharper divisions in the youth culture and released older children both from contact with and responsibility for younger children. Parenthetically, it also created the pre-conditions for a teenage culture. Similarly, as the family delegated more responsibility to the community for socialization of its young through public institutions, the family itself became less competent to provide training and supervision. The emergence of a juvenile justice system was a direct reflection of the community's awareness that families could no longer resolve the behavioral problems of its young.

Exposure to historical analysis of the situation of adolescent youth was an important constituent of the course in that it provided students with insight into the nature, direction, and process of change. Historical study also enabled students to study the relationship between changes in the economy, the educational system, and the family as interrelated factors in the socialization of adolescents. Hence the idea of changes in social, economic and technological factors which affected policy could be introduced, preparing students to understand the changing nature of values and social expectations relating to youth.

V. Values and Social Policy

Still another area of content which developed the themes of change and choice was the issue of values and their relationship to practice and policy objectives. To illustrate this issue Worsfold's philosophic perspective on the rights of adolescents was selected.[4] Worsfold's article utilizes John Rawls' Theory of Justice as a basis for conceptualizing the question of rights in relation to children.[5] Worsfold's analysis provides a basis for allotting considerably more autonomy in personal choice and freedom than traditional values allow. Worsfold's position differs substantially from conventional perspectives on children's rights since it challenges the notion that children lack competence or a sense of justice sufficiently developed to make decisions on their own behalf. Quoting Rawls, Worsfold notes, for example, that "paternalistic intervention [in the affairs of children] must be justified by the evident failure or absence of reason and will," and when used "must be guided by the individual's own settled preferences and interests insofar as they are not irrational."[6] Consequently, to the extent possible (determined by the child's development and reason), children should have the right to "act according to a personal

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[4] Victor R. Worsfold, "A Philosophical Justification of Children's Rights," Harvard Educational Review 44 (February 1974):142-147.

[5] John Rawls, A Theory of Justice (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1972).

[6] Worsfold, "A Philosophic Justification of Children's Rights," p. 154.

conception of his or her own best interests, but not at the expense of others."[7] Worsfold's conception provides that children's rights are inviolate and that the decision for removing rights must be made on the basis of the child's capacity to reason. Thus, "children have a right to make just claims and adults must be responsive to these claims." This conception of the just society, if widely accepted, would lead to a change in attitude on the part of adults. In according rights to children the theory makes adults more accountable to children.[8]

The purposive introduction of the Rawlsian view into the curriculum was designed to provide a basis for helping students re-conceptualize social policy toward children and for disclosing the elements of choice which a "radical" value position permits. The anticipated outcome of this aspect of the program was that students would be motivated to reconsider and discuss their own value perspectives. This effort seemed pertinent since the value perspective one uses in assessing practice options determines: a) the status of the client, whether his or her behavior represents a departure from some normative standard, b) the nature of the social measures which the worker supports or seeks to change, and c) the perspective taken in relation to official agencies involved in managing deviant offenders.

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[7]Ibid., p. 151.

[8]Ibid., p. 157.

VI. Social Science and Social Policy

Though labelling theory is not often utilized by social workers, its insights are central if humanistic concerns are to guide policy analysis. Special emphasis was therefore allotted to this perspective and the role that social institutions play in labelling and defining deviance. From the perspective of policy analysts an understanding of the processes through which conditions come to be perceived as requiring social intervention are particularly important.

The interactionist perspective holds that "deviance is in the eye of the beholder." For deviance to become a social fact "somebody must perceive an act, person, situation or event as a departure from social norms, must categorize that perception, must report that perception to others, must get them to accept this definition of the situation, and must obtain a response that conforms to this definition."[9] Edwin Schur, whose work on delinquency was particularly relevant to the purposes of the workshop, notes that "Delinquency cannot simply be taken as a given to be studied and dealt with. On the contrary it is a legislative and social construct the nature and scope of which are subject to our determinations."

Commenting further on the delinquency label, he notes that it "has been greatly overused . . . as a convenient

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[9] Martin S. Weinberg, ed., Deviance: The Interactionist Perspective, 2nd ed. (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1973), p. vii.

catchall to avoid openly facing our values."[10] Thus labels are convenient forms of categorizing "deviant" persons but only at the cost of oversimplifying behavior. They also prevent society from perceiving the normative content of behavior and prescribe punitive actions for whole classes of individuals. Schur alleges that labelling prevents society from thinking through the conditions which are labelled and devising appropriate actions. Thus he concludes, "It is much easier to call offenders 'problem girls' or 'female delinquents' than to carefully explore the meaning of adolescent sexuality and running away from home, and to think through just how we ought to respond to these actions."[11] He further alleges that delinquent youth are essentially no different from non-delinquent youth except for the fact that they have been processed by the juvenile justice system. Therefore all youths may at some time perform delinquent acts, but since they are not caught or not judicially processed their deviance remains essentially a private matter and their foray into deviant activities will have no lasting social or personal impact. Schur argues that policies are needed which accommodate society to a wider range of acceptable behaviors and concludes that universal programs which do not single out some youth for special attention but rather are designed to fit the need for services to all youths are an appropriate response.

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[10]Edwin Schur, Radical Non Intervention (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1975), p. 6.

[11]Ibid., p. 6.

The perspective offered by Schur and others in the interactionist school provides a powerful tool for policy analysis, since its ideas interface with contemporary social service delivery system theory. Thus, Schur's recommendation for a universal system which does not infringe upon personal identity is logically consistent with and similar to Kahn's perspectives on personal social services available as a social utility to all.[12]

Kahn, advocating a shift in the residual, categorical structure of contemporary social services notes the tendency to "attack the users of social services as in some way morally inadequate" and argues that "citizen and social service consumer become synonymous terms in the industrial and post-industrial world."[13] Kahn's argument, increasingly echoed by others concerned about social welfare policy, is that users of social services in contemporary society include virtually everyone. Use of social services is linked not only to poverty, crime, delinquency and dependency, but is also associated with many of the normative features of contemporary living. Kahn therefore urges consideration of a social service system based upon the idea of social investment and stresses the provision of a universal social minimum:

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[12]Services delivered as social utilities would conceivably be viewed as part of a larger scheme of social investment. Adolescents, for example, would be eligible for these services regardless of income or condition. In short, they would not need to become involved with courts or police in order to become eligible for publicly supported programs.

[13]Alfred Kahn, Social Policy and Social Services (New York: Random House, 1973), p. 17.

> Universalism as an idea is appealing to people with democratic convictions. It breaks away from poor law notion that only the inadequate, the failures, need the resources of the social welfare system. . . . Universalism also departs from the residual notion that social services are temporary and needed only in time of special stress or catastrophe. It encourages constant updating of social services in the light of social change. It recognizes the large part that social services play in the economy and manpower strategy of any society. It offers leverage to assure that social services are quality services: where services are for the poor or only for the 'unworthy', one cares little for making them attractive. Where they may serve anyone they must meet the standards expected of any general communal provision.[14]

These conceptualizations, touching upon problems of historical change, social provision, stigma, and values, formed the basis for the curriculum of the course. Reference to the course outline and bibliography in Appendix A illustrates the specific readings which were used to help students develop an understanding of this perspective as a basis for discussion of the policy questions and issues of importance to adolescents.

VII. Objectives of the Course

Though the course was designed around analysis of one policy area, the problem of runaway youth, the overall purpose was to help students understand basic concepts of policy analysis and develop the ability to apply them to practice. The primary objectives were then to help students: a) perform a policy analysis of runaway youth services, b) understand the principles involved in utilizing this approach, and c) integrate the principles learned in a way which encourages application to practice.

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[14] Ibid., p. 79.

VIII. Principles and Practice

The specific practice principle conceived as the organizing framework of the course was: Changes in values and life styles often create new social arrangements which promote inequality where it was not previously experienced or perceived. Where this occurs, practice should be directed toward focusing attention on the new situations, identifying appropriate remedies, and promoting positive change. Consequently, social workers are commended to direct their attention toward widening opportunity where inappropriate constraints on personal choice exist.

Social workers therefore must be able to discriminate between protection and unfair constraint. In the case of youths involved with the police and judicial systems, this distinction is particularly important since there is considerable documentation that these institutions often function inadequately, and by stigmatizing and labelling youths, further propel them into a self-destructive trajectory. The judicial system is also particularly prone to retain outdated values and labels which defer reconsideration of the nature of the behavior being adjudicated.

In the case of runaway youths, current definitions of the action appear to be out of phase with the contemporary youth scene.[15] The changing texture of contemporary values,

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[15] The propensity of social workers and legislators concerned about youth to define _conditions_ as _problems_ requiring intervention was well documented recently by Margaret Rosenheim in "Notes on Normalizing Juvenile Nuisances," _Social Service Review_ 50 (June 1976):177-93.

new life styles and new concepts of appropriate adolescent behavior require re-definition of normative categories which place youths who must leave home or those that choose the option freely at a considerable disadvantage.[16]

Consequently social work practitioners must be able to appreciate and support life styles which heretofore have been uncommon or have been considered unacceptable. In the case of youths who leave home, describing them as runaways limits the actions which may be taken in their behalf. Hence new definitions such as "independent minor" must be introduced into law as acceptable alternatives. Once entering the realm of acceptability, these new definitions and laws may create the climate for the emergence of special services and helping alternatives which provide real assistance.

IX. Method of Instruction

1. Format of Course

Conceptual framework. In planning the format of the course, the principles of andragogy, an educational method for adult learning, were used as guidelines, as were insights obtained from reviewing the work of other teachers of social policy analysis. Andragogy in contrast to pedagogy assumes that: a) the adult learner's self-concept as a motivated and self-directed learner is critical to the educational process.[17] Adult learners therefore require a different teaching style,

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[16] In a previous paper I have discussed this problem in some depth; see Stephen Antler, "The Independent Minor: A New Problem for Social Service," 1974 (See Appendix D).

[17] Malcolm S. Knowles, The Modern Practice of Adult Education (New York: Association Press, 1970).

one that builds upon the adult's concept of self and which encourages individual and group inquiry. The second assumption of andragogy is that adult learners possess a repertoire of skill and experience which provide resources for learning. Respect for the student's perception, experience and knowledge is therefore important to the teaching-learning process. The third major assumption of this method is that adults have a different time perspective than younger learners. While children are willing to defer applying new knowledge, adult learners seek to immediately apply new skills and insights.

Adults as learners therefore want to be accountable for their own learning and can be motivated if given a share in the planning and teaching of curriculum. This principle, motivation through involvement in setting the direction of the educational experience, is an important feature of andragogy.

The role of the teacher using this method is also considerably different than in using traditional pedagogical methods. In andragogy, "the teacher's role is re-defined as that of a procedural technician, resource person, co-inquirer; he (she) is more a catalyst than an instructor, more a guide than a wizard."[18]

The design of the andragological course follows a consistent pattern, since the emphasis is on student involvement, self-learning, and group problem-solving. Consequently,

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[18]U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Social and Rehabilitation Service, A Trainer's Guide to Andragogy, rev. ed. (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1973).

use of this method requires more limited use of the traditional lecture format and a greater emphasis on placing the learner in a more active role, through experiential techniques such as group discussion, role playing, simulations, field projects and exercises, and student-led sessions.

2. Design of Course

Guided by the methods of andragogy, the course was planned as a policy analysis workshop. Its purpose as understood by the students was to "explore the situation" of youths not living at home. The field component, interviews with youths who had run away or were currently not living at home, was included in the project as an essential learning exercise to promote student involvement.

A unique aspect of the course was that it relied on a single policy question as a subject for the entire class. This design is markedly different than other social policy courses reported in social work journals.

In reported efforts students are ordinarily encouraged to choose their own policy issue with each student working individually on his or her own project. There are, however, advantages to conducting a single-issue policy course.

First, the many aspects of the problem can be divided for study into several sub-sections. Each student group then has the responsibility to report back to the class after exploring the aspect of the problem assigned. Since more manpower is dedicated to work on the problem, a deeper, more insightful analysis is possible. Second, in discussion

everyone is involved more or less equally, since the policy questions are applicable to the work of the entire class. Consequently, there is opportunity to build group cohesion, develop group consensus, and apply the entire group's attention to one issue. Finally the conclusions and alternatives agreed upon at the termination of the course have applicability to everyone in the program since all were involved in developing the data and analyzing its significance together.

In conclusion, the curriculum was organized around a contemporary social science perspective and included theory about social service delivery systems. Both literatures were related to a preferred value perspective which was then communicated to students as a conception for evaluating practice within a policy context. The methodology used to communicate this perspective was adopted from principles of the theory of andragogy. Thus, the educational process was constructed to conform to student learning needs, and a related, participatory, problem-solving, discussion-centered climate was consciously developed. Consequently, students' willingness to consider unfamiliar perspectives was enhanced.

Chapter III

PROGRAM OPERATION

In this chapter the process through which the course was accepted into the school's curriculum will be discussed. The final conception of the course, including readings, discussion topics and lecture subjects will be described and related to concerns about learning social policy conceptual skills noted in Chapter II. The field component, a critical element in course execution, will be explained as well as some of the problems in implementation which demanded revisions in curriculum plans. Finally the course, as it was conducted, will be described session by session.

I. Obtaining Organizational Approval

The procedure which is usually followed when listing a course in the social welfare curriculum at the university where the course was to be taught ordinarily involves comment and approval from members of the relevant concentration which will list the course, as well as the Dean. Three concentrations currently constitute the program units of the organization: intervention, social strategies, and policy planning, research and administration (PPRA). Since the course fell into the general area of the PPRA concentration, a submission to that faculty was required. Though the faculty members sanctioned listing the course without in-depth discussion, the reason for the decision was not based upon the course's relationship to overall curriculum requirements. The concentration lacks a set of tangible objectives which can be translated into action, hence the basis for many decisions bears little relationship to the unclear organizational

goals.[1] In this situation, though the course was obviously within the major areas of concentration direction and potentially a valuable addition to the curriculum, the primary reasons for its inclusion bore little relationship to these factors. Rather several other factors were of primary importance: first, the course did not appear to duplicate or conflict with other offerings within the concentration, hence no other faculty member's area of competence or interest was threatened. Second, since there were no clear objectives or new program needs requiring development, there were no powerful claimants to the investigator's workload which would have required re-direction of effort. Had the concentration members desired to fill out other areas of the curriculum, opposition might have been expressed to a specialized course. Third, the concentration's tendency is to accommodate faculty interests rather than challenge them.[2] Consequently, though

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[1]Conventional organization theory tends to focus on the negative aspects of organizations without reasonably explicit goals, though here I have pointed to at least one positive: the capacity for individual autonomy inherent in an organization's lack of tangible goals. For the organization, however, the goal displacement inherent in such random, non-rational processes is a real danger. See, for example, W. Keith Warner and A. Eugene Havens, "Goal Displacement and the Intangibility of Organizational Goals," Administrative Science Quarterly 12 (March 1968):539-55. In these cases, system maintenance tends to dominate the concerns of relevant actors.

[2]In this case, the system which is being protected may be the cherished autonomy of individual faculty. The method for its continuance involves meeting as many faculty needs as possible through a system of exchanges. See, for example, Peter M. Blau, Exchange and Power in Social Life (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1964), pp. 14-19.

the faculty did not look carefully at the course materials presented (which incidentally were more extensive than most of the course descriptions submitted for approval), approval was a relatively foregone conclusion.

II. Plan for the Course

The curriculum outline which guided the development of the program proposed that the first third of the semester accomplish the following objectives:

1. Through conscious use of the principles of andragogy, develop a learning climate which supported self-directed student inquiry. This required several steps: a) attain student participation in outlining the content to be covered, b) develop a relaxed, informal atmosphere which encouraged sharing and participation, c) relate the content of the course to student learning objectives, and d) based upon student interest and capacity, form work groups to develop areas of related knowledge for inclusion in discussion.

2. Introduce basic content about the definition of social policy, its relationship to social work practice, and a basic method for inquiry into specific social policy questions.

To meet these objectives, students were introduced to diverse definitions of social policy which included an exploration of the social service delivery implications of each viewpoint. The work of several analysts was presented in order to illustrate the many service perspectives which can evolve from varying definitions. Titmuss, for example, indicates that a primary purpose of social policy is to promote

social integration. This can be done, he argues, through a system of universal services not conditioned to crisis situations.[3] Implied in this definition is a criticism of the residual social service system which American policy analysts are most familiar with and which tends to emphasize crisis management, social control and protection.

In order to introduce a structure for evaluating the purposes and structure of social policy, David Gil's work was used as a resource.[4] In particular, Gil provides a broad outline for social policy study which details the factors which require consideration in evaluating the elements of a social policy area.

The second segment of the course was directed to increasing students' awareness of the range of issues which temper the life experience of adolescents who leave home. The primary method for introducing this issue was through the use of field interviews of youths who had left home at some time in the past or were currently living away from home. A relatively unstructured guide was developed by students and the instructor, and several training sessions were held to familiarize the class with it and to prepare them to engage in interviews.[5] Training methods for helping the class prepare for their contacts with adolescents included: 1) Role

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[3]Richard M. Titmuss, Commitment to Welfare, 2nd ed. (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1976).

[4]Gil, Unravelling Social Policy.

[5]See Appendix E.

play enacted in class followed by commentary by the class and the instructor, and 2) Individual sessions with each student to provide supervision around interview technique. During the sessions following preparation for interviewing, occasional discussions were held concerning the progress of interviewing and the problems which students were encountering.

Following preparation for field interviewing, the content of the course was directed to discussion and analysis of the structure of the adolescent condition and description of general social policy affecting young people. In this context runaways and delinquents could be seen as subgroups of the larger population of all adolescents who, while they clearly had problems in addition to those normally encountered by youths, were nonetheless further disadvantaged by their involvement with judicial agencies. Elaboration of these issues set the stage for investigation of the question of justice for juveniles, a contemporary dilemma which has received considerable attention from various reform-oriented organizations as well as scholars.

For the past two decades the juvenile justice system has been the subject of considerable criticism. As its function has expanded, the system has increasingly been called upon to control essentially non-criminal behavior. Labelled juvenile status crimes, these acts are an object of court intervention only for minors. The concept of "status crimes" reflects considerable confusion about how to manage the many children who either are out of parental control or who refuse

to submit to accepted canons of adolescent behavior. Runaways are one group which fall into this category. Consequently, they are consistently arrested and returned to their families as a result of police and judicial intervention.

In order to assess this problem and provide some insight into the policy problems which needed attention, the group was next exposed to discussion and analysis of the values and goals implied in current attitudes and policies toward adolescents. An alternative perspective was provided through discussion of the value perspective toward juveniles suggested by the work of John Rawls.[6] As interpreted by Victor Worsfold, Rawls' perspective was introduced to challenge students' conventional ideas about social policies toward children and the family.[7]

This discussion was buttressed by discussion of the relationship of labelling theory to the problems of delinquency. Discussion of the philosophic perspective of John Rawls opened students to the notion that deviance is a constructed reality. Additional reinforcement was provided by presentation of social psychological perspectives which indicate how realities can be created and applied to individuals. These social perspectives offered a potentially powerful method for changing students' ideas about the nature of the problem of runaways.

The final third of the program was dedicated to

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[6] Rawls, A Theory of Justice.

[7] Worsfold, "A Philosophical Justification of Children's Rights."

student reports on the issues assigned early in the semester as well as upon the interviews which students had completed with adolescents who had left home. Its content therefore elaborated professional and institutional responses to runaways, the assumptions of current social research, and the relationship of the research to public policy. At the conclusion of the course, the class was to discuss the intended and unintended effects of public policy and of social work practice. Finally, alternative policies and practices were to be recommended and specified.

III. Field Component

Special mention should be made of the field component of the project since in many ways this was the most exciting and the most problematic feature of the course. Prior to conducting the course, the instructor conducted approximately ten interviews with youths identified by local youth service agencies as previous or current runaways. From insights obtained through these interviews, a questionnaire several pages in length was prepared as a guide for student interviews which were to be done by those taking the course.

The interview guide was designed to elicit demographic information such as age, family composition, income and occupation, as well as to probe for reasons for leaving home. In addition, the guide sought to help students raise questions about the activities of helping institutions such as schools, social agencies and police, and the role they played in shaping interviewees' experiences both prior to leaving home and afterwards. Finally the guide raised questions

about family relationships, parental attitudes, and the desires of the youth being interviewed.

Prior to the course, meetings were held with approximately seven agencies which collectively operate about thirty different youth service programs in as many different sites. In each case agency cooperation was requested and secured, and procedures established for referring students. Consequently, it was assumed that implementation of the interview program would proceed smoothly and little time would be wasted in arranging the approximately one hundred forty appointments that would be permitted by the expected course enrollment. This proved to be an overly sanguine assessment. The problems encountered in developing this aspect of the project were many and complex. Since several of the agencies were decentralized, local operating units did not feel obligated to commitments made on other levels despite the fact that they had been consulted and the project explained by the instructor. In other instances agencies grew concerned about confidentiality despite reassurances that it would be respected. In some agencies we were told that no runaways were willing to be interviewed. This was often a consequence of how the project was explained since agency staff often could not define a runaway. Frequently staff were unavailable to assist and occasionally staff changes had occurred and new staff were unwilling to follow through on commitments made by predecessors. Despite these difficulties the students managed to complete about sixty interviews, most of which were done through agencies that had earlier agreed to

the project, though many were developed out of the students' own resourcefulness.

The difficulties of inter-agency coordination of programs conducted out of the school were greater than anticipated, since as the agencies did not feel committed to the educational goals of the project, and had weak commitments to the school, it was difficult to establish a cooperative relationship. While no broad generalizations are possible based on this limited experience, it does appear to represent an illustration of the value of exchange theory in viewing inter-agency efforts.[8] Had the agencies felt that the project would lead to positive changes specifically in their interests, such as a funding proposal, they might have been more inclined to offer other than token cooperation. It is indeed likely that some agencies perceived the study as a potential threat and were therefore less than enthusiastic about participating.

IV. Course Implementation

The organizational climate and the administrative procedures of the institution are critical to planning for opening course sessions. Many students "shop" for courses during the first week or two of the semester until the add-drop period ends. Therefore, students attending the second session may differ in composition somewhat from the first session. Consequently, critical information about content and course procedures is best repeated for students entering

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[8]Blau, Exchange and Power in Social Life.

at the second session. In view of these factors, the evaluative tests were administered during the second session to insure that all students taking the course would receive it at the same time.

Session I

The opening session was designed to establish a warm, friendly climate for the course, familiarize students with the curriculum and discuss the learning objectives of each of the students. Many of the students expressed interest in the course because they would have the opportunity to interview youths. This was felt to be an innovative and interesting course feature which would add depth to the discussion of the runaway situation. The instructor noted that during the semester, the class would analyze the runaway issue from a variety of perspectives and that out of this experience students would learn some policy analysis skills which could apply to many situations. Of particular interest was the suggestion that we would focus on the role of values and the concept of outcomes in practice and policy as important variables for social workers to understand.

For future discussion a mimeo with several different definitions of policy was distributed, as well as the bibliography and course outline.[9] It was stressed that the bibliography and course outline could be modified and were to be regarded as a guide rather than a firm plan for the course. This enabled students to discuss the course and feel freer

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[9] See Appendix A.

about offering suggestions and recommendations for changes. Most importantly, it reinforced the climate of openness, sharing, and mutual respect which was important to the kind of interchange required for this type of program.

Session II

The test instruments were distributed and filled out during the session. Two instruments were used, a schedule designed to measure changes in attitudes and practices toward adolescent runaways, and a "data base," designed to secure the usual demographic information about subjects. Administration of the test took about two hours and left some time for further discussion. The interest of students was piqued by the test instrument which apparently stimulated considerable thought. For some of the students, the idea that a broad range of alternative strategies could be drawn from to deal with this problem was a new one which had not previously been considered. Several noted that most of the policy courses they had noticed in the catalogue were not directed toward analyzing a single problem, but were described as broad overviews of social policy. The educational decision to focus on a single-issue policy analysis as a subject for the course interested students.

Runaway programs were then contrasted to other possible programs for adolescents which are based on the desire of society to promote social development and integration rather than control. Schools, for example, have a social investment rationale but are the only universal service commonly available for adolescents. The question of why social

programs typically are directed toward limited populations for limited purposes was then introduced. Discussion indicated that students accepted the idea that the problems of runaways were probably not highly differentiated from those of many, if not most, adolescents. Yet the responses of runaways were by definition problematic and perhaps more threatening to society. Thus the motivation for social measures is reinforced by forces which demand control of behavior which is potentially threatening. Hence the public policy agenda was seen as often guided by political forces which forced direct reaction to problems rather than thoughtful exploration of context.

Comment. Though allowing time for only brief discussion, this session exposed the considerable learning resources which existed within the group. Several of the students had some special knowledge or experience with adolescents which helped them contribute to the class. Many of the students stated that the evaluative instrument was an interesting and challenging exercise which stimulated thinking about the issue in ways they had not considered previously. The after-effect of the test was an animated and wide-ranging discussion. Though seemingly disjointed, this discussion did have a logic. The test required students to reconsider the basic question of how to define and intervene in a problem situation.

Session III

During this session the students and the instructor focused on the purpose of social policy toward runaways.

Agreeing that the goal of policy was both maintenance of the family unit and protection of the minor from exploitation, the class then discussed the social strategies used to foster this end. In evaluating these strategies a continuum was drawn for heuristic purposes. The continuum proceeded from social development strategies (i.e., education and social incentive programs) to treatment modalities (psychotherapy, casework) and finally to social control (police and courts). In discussing runaway strategy the class found that treatment and social control were the dominant modalities in contemporary programs.

Discussion then returned to the question of how one defines the classic runaway. Using a four-part chart denoting two variables, parental permission and the youths' access to resources, the class observed that the pre-condition for becoming a runaway involved with the court or juvenile justice system was that a parent had to take out a complaint against the child (see Table 1). If the parent chose not to do this and the youth has resources, then he or she is simply independent. If there is no parental complaint and the minor has no resources, he is likely to be labelled a vagrant or

	R	$\underline{R}$
P	Ind. Minor	Neglect or J.D.
$\underline{P}$	Runaway	PINS, Runaway J.D., Vagrant

P = Parental Permission   R = Resources

$\underline{P}$ = No Parental Permission $\underline{R}$ = No Resources

PINS. In this manner, students recognized that the label has little to do with the behavior, at least in the judicial sense. This discussion also suggested the possibility that a youth could be an independent minor living away from home and have no deviant identification.

Discussion also developed the idea of how social services are triggered for adolescent youth. Residual services are instituted when a problem situation emerges, while institutional services are available to all adolescents. The latter system identifies all adolescents as having similar attributes whether or not they happen to be in trouble with family, school or police. Similarly, the latter system has no stigma attached to its users while the residual approach usually does.

The discussion was made more graphic for students by delineating the various residual programs directed at youth, and illustrating their problem-oriented focus (i.e., drug and alcohol, anti-drop-out, delinquency prevention, remedial education, etc.).

An alternate approach not necessarily directed toward solving the problems of youthful acting out was suggested. This approach might be directed toward understanding and acting upon the universal stresses experienced by all adolescents as members of families and as members of society. Thus a two-prong approach might be considered, one aspect of which attends to the needs of adolescents while the second focuses on the problems of families. The latter aspect might focus on the stresses experienced by the family and propose

policy changes designed to ease these stresses and provide support for the family.[10] The interests of adolescents, however, may be somewhat distinct from those of the family and require separate approaches designed to promote growth, provide appropriate satisfactions now lacking in the adolescent experience, and assist youths in their inevitable movement toward greater independence.[11]

Comment. This was an exciting session. The students were very involved and animated by the approach the class had adopted. Unused to thinking in system terms about the nature of practice, students were opened to new methods for considering problems.

Session IV

This session commenced with a brief review lecture to reiterate and underscore the central points made in the previous two sessions. The use of a review lecture appeared to be particularly important since often the most important concepts were disclosed during discussion and might have been overlooked if not restated. In particular, the concept that runaways were a sub-category of a much larger group was reemphasized. Considering adolescents holistically as persons who were becoming adults, as parts of families, and as

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[10]In this case the idea of family policy as proposed by Urie Bronfenbrenner, in "The Challenge of Social Change to Public Policy and Developmental Research," April 1975 (Mimeographed), was offered as an example.

[11]See, for example, Robert Gemignani, Youth Service Systems (Washington, D.C.: Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Youth Development and Delinquency Prevention Administration, 1973).

participants in specialized institutions, widened the range of potential interventions from those disclosed by considering merely the runaway. Intervention from this viewpoint could then be considered for all adolescents, for families, or for some other condition other than the individual's deviant status.

To deepen understanding of the relationship between the policy-making process and problem identification, the question of why concern about runaways has recently developed was introduced. Was this new public concern a response to a problem which is indeed growing in scope? Did it present some new social threat which generated increased crime or was it a reaction to social changes which challenge deeply held values about the family and the role of children in it?

The suggestion that attention to runaways might be viewed as an attempt to apply social control measures to problems of family dissolution was considered. If this context is applicable, then control measures applied to runaways may represent a refusal to accept rapid changes in values which considerably devalue the family. Adult expectations, always somewhat out of phase with youthful drives toward independence, might then be seen as based upon values which are not shared by many adolescents. Since little research has been done on this subject, no conclusion could be reached. Nonetheless the group perceived that laws and practices directed at runaways may reflect an ideal concept of the family which is no longer appropriate to changed conditions.

This discussion introduced the idea that value changes

and changes in normative standards ordinarily precede changes in law and that there is usually a transition period during which an attempt is made to act as if the changes have not occurred and inappropriate goals and expectations remain operative.

For much of this session, Gil's framework for policy analysis proved useful.[12] Intensive discussion of the relationship between causal theory and preferred social strategies resulted from use of the framework. Three ideas of causality were introduced, individual, institutional and economic.

Starting with the pre-conception that the individual is somehow at fault usually leads to strategies designed to change the character structure or psyche of the individual. Consequently, psychodynamic theories are the most applicable theoretical approaches. The strategies used would include psychotherapy, casework or group work.

If the fault is seen as emanating from the failure of institutions, i.e., deterioration of the family, inadequate schools, inappropriate social services or overzealous law enforcement, then the appropriate strategies stress institutional reform or policy change. Applicable theory would emphasize organizational change as well as social policy modification.

If, finally, the fault was seen to lie in the economic or social structure, still other strategies would

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[12] Gil, Unravelling Social Policy, pp. 34-35.

apply. Included among these would be radical changes in the distribution of wealth and power, changes in social expectations about the population in question and development of a new sense of participation in the society. From sociology, the interactionist approach might be most applicable for this analysis. If derived from social welfare literature, the work of Titmuss might be most applicable.

Session V

This session was designed to familiarize students with basic techniques of interviewing in preparation for contacts with runaways. Using the interview guide, techniques such as role play and simulation combined with lecture and discussion helped to animate the class. The role-playing stimulated useful discussion and helpful criticisms of technique. As a result of this session, several changes were recommended in the interview guide and were subsequently incorporated. Such frequent consultation with the class helped to sustain involvement in the project and contributed to the feeling of participation in planning and execution which were critical to the success of the program.

In the interval between sessions five and six individual consultations were scheduled with each student to arrange for agency contacts and interviews. In each case the instructor made the first call to the agency, introduced the student and made arrangements for follow-up. It was felt that this would insure more cooperation from agency personnel.

Session VI

The purpose of this session was to introduce the

concept that the role and status of youth vis-a-vis the family and society was constantly changing and evolving toward increased autonomy and independence from the family. Hence it was planned that the discussion of historic shifts in social perspectives and life styles for youth was to be joined with a discussion of contemporary debates about the rights of youth.[13]

Before the class proceeded to this question, a discussion began of two articles which had appeared during the previous week in the New York Times.[14] Since many of the students had read the articles, related them to class content, and brought them in for discussion, I felt this was a sign of their growing involvement in the subject matter of the course.

An article by Christopher Lasch on inappropriate use of psychoanalytic methods criticized the use of psychotherapy as a technique for controlling deviance, claiming that such

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[13]On the history of children and the family, see Philippe Aries, Centuries of Childhood: A Social History of Family Life (New York: Random House, 1962); deMause, The History of Childhood; and Kett, "Adolescence and Youth in Nineteenth Century America," Demos, "Developmental Perspectives on the History of Childhood," Rothman, "Documents in Search of a Historian: Toward a History of Children and Youth in America," in Rabb and Rotberg, The Family in History. On children's rights, see Worsfold, "A Philosophical Justification of Children's Rights"; Paul Adams et al., Children's Rights: Toward the Liberation of the Child (New York: Praeger, 1971); Albert E. Wilkerson, ed., The Rights of Children: Emergent Concepts in Law and Society (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1973); and David Gottlieb, ed., Children's Liberation (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1973).

[14]Christopher Lasch, The New York Times, February 28, 1976, and Kenneth Keniston, The New York Times, March 2, 1976.

utilization was far removed from the intentions of early theorists of psychoanalysis. In their view, psychoanalysis could help people who perceived themselves as ill and unhappy and voluntarily requested help. The result of psychiatric intervention might then be changes in self-concept, feelings about the world and one's personal environment or shifts in life goals. Psychoanalysis was therefore an individual strategy for self-realization. Lasch criticized contemporary mental health professionals for their willingness to allow their professional skill and insight to be used for the regulation, classification and treatment of social deviants. He noted that this trend was a disservice to those whose activities were in conflict with society and it implied that all anti-social actions could be regulated through psychological treatment.

Lasch's treatment of this subject had considerable relevance for the class as previously we had discussed that in the case of runaways, there was a growing tendency to explain their actions as a result of emotional malfunctions rather than other possible explanations. Hence social agencies have emphasized provision of counselling services and largely excluded other possibilities.

The article by Keniston, on the other hand, claimed that family dissolution was an increasingly common phenomenon and that therefore fewer and fewer persons were available for child-rearing. Claiming that essentially economic forces were involved in the rising divorce rates and in the increasing frequency of two-parent working families, Keniston argued

that society needed to create public policies which recognize the efforts of parents and the needs of children. If this is not done, Keniston maintains that the environment for raising children will progressively deteriorate.

Keniston provided a useful perspective to the material students were assigned to read for that session, which analyzed changes in the status and experience of youth in the family. For this purpose, the work of Joseph Kett was illustrative.[15] In Kett's monograph, the history of age grouping in America is described and the creation of the modern teenage culture is analyzed.

Kett's research suggested that until the latter part of the nineteenth century children from about age six through age twenty-one were part of a relatively homogeneous age grouping loosely described as "youth." In general this group was characterized by rather close peer relations, but not necessarily close parental ties. Supervision of younger children was usually undertaken by older ones while both parents were otherwise employed. Not until compulsory education developed later in the century with an age-graded classification system was there movement toward a distinct youth culture characterized by narrow identification with peers. Previous to this time, Kett claimed that youth had considerable independence from their families, since supervision was often provided by older youths. For older youths there was minimal supervision since their responsibilities kept them

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[15]Kett, "History of Age Grouping in America," in Youth: Transition to Adulthood, pp. 9-29.

relatively independent of their families. Thus, Kett argues, the modern family actually requires closer attention by adults to the activities of children than previous historical periods. This closer attention and more intensive supervision, he implies, may be at variance with the developmental needs of adolescents for independence, though consistent with those of younger children.

The Keniston article provided background to the discussion following, which surfaced the broad question of children's rights. The purpose of this discussion was to induce analysis of what constituted appropriate control of the lives of children and adolescents. This question is particularly applicable to the problems of youths who leave home since state actions essentially control where they may live. While a thorough explication of the children's rights perspective was not possible within the time permitted, the students had been asked to read a selection which applied the Rawlsian perspective to children's rights.[16] Many questions emerged, most of them skeptical about the applicability of the concept of fairness and self-determination to young children. As many of the students in the class were in their late twenties and thirties and more than half were themselves parents, there was a tendency to personalize the discussion and to use relations with their own children as examples. While encouraging this discussion, I also suggested that the personal perspective had to be expanded to consider the treatment

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[16] Worsfold, "A Philosophic Justification of Children's Rights," pp. 142-147.

of children by legal institutions as well. Nonetheless it was difficult to move away from the anecdotal level. Despite this inevitable problem, the Rawlsian principle of justice as fairness had apparently been absorbed as the students struggled through the discussion of its applicability to their own lives.

Finally, several students agreed that the use of parental authority was so ingrained that it was often difficult to consider the child as a person having rights which were innate and separable from those of the parents. They later concurred that the experience of discussing these questions in class had led to attempts to modify their own relationships with children at home. This process was found by students to be confusing, though often gratifying, as their children began to respond in new ways to the conferral of higher status that was associated with the new parental behavior.

Session VII

This session was conducted without the presence of the instructor, who was presenting a paper at an out-of-town conference. Arrangements had therefore been made to show a film by Frederick Wiseman, entitled High School, which had been selected to illustrate some of the dilemmas of the adolescent experience. For the same session students had been asked to read Coming of Age in America by Edgar Z. Friedenberg, a timely critique of adolescent life.[17] Since the

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[17]Edgar Z. Friedenberg, Coming of Age in America: Growth and Acquiescence (New York: Random House, 1965).

instructor was not present, the students were asked to appoint a convenor to conduct the discussion and to provide a report for the next session on the impressions that the film had made on the class.

Session VIII

The students' report on High School was presented. Using their own experience and recollections of their high school years, the students found they concurred with Wiseman's view of the high school as an oppressive, unjust, stifling institution which sought to teach the values of conformity and patriotism to an uninvolved, alienated audience of skeptical teenagers. Students concurred that a hidden learning agenda of schooling was 1) acceptance of the necessity to follow directions, and 2) respect for authority whether or not it was fairly administered. It appeared that many forgotten resentments of their own surfaced upon seeing the film, and there was considerable discomfort exhibited about the passive role they had played in maintaining a system which they felt continues to hurt their own children. A few participants mentioned that they could observe in their young school age children a loss of the "free spirit" which they had observed in their pre-school period.

At the end of Session VI, the students had expressed interest in reading a paper which I was to present the following week at a conference. Since there were some related policy issues involved, I felt it would be useful to distribute

the paper and discuss it at a subsequent class.[18] The students had therefore read it and remarked that the ease with which child abuse had been adopted as a problem seemed to be consistent with the kind of attention being paid to runaways. Particularly noted was the concept of the "issue-attention cycle" which described the process and alluded to the dynamics of adoption of problem situations for public attention.

Though the objectives for this session had been to analyze specifically the Runaway Youth Act using the background perspective developed over the past few sessions, the students were very uneasy and frustrated about the seeming futility of a critical analysis in the absence of specific strategies for redressing the injustices under discussion. Though in planning for the course this aspect had been left for the last few sessions, it seemed important at this point to initiate discussion of at least one strategy which might be considered by practitioners working on the case level, since students had expressed interest in such techniques.

After reiterating the principle that, in order to help adolescents, their needs for autonomy, independence and fair treatment had to be considered, a concept was presented for discussion which in specific circumstances, primarily with middle class youth, might be a useful method of promoting fair treatment at least within the limits of the family. The concept involves the use of negotiation techniques and

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[18] The paper entitled "The Rediscovery of Child Abuse: Perspectives on an Emerging Social Priority," was presented at the 22nd Annual Program Meeting of the Council on Social Work Education, Philadelphia, 1976.

development of a familial contract which implicitly recognize that adolescents have interests and prerogatives independent of those of the family. Written contracts, negotiated with the participation of all family members, were central to the method's effectiveness, since the written pact could be used as a basis for resolving subsequent disputes. The contracts would spell out both obligations and rights of all family members and would be of relatively limited duration, perhaps six months, to allow for amendment and change.

As this idea was discussed, class members elaborated on it further, noting that while it clearly required more development it might modestly increase the negotiating power of adolescents and produce a more amenable environment for some youths. Conscious of the need for more global strategies as well, several students suggested that in addition to case methods, ideas for legislative changes and a program of community mobilization for change were also needed. Such efforts would focus on changing work laws, insurance laws and other rules which were impediments to economic and social independence for youths. In gaining rights, however, it was recognized that adolescents would also be foregoing certain valuable protections, particularly in the area of contract obligations, which at present cannot be enforced upon anyone under the age of twenty-one. The class felt that while some safeguards were needed for youths, the potential benefits of these revisions might be more valuable than the liabilities created by foregoing special protection.

Session IX

The purpose of this session was to present information on the laws and policies which would apply to runaways on the federal, state and local levels. Several members of the class presented the results of their research.

Federal. The primary federal legislation concerning runaways, The Runaway Youth Act, is of relatively recent origin (1974). This act, which cites as its purpose the reuniting of families and the provision of services to youths not living at home, provides for a number of program approaches. First, it provides for federal funding for the operation of hostels and counselling programs on the local level designed to help runaways. Second, it provides for a national toll-free hot-line through which adolescents who have left home can contact their families. Finally, it provides for research into the causes of running away and the problems encountered by youths in this situation. The act is modestly funded at ten million dollars annually.

State and local. In general, laws passed at the local level provide for youths under specified ages (in New York it is now age sixteen for boys and girls) to be treated as PINS (Persons In Need of Supervision), by the courts and probation service if they run away. In order to be charged under these laws, a parent must make a complaint to a law enforcement agency. Upon parental complaint, the minor may be brought to family court and placed on probation, although in the case of repeated or chronic runaways, the judge may place them in a state training school.

For persons over the age of sixteen, there are no laws regarding runaway behavior, though legally parents remain responsible for the care and maintenance of their children until the age of twenty-one. However, if a youth over age sixteen decides to remain away from home, no legal force can be used to bring him or her home. Of importance, however, is the fact that if a minor lives away from home, the courts usually do not compel the parents to provide financial support. In addition, parents' permission is still required for provision of medical care. Moreover, parents may hold anyone liable who provides shelter to the youth and may sue in a court of law. Since work laws and insurance regulations frequently preclude the possibility of employment for minors, there are, in addition, other handicaps which make it difficult, if not impossible, for minors to live independently for any length of time without tacit or active parental approval and support.

Discussion of these issues led to recognition of the "catch twenty-two" character of laws which, while ostensibly protecting youths from exploitation and abuse, in fact severely disadvantage them. In the case of youths living independently and with parental permission, the laws provide little redress.[19] While conducting interviews, many of the students had encountered youths who either refused to return

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[19] In some cases, youths had been refused re-entry by their families as well as financial aid, while in others, parents have simply not challenged the child's desire to live away from home. In both these instances, the youths may indeed be "push-outs" rather than runaways.

home or whose parents no longer were willing to have them return. In some instances, these individuals were reliant upon friends or relatives for hand-outs since the local welfare department was unwilling to provide financial assistance and the youths were reluctant to bring their families to court. Several students who had encountered youths who were living independently noted that the schools almost uniformly erected roadblocks to continued study once someone was no longer living with responsible adults.

The most striking feature of this session was the clear relationship which emerged between class discussion of theoretical material and the experiences students were having in the field. Many of the students had already encountered the effects of policy decisions in the lives of the youths they were interviewing and recognized these as manifestations of the anachronistic laws under discussion.

Session X

The objective of this session was to explore the values, goals, procedures and strategies of social agencies whose mission is to provide help to youths who leave home. A representative of a temporary residence and of a counselling service for youth were invited to discuss their institutional practices and to offer their perceptions of other services in the field. In addition, a student study group on agency operations had prepared to ask questions and offer their own comments about agency policies and practices based upon their own research.

The agency representatives were quite knowledgeable

about the relation of policy to practice and began their discussion by noting that every client-worker interaction reflects the practice component of a policy. Both representatives felt that the legal restrictions placed upon them severely hampered their capacity to build a trusting relationship with youths who seek them out.

For example, one worker administered a residence which could not accept any youth for service unless there was prior parental consent. She noted that this created problems for youths who did not want their parents to know their whereabouts. For others, the independence expressed by leaving home was mitigated by the need to seek parental approval to receive help. When parents refused permission, the youth often had no other alternative.

While these two agency workers felt that these regulations were inimical to good service, they noted that most other programs did not feel so constrained. Critical of other agencies for their complacency about accepting parental authority, these workers were articulate advocates for increasing the options open to youths leaving home.

In the discussion which followed, several students noted that the perceptions of the two speakers were consistent with the findings which were emerging from their inquiries of agencies. Reference was made to several themes in the readings suggested for this session, including Friedenberg's perception of the second-class status of adolescents

when in contact with organizations and institutions.[20] Redressing this power inequity, it was noted, required not only changed perceptions of appropriate practice on the part of agencies but also modifications of laws and social policies affecting youth and the family.

It was necessary, however, to consider the force of tradition in attempting to change policies which reflected deeply held beliefs about the sanctity and authority of the family. Workers, in order to retain credibility with the youths as clients, could engage in quasi-legal activities to support the youths' desires, but this often leads to confrontations with families and funding agencies. At times, workers could stress advocacy which may result in confrontations, but as one student noted, one could "make advocacy points and wind up not helping the clients."

The outcome of the discussion which followed was an increased perception of the dilemmas confronted by agencies which must operate in an undesirable political environment though staff and administration seek to function as professionals working in the best interests of their clients.

Session XI

The purpose of this session was to review contemporary research into runaway behavior and to illustrate the relationship of social science research to social policy. A student group had reviewed the research and related anecdotal or journalistic literature and prepared an analysis of their

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[20] Friedenberg, Coming of Age in America.

readings. The framework in which the presentation was placed divided the literature into three major categories. The first emphasized the psychological derivation of "flight" and stressed the idea of psychopathology as the primary cause. The second organizing framework emphasized the psychosocial derivation of running away. In this view, the source of the problem is conflict within the family, and faulty communication and relationship patterns predominate. The third framework placed the research into a sociological context and explained juvenile behavior as a reaction to unresponsive social institutions and unrealized role aspirations.

The explanation of derivation of behavior a practitioner implicitly believes largely determines the primary practice methods used and the objectives of intervention. Although there are few proponents of monolithic explanations of behavior in actual practice, the use of such a tripartite framework provides some insight into preferred strategies and the relationship of these strategies to social science behavioral research. Thus, those holding the view that psychopathology is inherent in running away seek to provide analytic psychotherapy in order to alter the deviant characterological patterns which cause the behavior. Holding a psychosocial view causes the practitioner to stress a family treatment model which seeks to change relationship patterns within the family. Similarly, adopting a sociological view suggests social action strategies which seek to alter the social conditions which propel youths into runaway adaptations. In this last view, the practitioner might intervene

in the school to change policies which are unfair and which create problems for the client on whose behalf the intervention is made. Alternatively, the worker might seek to change laws or alter agency policy in ways which benefit adolescents.

While these strategies were presented as pure types, it was recognized that a merger of strategies is both possible and feasible. Thus it is likely that a worker might seek to treat a family while at the same time attempting to alter agency or school policy. However, the relative emphasis placed on alternative styles reveals the ideology of the practitioner. During discussion, the students perceived that the psychopathologic model appears to be dominant both in the research and in the types of strategies preferred by agencies with whom they had consulted.

Comment. The purposes to which alternative explanations of the same behaviors could be used was reinforced during this session, as evidenced by student reactions. One student, for example, had not thought about research as a vehicle for reinforcing ideologies or determining strategies for intervention. Another concluded that the emphasis on psychopathological causation seemed narrow and could not adequately explain the apparent growth in the incidence of runaways. Thus she noted that it would seem unlikely that large numbers of adolescents were suffering from similar reactions to personality difficulties at the same time.

Session XII

This session was devoted to discussion and analysis of the interviews performed by each of the students. Since

the session was scheduled approximately nine weeks after interviewing commenced, students had ample opportunity to complete the five interviews which were required, and prepare written reports on these interviews.

In discussion, students listed a variety of reasons given by youths as to why they left home. About half the sample identified had left at the insistence of their parents, while the remainder had left because of some situation at home which they found intolerable. Aged for the most part between fifteen and seventeen, these youths had experienced physical and sexual abuse, neglect, chronic parental alcoholism or parental mental illness. Some had experienced lack of sufficient freedom because of over-controlling parents, while others found themselves in the midst of continual interparental squabbling which they attempted to mediate. According to the students, many runaways appeared to have had adult responsibilities thrust upon them prematurely with which they were ill-equipped to deal.

Several of the students commented upon, and expressed admiration for, the spirit of many of the youths with whom they had talked. Others criticized the social agencies responsible for providing service for being inaccessible and unsupportive of youths needing help. Finally, several of the older people in the class, particularly those with teenage children, noted that they felt closer to their own children and more responsive and sympathetic to their desires. There appeared to be considerable sympathy for the "runaways," a term about which most felt increasingly uneasy.

The definitional question then arose, with most participants agreeing, that the omnibus term used to describe youths who leave home was inadequate and stigmatizing. The reasons for leaving were too diverse to be categorized under one label. Moreover, in many instances running away had been accomplished with the tacit, if not active, assistance of parents. Concluding that the runaway label clearly disadvantaged youths in schools and other institutional contexts more than it helped them obtain needed services, the class at the next session turned to the question of policy and practice.

Session XII

This session was dedicated to discussing the policy and practice implications of the analytic work of the semester. The primary purpose was to help students develop an integrated framework which allowed them to use the insights obtained during the course of the semester in appropriate and meaningful ways. Consequently, a guideline was offered by the instructor in order to structure the discussion of conclusions and recommendations. The guideline proposed that discussion take place in three phases: first, on the level of direct practice with individuals; second, in relation to organizations and institutions; and, finally, in relation to laws and social policies.

Discussion of individual practice implications focused on the concept of helping reduce the unequal negotiating position of adolescents vis-a-vis their parents and schools where this is appropriate. The role of the worker,

consequently, is to provide help to the youth in structuring relationships with parents and others in ways that allow for the youths' viewpoint to be represented and considered. The "contract" approach suggested earlier in the semester was one such approach, though workers could creatively innovate other methods which might apply to different situations.

In discussing the question of improving the functioning of agencies and organizations which provide services to youths, several issues emerged.

1. The agencies reflect community values about children and their relationships to the families. Attempting to change their procedures without confronting the larger social value questions might not be feasible. Consequently, only limited changes could be expected.

2. Innovating practice strategies designed to be more responsive to adolescents without the sanction, or at least the tacit acceptance, of employing organizations and agencies did not appear feasible.

3. If agencies were to adopt an advocacy approach, considerable work might be done on the level of advocating broad policy changes which could have wide effects on youths.

4. Changes in agency practices required exploration of the practice assumptions common to most helping professions. Emphasis upon therapeutic modalities ordinarily found in most social agencies, while appropriate for some youths, may prevent these agencies from identifying alternative explanations for the problem.

On the level of broad social policy, considerable

confusion and lack of definition exists. For example, the increase in runaway behavior may be viewed in the context of the family rather than exclusively from the vantage point of adolescent misconduct or changes in values. Thus, runaway behavior might be reflective of larger forces in the society which are weakening family ties. Child abuse, rising divorce rates, increasing numbers of individuals who remain single and other factors would then be seen as indicators of a large-scale social change. Social policy change would then be directed toward increasing the community supports available for the family. Personal social services, marital counselling, an incomes and housing policy, as well as special tax incentives, might be appropriate aspects of the total response to this condition.

Another explanation is that changes in society have engendered changes in the expectations, values and experiences of adolescents. One could conclude, then, that a re-evaluation is needed of policies specific to youth. Lowering the compulsory education age, changing laws which exclude youths from the labor market, increasing the options for returning to school at later ages, increasing the community resources available to all youths, are all possible responses to this changed condition. While the class was reluctant, on the basis of available information, to advance either conclusion exclusively, there was agreement that elements of both explanations might be utilized in formulating strategies. Thus the discussion enabled students to state explicit value preferences and understand these as a basis for framing

a social policy.

The class, in effect, chose a model which widened options for adolescents while not necessarily rejecting a solution which focused only on the family as an entity. Considerable support was voiced for changes in the law which permitted adolescents to attain independence at an earlier age for those who wanted it and were prepared to take responsibility for themselves. Simultaneously, there was feeling that, to improve the situation of adolescents within the family, social policy options such as increased tax deductions or outright subsidies for adolescent children might improve parent-child relationships by easing the financial burden of child-rearing.

This view arose out of the recognition that runaways could not be considered without reference to their need to continue relationships with families. That parents were occasionally resentful of the continued financial responsibility for older children also seemed clear. Consequently, remedies to ease the burdens of parenting were also thought to be appropriate.

Session XIII

The final session of the course was devoted to administration of the post-tests and anecdotal evaluative reports, which will be discussed in Chapter V.

CHAPTER IV

THE FIELD PROGRAM

I. Introduction

During the planning phase of the project considerable emphasis was directed toward developing arrangements for student interviewing of youths who had run away from home or who were living independently. The primary purpose of the interview component of the program was to provide direct information on the problems of these youths which could inform class discussions and provide practical substance to otherwise theoretical deliberations. This was particularly critical since most of the available research in this area tends to stress the psychological problems of youths who run, or the emotional climate of their family situations. The interviews developed by students were intended to emphasize, instead, the situational factors which influenced the youths' decision to leave home and the problems they encountered after leaving. These situational factors included school, family, or social problems, which were experienced as crises and for which help was frequently not forthcoming from families or social agencies.[1] Though conscious of the fact that psychological issues were involved, class emphasis was directed toward other factors which might be equally significant in the considerations of youths who leave home, but have different bearing on the planning of social services.

An additional purpose of the interviews was to determine the quality of service, if any, which was received by

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[1] See, for example, Max Siporin, "Situational Assessment and Intervention," Social Casework 53 (February 1972), p. 92, for a discussion of this type of case analysis and practice.

the youths. Through interviews, observation of agency practices and discussion with staff, students would be provided with sufficient data to estimate the quality of institutional responses and worker attitudes toward runaways. From this background class discussion could then be directed toward recommendations for changes in practice and program.

Prior to beginning the interviews, however, students in the program were introduced to basic policy analysis perspectives on social welfare services to enable them to intelligently probe interviewee responses. Since interviewing did not commence until after the fifth session and was not completed until the tenth or twelfth sessions students had received considerable exposure to course content about agency goals and their relationship to social policy and community values. Hence the fieldwork enabled students to deepen and extend recently acquired insights.

II. Legal Constraints in Practice with Adolescents

Agencies providing service to adolescents and runaways are constrained and limited by the legal system. The juvenile justice system, in addition to its responsibilities for adjudicating acts which would be criminal if committed by an adult, also has jurisdiction for many offenses which cannot technically be committed by adults but only by children under age sixteen. Called juvenile status offenses, these include such actions as incorrigibility, truancy, smoking, curfew violations, sexual promiscuity or simply "behavior considered not controllable" by parents or legal guardians. The statutes describing these laws are in the Family Court

Act of New York State Section 712 (B), which states, "A Person in Need of Supervision (PINS) means a male less than sixteen years of age and a female less than eighteen years of age who does not attend school in accordance with the provisions of Article 65 of the Education Law or who is incorrigible, ungovernable or habitually disobedient and beyond the lawful control of parent or guardian or other lawful guardian." The PINS statute was modified to include any person under the age of sixteen by a New York State Appellate Court decision (the case of Patricia A., New York, 2 July 1972) which held that age distinctions between males under sixteen and females under eighteen constituted an unconstitutional discrimination against females. Section 718 of the Family Court act specifically concerns runaways. "A Peace Officer may return to his parent or other person legally responsible for his care any child less than sixteen years of age who has run away from home without just cause or who in the reasonable opinion of the police officer appears to have run away without just cause." Reasonable cause to return a child home, continues the statute, is established when "the child refuses to give his name and the address of his parents or other person legally responsible for the child's care."

Social agencies providing service to youths who leave home must of necessity be aware of these statutes, since if they aid and abet a runaway the agency may risk prosecution or civil suit. Thus, though the sympathies of the agency may at times rest with the youth, legal restraints place critical limitations on the service which can be provided. Some

agencies observe the intent of the law by insisting that the youth permit the agency to contact his or her family prior to providing shelter or counselling. The parent is then urged to permit the agency to intervene and informed of the child's condition. In most instances, the parent consents to agency intervention in the belief that this will insure the youth's safety, and that the agency will work toward urging the youth to return to his or her own home.

Youths over the age of sixteen, however, occupy a different status. Since the PINS statutes relate only to youths under the age of sixteen, those over sixteen cannot forcibly be returned to their parents. However, these youths, though unaffected by the statutes which "protect" those under sixteen, are nonetheless not free to exercise the rights and options available to adults. Disadvantaged in terms of employment, welfare, health care, and schooling by a web of legislation designed with the assumption of parental hegemony over adolescent activities, youths over sixteen and living away from home occupy a legal limbo which severely handicaps them, and often prevents them from receiving help from health and welfare organizations.

The constraints imposed on social agencies working with adolescents, however, often go well beyond the limits of law. Concerned with community sanction and support, agencies often feel that even when working with older adolescents, they must consult parents and receive their permission to offer service. Whether adolescents are aware of this and therefore refuse service in large numbers or simply never

apply for service is a matter of conjecture since empirical research is not available on this topic. What we can speculate upon, however, is that increasing numbers of youths are living independently, outside the protection and support of the family and without assistance from social service agencies.

III. Constraints on Interviewing

At about the time that students began interviewing, Newsday, a local newspaper, ran a serialized feature story on runaways, which, though it disguised the names of the youths involved, provided easily recognizable descriptions which severely embarrassed many adolescents and their counsellors. Consequently, some agencies' usual concern with confidentiality was exaggerated by the awkward position in which they were placed by the article and this made them less accessible than they might have been. Student interviewers interpreted the agency reluctance as overly protective, since they felt they were doing field research through a recognized educational institution rather than a newspaper and were therefore above suspicion. Occasionally, the reaction was so severe that students suspected that the agencies were acting protectively for their own interests rather than those of their clients. Thus one student, after being denied access to the agencies' clientele noted that, "kids who run away don't seem nearly as evasive as the agencies which serve them."

Another student found that an agency felt that interviewing runaways would "encourage kids to run away by

reinforcing the runaway behavior." Still other students disclosed that phone calls went unanswered and requests for information and help were treated casually and required continual follow-up for resolution. Students were puzzled about the attitude of the agencies and felt that their lack of cooperation was based on many factors. They concluded, for example, that the agencies were defensive about their practices because runaways were frequently not aggressively and adequately served and the agencies feared an outside evaluation. While the students were not unrealistically idealistic about the problems of social agencies, their attitudes were colored considerably by the initial hesitation of the agencies to fully cooperate. More importantly, the students felt that the agencies were too easily threatened and therefore questioned the professional practices of these organizations.

This experience underscored for students the problems inherent in an employee profession. Considerable discussion was fostered of the problems of performing adequately and competently in settings which are not strongly committed to self-evaluation and improvement. Students appeared to deepen their own understanding of the need to fully integrate personal practice standards in order for them to be able to struggle against practices which they might find difficult to accept professionally.

Despite these problems, the students in the workshop were able to complete about sixty interviews with youths who either had previously left home for twenty-four hours or more on at least one occasion, or youths who at the time of the

interview were not living with their parents.

The interview schedule used by the students emphasized the situational factors which precipitated running away or, as we came to call them, home-leaving episodes.[2] This emphasis was in contradiction to much of the published research on "runaways" which often focused upon the psychological makeup of the runaway or defined runaway behavior as a delinquent act.[3] Several of these studies concluded that the runaway was more immature than his contemporaries, more impulse-ridden, narcissistic, aggressive, and potentially sociopathic.[4] Other studies concluded that the runaway girl was responding to unresolved and overwhelming oedipal conflicts characterized by unconscious incestuous drives.[5] Another found that runaways were motivated by disorganized home situations in which there was considerable parental

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[2]Home leaving, though an awkward label, has no stigma attached to it and was useful to emphasize the potentially neutral nature of the behavior. Situationally oriented analysis has been previously noted. See Siporin, "Situational Assessment and Intervention."

[3]For discussions of runaway activities as criminal or pre-delinquent, see M. Gold, Delinquent Behavior in an American City (Belmont, California: Brooks Cole Publishing Co., 1970), and K. Tsubouchi and R. L. Jenkins, "Three Types of Delinquents: Their Performance on the MMPI and POR," Journal of Clinical Psychology 25 (October 1969):353-58.

[4]Martin Goldberg, "Runaway Americans," Mental Hygiene 56 (Winter 1972).

[5]Ames Robey and R. E. Rosewald, "The Runaway Girl: A Reaction to Family Stress," American Journal of Orthopsychiatry 34 (July 1964):762-67.

bickering.[6]

Research emphasizing psychological factors in runaway behavior presupposes that the act is clearly deviant and anti-social and implies the use of strategies designed to treat the psychological problems of the individual.[7] While counselling services may be an essential feature of any service offering help, the explanation of runaway behavior favored by the practitioner will influence the treatment provided. In the context of the educational project, however, greater emphasis was placed upon several other factors lying outside the emotional make-up of the individual, but which also affect behavior. In general these factors can be characterized as situational, maturational, and environmental.

Situational factors emphasize the immediate experience of the individual. A severe crisis, for example, characterized by some event such as an arrest, pregnancy, failing grades in school, or a suspension from school can precipitate a dramatic response on the part of the youth, and lead to a

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[6]John Goldmeixer and Robert Dean, "The Runaway: Person, Problem or Situation?" Crime and Delinquency 19 (October 1973).

[7]The alternative view has been discussed in other sections of this report. See, for example, Edwin Schur, Radical Non Intervention, for the view that most delinquent acts are in fact transitory and normative for adolescent youths. Several other observers have taken the view that running away is a "natural interlude": for example, J. Kaufman, J. R. Allen, and L. J. West, "Runaways, Hippies and Marijuana," American Journal of Psychiatry 126 (1969):717-20, and R. Shellow, J. R. Schamp, and E. Liebow, "Suburban Runaways of the 1960s," Monograph of the Society for Research in Child Development 32 (1967):1-51.

home-leaving episode.[8]

Environmental factors can be thought of as ongoing problems in the youth's life. Continual bickering in the home, overly controlling or demanding parents or siblings, poverty, and a repressive school environment all contribute to a disorganized lifestyle and may cause the youth to want to escape.

Maturational factors include the possibility that youths, even from relatively positive home environments, may experience the need for independence prior to reaching their maturity. For youths who leave home, this category includes the emancipated minor, or as categorized in the workshop, the independent minor.

Since the class emphasized these factors instead of those associated with mental illness, a markedly different perspective emerged in the student reports on interviews with youths.

The difference was particularly noticeable in the narratives prepared by students which described each of the interviewees. In these narratives they were asked to describe:

1. The characteristics of the youths; i.e., school status, employment and income, involvement with juvenile court, relationships with parents and siblings;

2. The alleged reasons for leaving and the ages at which running away began;

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[8] C. J. English, "Leaving Home: A Typology of Runaways," Society 10 (July 1973):22-24.

3. The places the youths went to when they left home. Did they stay with friends, relatives or neighbors, or did they leave the area entirely and travel in the classic runaway mode?;

4. The outcome of leaving home. Did the situation which precipitated running away change? Did relationships at home improve or deteriorate? Were the changes permanent?;

5. The experience of the youths with social agencies, police, and the courts. Were agencies helpful? Did they intervene in a way felt to be positive by the youths?

In describing the content of student reports, an anecdotal style will be used rather than a quantitative one. The data collected by students was not systematically structured and the sample was at best accidental and perhaps idiosyncratic. Nonetheless it is useful to clarify the manner in which the field component of the project influenced the educational program and student learning.

IV. Characteristics of the Youths

The bulk of the interviews performed by students were done with middle-class youths who were frequently from professional families as would be expected in a relatively wealthy suburban community. However, a small number of youths interviewed were black and/or poor. Not surprisingly, about 75% of the interviewees were girls (national statistics similarly reflect a greater number of female runaways) and most were in school at the time the interviews took place. While many had severe school problems, a number also had rather exemplary school records and planned to continue on

to college. Several of those who had dropped out or were doing poorly expressed regret since it prevented them from receiving the training they felt they needed.

In describing virtually all the interviews, students in the program noted the eagerness of the interviewees to relate their stories. This was often ascribed to a need to talk with a sympathetic adult. It is also possible that the students presented themselves in ways which the youths did not find as threatening as other professionals and were therefore more open about discussing their problems.

Many of the interviewees, a surprising number, in fact, considering their social class, came from large families, often with five or more children in the home. Thus even where there was a substantial estimated family income, the relative family income may have been lower than appeared on the surface. In addition, many of the interviewees, about 30%, had lived in the community a relatively short time. However, very few could be described as socially isolated. Many, in fact, only left home because they were able to secure assistance from friends, friends' families and relatives.

In several instances, student interviewers commented upon the relative maturity of some of the interviewees. This was observed not only in their precocious capacity to live away from their parental home but also in the responsibilities many of them carried while living at home. In some instances these responsibilities included almost full child-care responsibility for infant siblings, care of mentally ill or alcoholic parents, and frequently part-time employment to

supplement family income even while going to school and carrying other responsibilities in the home.

V. Reasons for Leaving Home

One student noted that in her interviews she felt that it was the "parents who ran away, not the child. . . ." She further described the youths "as victims of circumstance beyond their control," seeking help by "publicly calling attention" to their situation even though this led to stigmatization and public ridicule. Seen in this context, running away was not only an act of desperation but of considerable courage as well. Clearly, in this case, the students' sympathies were almost totally with the interviewee.

Other interviewers noted the extent to which reportable abuse and neglect, including sexual abuse, was present in the life situation of youths who leave home. Several found the youths under unbearable pressure and carrying huge responsibilities well beyond what is normally expected of a teenager.

In one instance a girl's mother had been deserted by the father just prior to the birth of a male child. The mother, overwhelmed by these events, experienced an emotional breakdown and allowed the daughter to manage the household and supervise child care. Though only twelve years old at the time, the girl was able to manage these tasks while understanding the severity of her mother's illness and providing support for her. In addition, she recognized the effect her mother's illness was having on her infant brother and sought the help of neighbors and ultimately the social services

department. Finally she left home at fourteen, unable to bear the heavy burdens placed upon her and physically exhausted by the constant demands.

There is little reference to this type of problem in the literature of runaway services, though many runaway youths are burdened with excessive responsibility. Yet students in the class were able to define it as a significant cause of home leaving for some youths. Their special role which enabled them to listen and observe the positive signals which youths conveyed may have some bearing on the information they received. An alternative though unlikely possibility is that the youths successfully manipulated interviewers. Adolescents' manipulation is usually claimed by the agencies as they describe their work with adolescent runaways. Yet, given the powerless position of the youths, it is probable that they are required to manipulate agency staff in order to obtain a sympathetic hearing from agencies which control services they desperately need. Their desire, willingness, and capacity to thoroughly delude student interviewers remains an unknown and probably unknowable factor in this program. However, students in the class believed that they were <u>not</u> being manipulated.

While parental bickering was cited as a reason for pressures in the home, it was rarely noted as the primary reason for leaving. More often a failure in school or other school troubles had greater impact on the youths' decision to leave as did problems such as pregnancy or trouble with the police.

Perhaps the most common cause cited for leaving was the imposition of unreasonable controls, severe disciplinary measures and physical abuse. Many of the youths expressed resentment at being treated like young children and resisted parental curfews or intensive parental scrutiny and control of their activities. Thus in one reported instance the parents' dislike of the girl's friends and their efforts to keep her away from them were important reasons for leaving. In another, a beating with a horsewhip precipitated running away and led to a demand by the youth for a foster care arrangement. In still a third, a child who was in foster care was sexually molested and left home out of fear of further attack.

The majority of interviews reported by students seemed to locate the cause of leaving home in the family's situation rather than in the characteristics of the youths themselves. It is conceivable that the youths presented themselves to the interviewers differently than they would to agency personnel. In this interaction no action was anticipated, no service expected or supplied. The youth, in short, was not obligated to be a client and the interviewer was not required to respond to someone's needs and problems. Alternatively, it is possible that the interviewers uncritically accepted the youths' statements, for the same essential reasons that the youths might have presented themselves differently. Since the interviewer is not responsible for delivering a service, the processes which lead to changing perceptions and refining diagnoses and impressions are not available over

a long enough time to allow the worker to check initial impressions.

VI. Outcomes Experienced by Runaways

In many instances reported by interviewers, the youths had left home knowing they would shortly return and hoping that running away would cause a change in their parents' attitude toward them. Many of the youths reported that temporary changes in parental attitude did occur although these tended to disappear within two or three months at most. Most of the youths stated that they felt guilty about leaving home because they had in some way hurt their parents. A number reported that they had been stigmatized in school and with their friends after having run, and had considerable difficulty re-establishing relationships with friends and teachers. This kind of embarrassment appeared frequently. As a result of these observations, students received new insight into the difficulties experienced by youths who return and were led to consider the kinds of services needed for re-entry into the community.

A smaller number of youths actively sought permanent alternative arrangements and did not wish to return home. Several "adopted" foster parents agreed to provide a residence for them. In some instances the local Department of Social Services agreed to place the youth in a foster home selected by the youth. Under those arrangements the department actually paid maintenance and support and solicited permission from parents as required by law. The case described above of the young girl who took full responsibility

for child care and home management was one such instance.

Again, perhaps because student perceptions were unaffected by agency experiences, students were more open to accepting and even admiring attributes of the runaway interviewees. Students remarked in class sessions that they found the youths' independence and resourcefulness refreshing. As youths described their experiences both prior to and after leaving home, it became apparent to the interviewers that there was something special about having to leave home at an early age. While the agencies and the youths' families might ordinarily focus on the negatives in such situations, the students, as outsiders and observers, perhaps found it easier to see positive attributes in the adaptive behavior exhibited by interviewees. If they were anticipating a con, as many youth workers do, it is possible that students might have been more skeptical about the stories relayed to them. Perhaps because of the initial hesitation of agencies in cooperating, many of the students anticipated that the con was more likely to come from the agency rather than the youth. It should be stressed that the students were not especially suspicious of or hostile to agencies either before or after the program.

Perhaps the most common outcome in all situations which students located was the introduction of an outside agency into the family situation as a result of running

away.[9] Often this led to acceptance of short-term counselling. While few long-term effects in the home were noted which were attributed either to counselling or to the act of running away, virtually all of the youths who returned home reported that parents were more willing to listen and there was some relaxation of Draconian disciplinary measures and overbearing rules. In general, this lasted no more than two or three months before conditions returned to the previous unsatisfactory state.

In a minority of instances, it was reported that the runaway episode left a residue of distrust and suspicion which led to greater control than before. This appeared particularly marked with teenage girls and was often ascribed by them to increased concern with their sexual activities.

VII. Where Did They Go?

The popular perception of runaways is that they travel long distances, frequently crossing the country when they elope. The long-distance mystique contributes to the image of the runaway seeking adventure and release and provides a quasi-romantic background to running away. While this type may be common, the cases discovered by students in the class were markedly different. The majority of the youths interviewed remained within blocks of their parental homes, a fact which surprised students. Often they stayed with the

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[9] Interestingly, these perceptions are found in the research literature of running away though are rarely apprehended as a major focus for intervention. See, for example, Shellow et al., "Suburban Runaways of the 1960s." His "runaway" category is motivated by the desire to call attention to the youth's situation so that help can be provided.

families of friends and occasionally in the apartments of older youths living independently of their families. In most cases they also remained in school and planned on graduating. The relatively conventional aspirations of many youths lent further credibility to the idea that they were not significantly different from other adolescents, a fact which students were quick to notice.

When travel was involved, it was frequently no further than to neighboring states such as New Jersey or Connecticut, and the destination was usually a favored relative with whom the youth felt some rapport. On occasion these episodes led to long-term arrangements where all concerned agreed to allow the youth to remain in the new environment, register for school and stay away from home for some specified period.

Wanderlust, or long-distance travel without a sense of purpose, was involved in only two instances uncovered by students. In these two cases the youths, travelling together, left for Florida and along the way accepted a hitch to California. After three months, primarily spent living with a sympathetic couple, they called home and were wired money for airfare. They conceded that they had no real destination when they left and returned largely because of loneliness.

VIII. The Runaway's Experiences with Social Agencies, the Courts and Schools

This segment of the interview was designed to elicit responses from potential consumers about utilization of a

wide range of services with which they might have come in contact. Potential service providers included family service agencies, storefront youth agencies, school guidance counsellors, social workers, and teachers as well as policeman and adjunct agencies of the courts, such as probation services and mental health programs. Student interviewers were directed to thoroughly explore the extent to which youths sought help from social services, the point at which help was sought (or imposed), and the opinions of the youths about the quality of services received.

Students discovered, somewhat surprisingly, that few of the interviewees spoke to any adult at all about their intention to leave home. However, many had spoken with school guidance personnel or, more commonly, preferred teachers, about their overall unhappiness. The type of advice offered was perceived by interviewees as exhortations to adjust to the home situation and wait until the possibility of independence was closer before leaving home. The class observed that the distance between teenagers and adults is so vast that special efforts are required by adults if help is to be offered.

Though few of the youths were involved with social agencies prior to the first time they left home, many received service afterwards. The usual intervention reported consisted of brief family and individual counselling. Many reported that they and their families discontinued the sessions after the third or fourth visit as they then felt that everything possible had been achieved. Where subsequent home-leaving

episodes occurred, there were few reports of discussions with agency workers until after the fact.

In a number of instances, non-traditional agencies offered temporary shelter (usually fourteen days or less) after a youth came to the agency seeking help and claimed that he or she was not willing to return home. The aid was often conditioned upon a requirement for notification of parents and willingness to accept either group, individual or peer counselling. For many youths acceptance of shelter appeared to offer an acceptable compromise to going on the road. After entering the sheltered environment (either a group home or temporary unpaid foster care in the home of a volunteer), counselling was directed toward preparing the way for reentry. Few of the youths reported advocacy assistance with schools where this was identified as a problem.

From their contacts with agencies, it appeared to the student interviewers that few of the agencies were aggressive in continuing contact with youths who had terminated service or had not followed through on their own initiative. Many of the agencies, observed the interviewers, appeared to be staffed by individuals without professional qualifications. Few had the MSW degree and many counsellors were themselves little older than the youths they were serving. In addition, agency staffs were themselves occasionally patronizing and judgmental about the youths. One student observed that staff in the agency she interviewed felt that "most runaways were spoiled, willful and impulsive and it was best not to lavish attention on them as they merely manipulated the worker and

the agency." This agency's staff felt that the best strategy was to attempt to push the youth back into the parental home. The agency engaged in additional gratuitous stereotyping, according to the interviewer, when staff observed that the parents were usually trying hard, and were inflicted with "deviant kids." While these attitudes may not be commonly held in youth agencies, their very existence was regarded by students as prejudicial. Indeed, this was a problem with which students were quite concerned. In class discussion they indicated that they understood that agencies can develop attitudes, practices and traditions which have their own momentum and are resistant to change. However, the students were also concerned about their own impending entry into the agency system and were disillusioned about the quality of much of the practice they observed. This was true not only for the runaway agencies but also for other agencies in which they had been placed.

In evaluating agency practice, students also noted that many of these agencies had resolved the problem of adult-teenage interaction by seeking staff who were like the clients. Students recognized that this strategy, while it may lead to better rapport between client and worker, may not necessarily lead to better service.

Perhaps the most striking observation made by interviewers was the lack of coherence and consistency among agencies providing help to runaways. Policies differed from agency to agency and even within the same agency depending on which worker saw the youth. Some workers would always

seek to make contact with parents before beginning counselling, while others did not deem it important. One agency would routinely offer temporary shelter while others discouraged it and would only infrequently seek to provide it. Few agencies or workers aggressively followed up on contacts with the youths, relying primarily on the client's own initiative to seek service and remain active with the agency.

IX. Conclusion

The interviewing component of the course had three central purposes. The first was to allow students the opportunity to develop insight into program and policy options by contact with agencies. The second was to evaluate practice technique based upon direct exposure to youths in difficulty, while the third was to provide an experiential basis for evaluating research into runaway behavior.

Combining interviewing with class discussion of interview findings supported this objective. Students were expected as a result of the interviews to consider the goals of intervention in the context of the client's situation as well as community values. Interviews helped to expose the gap between client needs and community expectations, and social service agency practices. Students were then called upon to consider their own value perspectives as they affected the goals of the interventions they would recommend for runaway youth.

Paradoxically, few of the youths interviewed fell into the official runaway count since in most instances their parents did not report them to the police. The youths

identified by the students by and large stayed within the community and quickly let their parents know where they were. Their running away, though perhaps symbolic, was real enough to them and loaded with emotional content and situational dilemmas which they communicated to the student interviewers. Similarly, none of the youths interviewed were involved with family court or probation because of their runaway episode. This was again a function of the fact that the youths and their parents were able to work out some satisfactory adjustment without the use of official agencies.

In reviewing research about runaways later in the semester, the class discussed much of the significant systematic research then available. In general, they appeared more favorably disposed to research which reflected a strong bias toward social structural causation of runaway behavior and tended to be more skeptical of research which focused on psychological characteristics of youths who ran away. While some of this bias is a reflection of the instructor's own value perspective about work with adolescents, much can be attributed to the interviews, which provided considerable opportunity for observing the perspective of the youths and for evaluating their motivation for leaving home.

Perhaps most importantly, students perceived the shortcomings of the research on runaway behavior which had been reviewed and recognized the danger of using it as a basis for program planning and practice. While most of this research focuses on the chronic, long-distance runaway, students in the program had discovered that other forms of

running away were far more prevalent than they had suspected among teenagers. The existence of apparently different forms of home-leaving activity than the literature reviews stimulated considerable discussion on the possibly normative features of leaving home. If very large numbers of youths were leaving home, and if many of these were seeking alternative homes, then perhaps leaving home prior to age eighteen is or should be an acceptable feature of adolescent life.

Many students reasoned that perhaps provision should be made to accommodate those who felt the need to leave home due to more rapid maturation or intolerable home situations.

The implications of these notions were discussed at some length. If leaving home is to be considered as possibly normative behavior, then a whole complex of laws, policies, traditions, and values must be altered in order to make it easier for youths to achieve independence from the family. Such speculation permitted a wide range of policy-relevant learning to occur about the integrated considerations required for understanding any complex policy issue.

CHAPTER V

EVALUATION OF THE PROGRAM

I. Introduction

During the past decade social workers have become increasingly sensitive to internal and external criticisms that the profession, as a consequence of its reliance on helping modalities directed at individual treatment, has repudiated its historic mission to represent the conscience of society in the interests of the disadvantaged. Emphasis upon clinical treatment, it is claimed, meliorates rather than changes the client's social situation and implies that the client is somehow at fault rather than factors within the social structure.[1] Social work education, by emphasizing education for psychiatric practice and by affording higher status to psychiatric social work, shares in the responsibility for this problem.[2] Partly as a consequence of these criticisms, however, the study of social policy has entered the curriculum of many social work schools with the intent of introducing alternative conceptualizations of the nature of social problems and the role of the helping professions in resolving these issues.

The study of social policy should be designed to facilitate understanding of the social structural component of human problems and should also introduce global concerns about justice and public policy into the social work curriculum as a counterbalance to the traditional approach which tends to

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[1] William F. Ryan, Blaming the Victim (New York: Vintage Books, 1971).

[2] See, for example, Willard Richan and Michael Mendelsohn, Social Work: The Unloved Profession (New York: New Directions Press, 1975).

emphasize adjustment and/or service provision rather than changes in society or in the status of those needing help.[3]

The runaway problem can be conceptualized in the context of these criticisms. The typical and conventional practice response of agencies to minors who leave home is to encourage them to return without considering other alternatives. This tendency was borne out by student interviews and impressions of agency practice. Agencies, in addition, usually offer helping services designed to help the family reconstitute itself as a full family with the child in residence. Where this is impossible, the youth is often referred to an alternative home or to foster care which artificially reproduces the nuclear family environment.

When viewed in this context, social agency practices often tend to promote or reinforce existing statuses rather than attempting to modify or change them. If one's life situation is unjust or if the applicable social provisions are unfair, use of clinical interventions alone may have the effect of helping people adjust to unjust situations. The use of social policy perspectives, however, can emphasize the concept of socially induced conditions requiring alternative interventions. Individuals in trouble and seeking help are then viewed, in part, as victims of a misdirected social

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[3]Carol Meyer, for example, in Social Work Practice: The Changing Landscape, 2nd ed. (New York: The Free Press, 1976), emphasizes service provision to ameliorate the situational stress upon the individual client. While this is obviously critical, it does not address the broader question of reactions on the part of worker and client to social injustice.

structure rather than as defective individuals whose personality and character are primarily at fault.

These issues informed the purposes of the program and guided the selection of materials for study.

Stating these practice problems as a hypothesis to be tested introduces the following formulations:

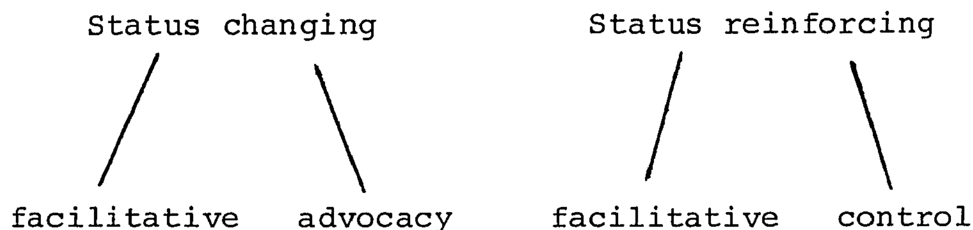
1. When confronting individuals such as runaway youth social workers are likely to favor strategies which emphasize use of counselling and psychotherapeutic modalities.

2. Introducing a social policy perspective on the problem as an additional analytic mode will direct the students toward program approaches which emphasize a social structural analysis of the condition.

3. In general, these approaches will be directed toward modifying the individual's status rather than his or her personality. The greater the degree of commitment to status-changing strategies felt by the student, the more likely he or she is to select program approaches consonant with the wishes of the youth, and, where appropriate, directed toward greater autonomy from the family.

Utilizing the concept of status change as a variable for measurement underlay the design of the formal evaluation. The object of measurement was the degree to which participants in the program would seek either to reinforce the existing status of the youth or change the status in the direction of greater autonomy and independence. Illustrated schematically the two variables can be drawn in the following

manner.



Each of the variables are thus demonstrated to have two dimensions. An aggressive commitment to status-changing activities suggests the use of advocacy, while a more passive commitment presupposes the traditional enabler role, or a facilitative approach which emphasizes service provision. In this case, the individual's situation is, however, modified toward increased autonomy. Where the practitioner is status reinforcing in orientation, this can be demonstrated through use of therapeutic interventions (facilitative-status reinforcing) or through reliance on more heavy-handed methods of social control (control-status reinforcing) such as courts, police or school authorities.

II. Purpose of the Evaluation

The evaluation was designed to test the hypothesis that exposing graduate social work students to a specially designed curriculum in social policy analysis would engender significant changes in attitudes, knowledge and practice about the problem under study. The evaluation of the program was administered on the first offering of the course and was conceived as an exploratory study, using a quasi-experimental design.

It was expected that after exposure to the program students in the experimental group would be more willing to

apply unconventional intervention strategies, goals and policies to the problems of youths who leave home. Worker actions, it was expected, would tend to emphasize services which promote and accept the youths' right to independence. Moreover, it was anticipated that students would be more likely to respond to the adolescent situation in ways which recognize the inequality of the adolescent's condition by recommending the use of "advocacy" on their behalf.

The primary instrument for evaluating the effects of the program on participants was a test which required responses to four realistic case descriptions of runaway situations, administered to an experimental and a control group both before and after the program. Neither the experimental nor the control group was specially recruited or selected. The control group was assembled from a class of students taking another required course offered by the school entitled "History of Social Welfare," which was also taught by the investigator. The control group, though experiencing a curriculum with a heavy social policy emphasis, did not discuss any material specifically relating to adolescent runaways.

III. Format of Test Instrument

The instrument for evaluating the effects of the program on participants was composed of four case descriptions, administered to the experimental and a control group both before and after the program. Each of the four case descriptions was composed of similar elements. A 15-year-old male with a runaway history threatened to run away again but was nonetheless receptive to receiving service from a social

agency. In each case the individual stated he was prepared to live independently and was amenable to finding employment. An estimate of the youth's maturity was provided and problems with schools and/or courts were described. In each case the youth stated he did not wish to return home to the family and reasons were given.

The instrument was designed to disclose several elements of the students' decision-making. The first segment asked students to select the <u>strategy for providing service</u> which seemed most reasonable. Four choices were available to be scored on a nine-point Likert scale. The second segment of the test explored the <u>diagnosis</u> used by the student in selecting the appropriate strategy, i.e., was the client mentally ill, subjected to unreasonable conditions, or a victim of inappropriate social policies? The third segment asked students to ascertain which specific <u>services</u> were most appropriate for the case. Approximately 20 services were listed, accompanied by a five-point scale. These ranged from conventional psychotherapy to assistance in finding a job. The fourth area of testing probed the students' <u>certainty or uncertainty</u> about their answers to the strategy and diagnostic questions on each case, as well as willingness to commit themselves to recommending complete independence from the family, at least for the moment, as a solution to the runaway's problem.

IV. Description of Test Questions

<u>Variable 1. Strategies for Helping</u>

Four alternative strategies comforming to the

status-changing or status-reinforcing paradigm previously described were presented.

Question 1A: Recommended a continuing counselling strategy.

Question 1B: Suggested the imposition of controls or stressed the harsh realities of living away from home. The intent was to discourage an unconventional solution.

Question 1C: Suggested utilization of social service facilities such as foster care or group homes.

Question 1D: Recommended helping the youth attain independence by aggressively assisting him and advocating on his behalf.

Question 1A conforms to a status reinforcing "facilitative" style, while Question 1B uses "control" strategies to implement a status reinforcing approach. Questions1C and D commit the worker to a status change, with Question 1C the "facilitative" response and 1D describing an aggressive "advocacy" stance.

Variable 2. Explanations for Runaway Behavior

The next series of questions were designed to ascertain the "diagnosis" used by students to determine the strategy recommended. Again four questions were used:

Question 5A: Indicated the problem was psychiatric or interpersonal in origin (facilitative-status reinforcing).

Question 5B: Ascribed the problem to unreasonable controls at home and stated problems would disappear if controls were relaxed (facilitative status-reinforcing).

Question 5C: Located the source of the problem in

unsympathetic and unresponsive schools and courts (facilitative-status changing).

Question 5D: Identified the problem to be solved as the lack of rights possessed by adolescents and the few options which were therefore available to them (advocacy status-changing).

Variable 3. Preferred Services

These questions, about 20 in number, were designed to elicit the preferred services which the students would recommend as helpful in the situations described. A comprehensive list of services was offered with a five-point scale.

Variable 4. Support for Independence

This unit comprised several questions which probed the student's willingness to support independence by asking how necessary was independence in this particular case, how important it was, how willing was the student to advocate on the youth's behalf within his agency. Students were again given a five-point scale on which to react.

V. Comparability

If the experimental and control groups were significantly different in composition, conclusions reached after analysis of data would require statistical adjustment. Since the sample was "accidental," it was important to conduct some tests on the data to ascertain whether or not the groups were comparable. The first set of comparisons was made on the demographic characteristics supplied by students using the chi square statistic. This information--age, amount of social work experience, area of specialization at the school,

first- or second-year status and part- or full-time enrollment--yielded chi square results showing no statistically significant difference between the two groups.

The pre-test demographic questionnaire also requested information on student opinions of the fairness of a variety of social institutions with which adolescents may become involved. Attitudes about these institutions--police, schools, courts and social agencies--provided an additional bellweather of student attitudes. No significant differences in student attitudes were recorded between the control and experimental groups in any of these areas. An additional comparison was possible on the question of whether respondents had personally known or worked with runaways. On this test there was again no significant difference between the two groups. Finally, the responses to pre-tests also provided opportunity for an additional comparison to be made as to whether the experimental and control groups offered similar reactions. At pre-test both groups responded similarly on the test. This set of comparisons on selected variables yielded *t*-scores which were not significantly different for the two groups (see Table 1).* Hence we can conclude that the two groups were equivalent when measured on relevant demographic variables as well as on the basis of responses to the pre-test instrument.

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*The students *t* was used. For a full description, see Fred N. Kerlinger, *Foundations of Behavioral Research* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1973); see particularly Chapter 13.

TABLE 1

MEAN AND t-SCORES AT PRE-TEST FOR SELECTED VARIABLES*

Recommended Treatment Strategies	Pre-Test Mean Scores: Experimental Group	Control Group	t
Question 1A			
Need for psychiatric help	4.96	4.63	.53
Question 1B			
Need for control	5.29	4.57	1.32
Question 1C			
Facilitate exit from home	6.81	6.13	1.16
Question 1D			
Need for advocacy on youth's behalf	5.10	4.95	.27
Question 5A			
Psychological interpretation	3.52	3.95	-.64
Question 5B			
Family problem interpretation	4.42	4.13	.59
Question 5C			
Deficiencies in institutions interpretation	6.50	6.20	.49
Question 5D			
Lack of rights interpretation	7.27	6.84	.95

*See Appendix G for description of analytic method

VI. Characteristics of the Experimental Group

The experimental group was equally divided between first- and second-year students, ten of whom were full-time and two part-time. Four were intervention (casework) students while the remaining eight were either intervention-social policy joint majors or "indeterminate" (students are permitted to not declare a concentration). The median age was 34 while the mean was 33. Fifty-eight percent of the group (7) were at the time working with adolescents in a variety of settings, while 83% or 10 of the students had at some point worked with adolescents. Not surprisingly, therefore, 10 had also known runaways or worked with them during their careers. As would be expected from their age, the group was quite experienced. Only one student had no experience in social work, three had at least six months, while the remaining eight had more than 16 months. Three reported at least five years in the field. When queried about professional interest, ten of the twelve reported that they were interested in direct services with adolescents.

VII. Analysis of Data

1. Pre-test Results

It was expected that at pre-test both the experimental and the control groups would favor strategies, diagnostic rationale and social services which tended to support and reinforce the existing status arrangements within the family rather than those which help the youth live away from home. These anticipated strategies would focus on provision of counselling services (Question 1A) as well as diagnoses

favoring emotional factors as causation for the problem (Question 5A). The goal of service would be on keeping the youth within his family. Where re-placement within the youth's biological family did not appear plausible, it was anticipated that participants would then select options which emphasized other status reinforcing strategies, such as placement within a foster family (Question 1B). The key to the concept of "status reinforcement" is seen then as residence with and supervision by either a biological or substitute family. Since the population from which the experimental and control groups were drawn consisted of social work students, it was not expected that they would opt for strategies which emphasize social control. However, within the framework previously described, control strategies would be one method for insuring continuation of the youth's role of dependent within a family structure.

Surprisingly, neither the experimental nor the control group responded as expected at pre-test (or at post-test, as we shall see later). Both groups placed highest priority on strategies which favored a <u>changed status</u> for the youth as well as explanations for running away which placed responsibility on an unjust social system rather than on the emotional problems of the youth. As Table 1 illustrates, students at pre-test awarded highest mean scores to Question 1C (suggests helping the youth leave home and live independently; mean score = 6.81 for the experimental group and 6.13 for the control) and Question 2D (this question interprets the problem as residing in the lack of access to social rights

by adolescents; mean score = 7.27 for the experimental group and 6.84 for the control.) One explanation for this apparent divergence between expected and actual outcome may lie in the special characteristics of the program at the School of Social Welfare. The school's mission, program and entrance criteria tend to stress goals which favor "social change" as opposed to "treatment." While there is no evidence or program research supporting the conclusion that the program is actually succeeding in its mission, this unexpected test outcome may result from the school's stated difference from conventional programs. Further research would be required to support this tentative conclusion.

2. Findings: Recommended Treatment Strategies

We now turn to discussion of the results of the program evaluation. The expected outcome on the variable "recommended treatment strategies," was that after conducting the program, the experimental group would show an increased commitment to intervention strategies which would favor independence from the family (Question 1D), and reduced reliance on those strategies which relied primarily on psychiatric counselling (Question 1A). The expectation was that students would move from a status-reinforcing bias toward one which favored and encouraged status change. Moreover, it was anticipated that the worker would be willing to actively advocate on the client's behalf rather than "facilitate" or enable. No change was expected within the control group.

This was indeed what occurred. Despite the

unexpectedly high priority placed on strategies which facilitate exit from home at pre-test by both the experimental and control groups, after the program the experimental group showed significantly increased commitment to advocacy strategies on behalf of the runaway (Question 1D). In addition, the experimental group also showed a significant decline in readiness to utilize psychiatric interventions (Question 1A). There were no differences of any significance recorded for the control group. Table 2 illustrates these scores.

3. Findings: Causes of Running-away Behavior

Question 5 required respondents to identify the reasons for running away which they felt were most significant. As noted earlier, Question 5A identified the problem as located in the emotional make-up of the youth; Question 5B suggested it was rooted in family disagreements and pressures; Question 5C interpreted the problem as emanating from the insufficiencies of institutions such as schools or police; while question 5D indicated that youths suffered from a lack of rights and entitlements which led to running away. Clearly, elements of all the above interpretations may be present in any one case, and students were therefore asked to identify the ones which were most significant. The scaling technique used allowed respondents to consider relative rather than absolute answers.

At post-test it was expected that students would show an increased commitment to Question 12, the "rights" interpretation, and a reduced propensity to define the problem within the context of the youth's emotional make-up. This

TABLE 2

MEANS AND t-TEST SCORES ON THE VARIABLE "RECOMMENDED TREATMENT STRATEGIES"

Recommended Treatment Strategies	Experimental Group (N=12)			Control Group (N=14)		
	Pre-Test Mean	Post-Test Mean	t-Score	Pre-Test Mean	Post-Test Mean	t-Score
Question 1A						
Need for psychiatric help	4.96	3.90	-2.72*	4.63	4.77	.35
Question 1B						
Need for foster care	5.29	4.80	-1.64	4.57	4.11	-1.4
Question 1C						
Need to facilitate exit from home	6.81	6.83	.05	6.13	6.08	- .15
Question 1D						
Need for advocacy on youth's behalf	5.10	6.40	3.19**	4.95	4.63	- .24

*P=<.05
**P=<.01

change would be consistent with expected changes in the "recommended treatment strategies" segment of the questionnaire. Though students in both the experimental and control groups had rated the "psychological" interpretation lowest at pre-test (see Table 3) and the "lack of rights" interpretation highest at pre-test, after concluding the program the experimental group showed marked shifts in emphases. Following the program, members of the experimental group tended to identify the problem even more strongly as emanating from a lack of rights rather than emotional or other causations. Table 3 illustrates that scores on Question 2A dropped significantly while those on Question 2D rose significantly for the experimental group. No significant difference can be observed between pre- and post-test scores for the control group.

Further evidence for the magnitude of these shifts in emphasis is provided by Table 4 which summarizes the differences in responses for the two groups before and after administration of the program. Mean scores for the experimental group show a significant decrease for Questions 1A and 2A, the two questions relating primarily to psychiatric causation and treatment, while statistically significant rises in the mean scores of Questions 1D and 4D suggest greater willingness to use advocacy strategies and to interpret the problem as emanating from the special disadvantages of adolescents. No significant differences are recorded for the control group.

TABLE 3

MEAN AND t-SCORES: INTERPRETATIONS OF THE YOUTH'S REASONS FOR RUNNING AWAY

Interpretations of Youth's Problem	Experimental Group (N=12)			Control Group (N=14)		
	Pre-Test Mean	Post-Test Mean	t-Score	Pre-Test Mean	Post-Test Mean	t-Score
Question 2A						
Psychological problem interpretation	3.30	1.50	-2.96*	3.95	3.77	- .50
Question 2B						
Family problem interpretation	4.34	3.86	-1.04	4.13	4.49	1.20
Question 2C						
Deficiencies in institutions interpretation	6.45	6.55	.20	6.20	5.66	-1.44
Question 2D						
Lack of rights interpretation	7.16	8.27	3.10*	6.84	6.71	- .52

*$P = < .05$

TABLE 4

DIFFERENCES IN MEAN SCORES
ON SELECTED VARIABLES

(POST-TEST MINUS PRE-TEST)

Variable	Experimental	Control	*t*-Test
Question 1A	-1.06	.14	-2.14*
Question 1B	- .50	-.54	.08
Question 1C	.02	-.06	.15
Question 1D	1.29	-.41	3.25
Question 2A	-1.36	-.21	-1.86
Question 2B	- .53	.45	-1.55
Question 2C	.10	1.59	1.23
Question 2D	1.11	.13	2.82**

*P=>.05
**P=>.01

4. Findings: Recommended Services

If practitioners change their ideas about the nature of a problem, it is then likely that they will also modify their conceptions of the services which should be provided to help those in trouble. Students were given a list of 20 support services with a five-point scale for each service, and asked to indicate their priorities if they could command any or all of these services on each of the cases. It was expected that they would show a decreased reliance on strategies linked to psychiatric treatment and more willingness to offer services which could assist the youth in becoming independent.

This proved to be the case. Following the pattern observed earlier in Questions 1 through 12, respondents' willingness to recommend counselling and casework type services decreased, while their use of concrete helping programs increased considerably. As Table 5 illustrates, significant difference scores were obtained on the seven services listed. Students tended to significantly increase their preference for services such as "income assistance to the youth," "employment assistance to the youth," "crash pad" and "reside with friend" while simultaneously reducing preferences significantly for counselling and recreation services. Services not listed in the table were not significantly different in the pre- and post-tests. These services were: foster care, agency-operated group home, half-way house, income assistance to family, employment assistance to family, educational counselling, tutoring, legal help for youth, social work advocacy,

TABLE 5

SELECTED DIFFERENCE SCORES - PREFERRED SUPPORT SERVICES

Service	Experimental	Control	t-Test
Counselling	-.7000	.2250	-3.47*
Family Counsel	-.6111	.1875	-2.05*
Reside with Friend	.6111	.1071	1.98*
Income Assistance to Youth	.8750	-.4038	3.32**
Employment-Youth	.2750	-.4545	2.03**
Guidance Counselling	-.9000	-.2885	-1.69*
Recreation	-.6136	.0893	-1.92**
Crash Pad	.9444	-.2500	2.39**

*P=>.05
**P=>.01

self-help group. Social work advocacy, however, which would be expected to exhibit a significant change, had the highest mean score of any social services variable listed both before and after administration of the program. It was closely followed by the pre-test scores for counselling. These scores closely parallel the previously noted unexpected emphasis on facilitative status-changing variables by both the experimental and the control groups.

5. Findings: Support for Independence

In the final section of the questionnaire, students were asked to directly respond to the issue of whether or not they could support independence for the runaway youth. Two of the questions focused on the necessity for sustaining the youth in his own home, or arranging for alternatives to it. In both instances there were changes in the direction anticipated (see Table 6, Questions 7 and 8). Students in the experimental group felt it was less important to keep the youth at home and more necessary to find an alternative. In addition, they were more willing to support the youth's demand to live away from home as suggested by the response to Question 11. Nonetheless, as the answer to Question 9 indicates, they were no more certain of correctness of their decision at the end of the program than at the beginning.

6. Findings: Distribution of Changes

Analysis of t-scores indicates that for a number of relevant variables, group means shifted in the expected direction. However, these aggregate scores may conceal the fact that change occurred in only a few individuals, while

TABLE 6

DIFFERENCES IN MEAN SCORES
ON VARIABLES INDICATING
COMMITMENT TO INDEPENDENCE

(POST-TEST MINUS PRE-TEST)

Variable	Experimental	Control	*t*-Test
Question 7	-.8056	.2273	-3.39**
Question 8	.7500	-.0833	3.21**
Question 9	.5682	.0000	1.10
Question 11	.4750	1.1111	2.80**

*P=>.05
**P=>.01

Question 7 How necessary is it to sustain the youth in his own home?

Question 8 How necessary is it to arrange for alternatives to living in the family?

Question 9 How certain are you of your decision?

Question 11 Can you support the youth's demand for living away from home?

most group members did not change at all. In order to identify how widespread the changes were that occurred in the experimental group, a final series of frequency distributions of the difference scores (between pre-test and post-test) was conducted on several key variables. The results of the frequency distribution indicate that the changes discussed in this chapter were very widespread within the experimental group.

On Question 1A, for example, 83% of the group showed a decrease in their willingness to use psychiatric strategies (see Table 7), while 77% of the group increased their preference for advocacy strategies (see Table 8). Similarly, 82% of the group were less inclined to see the problem as emanating from the youths' personality structure (Table 9), while 91% moved toward an interpretation which stressed the unequal rights possessed by adolescents (Table 10). We can therefore conclude that most of the students in the program changed in the expected direction.

VIII. Summary of Statistical Findings

Though the experimental and control groups were not scientifically matched, their pre-test scores, when measured along a number of demographic and opinion variables, showed no significant differences. Hence, it can be concluded that the two groups were equivalent. Evaluation of the course centered on a test composed of four similar case descriptions and questions relating to them, which was designed to measure student responses along four major variables. These variables were: 1) preferred strategy for service provision,

TABLE 7

FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF DIFFERENCE SCORES

EXPERIMENTAL
GROUP

QUESTION 1A

Code	Absolute Frequency	Cumulative Frequency %
-3.00	1	8.30
-2.75	1	16.70
-2.25	1	25.00
-1.50	1	33.30
-1.25	2	50.00
-1.00	2	66.70
- .75	1	75.00
- .25	1	83.30
.25	1	91.70
2.00	1	100.00
Total	12	100.00

TABLE 8

FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF DIFFERENCE SCORES

EXPERIMENTAL
GROUP

QUESTION 1D

Code	Absolute Frequency	Cumulative Frequency %
-1.25	1	8.30
-1.00	1	16.70
- .25	1	25.00
1.25	1	33.30
1.50	1	41.70
1.75	3	66.70
2.00	2	83.30
3.00	2	100.00
Total	12	100.00

TABLE 9

FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF DIFFERENCE SCORES

EXPERIMENTAL
GROUP

QUESTION 2A

Code	Absolute Frequency	Cumulative Frequency %
-4.75	1	9.10
-2.50	1	18.20
-2.25	1	27.30
-2.00	1	36.40
-1.75	1	45.50
-1.00	2	63.60
- .50	1	72.70
- .25	1	81.80
.50	2	100.00
.00	1	(missing value)
Total	12	100.00

TABLE 10

FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF DIFFERENCE SCORES

EXPERIMENTAL
GROUP

QUESTION 2D

Code	Absolute Frequency	Cumulative Frequency %
-1.00	1	9.10
.25	1	18.20
.50	1	27.30
.75	2	45.50
1.00	2	63.60
1.50	1	72.70
1.75	1	81.80
2.00	1	90.90
3.75	1	100.00
.00	1	(missing value)
Total	12	100.00

2) preferred explanation for running away, 3) preferred social services, and 4) support for independence.

Though both groups tended to favor advocacy strategies and non-psychiatric explanations for the behavior of runaways at pre-test, significant differences between pre-test and post-test scores were recorded for the experimental group, while none were observed among the control group along expected variables. At the conclusion of the program, students in the experimental group tended to place less emphasis on strategies which called for helping the youth to remain at home by offering counselling services and greater emphasis on provision of services which would help the youth move outside his parental home. Similarly, they were significantly less committed to explanations of runaway behavior which relied upon emotional factors and more likely to favor explanations which focused on the youth's socially determined lack of rights. In addition, the services they prescribed tended to reflect these changes and emphasized programs which would facilitate independence. Finally, students in the experimental group also responded positively when asked if they favored the decision to have the youths move away from home into situations which were more or less independent of adult supervision.

IX. Anecdotal Reports

In addition to the tests described in the first section of this chapter, there were other means of evaluation available to the investigator. First, student reactions to the content of the course were often personal and emotional.

Notes were kept on these reactions where they were observed as well as on the ongoing evaluatory comments made by students. Second, students were asked to fill out two evaluations at the end of the semester. One was anonymous, while the other was not. Finally, some students unexpectedly wrote notes to the instructor analyzing what had happened to them during the course.

As the semester progressed, students increasingly indicated that the content of the course was unique for them; that ideas were being used differently than they had previously encountered in class situations. They were particularly struck by the attention paid to problems of definition and the manner in which labelling affected the development of public policy toward adolescents. While initially hesitant about accepting data that challenged conventional wisdom, students very gradually began to accept the notion that running away was not as simple a definitional issue as they had at first supposed. Some students in the class had older children at the brink of adolescence and increasingly during the discussions they began to bring in anecdotes about their personal reactions to their children's behavior. After the discussion of adolescent rights, this discussion became quite heated as the class debated the degree to which youths should be permitted to make decisions on their own behalf. At the session following, some of the students wanted to continue discussion and several began to relate how they had modified their position toward their own children during the past week. In general, this change appeared to be directed toward

allowing more autonomy than previously. One young woman described a problem she had been having with her four-year-old daughter involving standards of dress. She spoke of continuing battles with the child as she attempted to impose dress standards that the child did not accept. As a result, she noted, of our class discussion on "fairness," she decided to let the child make her own dress decisions within certain broad standards of health. The obvious impact of the discussion on this student was repeated in more subtle ways by several others as they described how their own attitudes had shifted. This unexpected and unanticipated effect suggests that the policy problem of runaway adolescents may be so closely linked with personal child-rearing standards that to affect policy perception may require that basic personal standards must also be addressed.

In other discussions, students noted that they were less prone to take their perceptions about problems for granted as they had prior to taking the course. They noted that in their agencies it was common to develop a standard operating procedure about an issue that was rarely questioned, and the course had caused them to raise questions. In a sense, they said, they had become more skeptical and open to new interpretations as a result of the experience.

1. Written Evaluation

Ten of the 12 students in the group indicated that the interviews had been "very" significant in improving their understanding of youth problems. In listing the most useful topics, students tended to favor the content on labelling,

rights, and social policy as being the most significant and useful for them. In general, the evaluatory comments were very favorable, a reflection, perhaps, of rapport in a small group as much as of the content introduced during the course of the semester.

The students almost uniformly rated the course as average in the category "demanding" but rated it very highly on being intellectually stimulating. Several criticized it for not stressing programmatic alternatives sufficiently, thus providing them with alternatives to existing practice. Several also noted that they would have wished for some additional help in understanding parents' reactions and problems when children leave home.

X. Conclusions

Though it was initially anticipated that social work students would favor strategies emphasizing psychiatric intervention and would place lower priority upon interventions which would change the status of the individual toward more independence from the family, this did not occur. In general, at pre-test and post-test both the control and the experimental groups placed a high emphasis on status changing measures. The differences, however, in the mean scores between psychiatric help and status changes were not great. Significant change did occur in the experimental group along the variables predicted. Those taking the course appeared to place much greater weight upon advocating a changed status for the client and reduced emphasis on psychiatric help after participating in the program. Interpreting the problem as

"insufficient rights" and rating the need for "advocacy" highly supports this conclusion. This change was replicated along several comparable variables (acceptance of independence and service provision variables) providing further support for the contention that significant change in perception of the problem occurred as a result of participation in the course. This conclusion is supported by anecdotal notes of student perceptions and evaluations of the program.

However, the smallness of the sample size and consequent statistical errors as well as the imprecision of the test instrument itself moderate against any firm conclusions about the cause of the changes. The test instrument took longer than one and a half hours to complete and received less than total interest from the control group, though the experimental group remained enthusiastic. In addition, though means were drawn against all variables pre- and post- to cancel out any minor differences caused by the wording of the questions and the presentation of the cases, there is strong possibility that further refinement of the test instrument might have somewhat modified the results. Since the program was viewed as exploratory and the tests were administered on the first run of the program, these problems appear to represent acceptable compromises given the expected outcomes.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSIONS

The project described in this report was designed to stimulate critical thinking among future practitioners about the objectives and procedures of social work practice by introducing them to the techniques and assumptions of social policy analysis. The expected outcome was that, after exposure to a curriculum designed for this purpose, students would be more able and more motivated to challenge traditional assumptions about practice and would be more client-oriented in their own professional behavior. Evidence for a more client-centered approach would be provided by reliance on goals which tended to alter the client's status rather than his personality.

Several techniques and methods were employed to implement the program. First, the methods suggested by the concepts of andragogy were considered and, where appropriate, were utilized. Thus the program emerged as a workshop in which students played a large role in preparing and delivering content. Where possible, discussion was favored over lecture, and discovery by the students of concepts was emphasized over delivery of concepts by the instructor. Second, in contrast to other reported courses in social policy, the course was organized around a single policy issue. All students were therefore involved in a collective analysis of questions relating to adolescent youths and to those who run away. Thirdly, the course integrated class and field learning techniques since the students were expected to interview and report upon the activities, feelings, and experiences of youths who had left home. Finally, several specific content

areas were stressed as theoretical contexts for understanding the implications and outcomes of policy. The content areas--broad social welfare theory, labelling theory, historical inquiry and discussions of values inherent in policy--were central to the course experience.

The evaluation component of the project described in Chapter V documented the changes which occurred in the experimental group. Apparently, members of this group showed considerably more agreement with strategies and explanations which emphasized status-changing and advocacy activities than the control group. On virtually every measure the experimental group scores changed in the expected direction. The only unexpected finding was that the absolute mean scores of both groups, at pre-test and at post-test, were generally higher on "status-changing" variables than anticipated and therefore lower on scores which reflected "status-reinforcing" strategies. The unexpected tendency of both groups to devalue counselling strategies and psychiatric interpretations of runaway behavior can be attributed to the special climate and admissions procedures of the school which tend to emphasize the social change activities of social workers over their treatment functions.

Caution must be used, however, in interpreting the results of the statistical analysis. An N of 12 in the experimental group is not a large enough number from which to generalize conclusions. Moreover, test effects may have influenced the responses of the control group who were clearly less interested in the process than the experimental group.

On the other hand, there is fairly clar evidence that both groups were relatively similar despite the accidental procedures which were used to develop the sample.

Methodological Considerations

The use of andragological insights and techniques to organize the course was very favorably received by the students. The feeling of partnership and equality which this method promotes immeasurably aids the classroom climate and facilitates faculty-student and student-student interaction. The workshop format, though allowing for sufficient faculty direction of content learning, also promotes self-learning and student discovery of material in ways which traditional course formats do not allow. It was clear that students were more interested and committed to this class than to other courses they had taken and this was noted by them many times during the course of the semester.

Part of the excitement recorded by students may have been due to a Hawthorne effect since students were aware that the course was to be a part of the instructor's doctoral program and that they were therefore afforded special treatment. This unique feature and the fact that the course was organized differently from other educational experiences in the school may have played a role in stimulating student enthusiasm for the program.

The use of a single social policy issue as a locus for course organization also has favorable implications. In other courses, where students work independently on a policy question, less involvement is demanded of students with the

work of others, and there is less incentive for commitment to the total course process. In this case, students' work was interdependent. The interest and commitment of one student was a stimulus to the others. In addition, more attention could be paid to significant details than in a course where many policy areas are discussed. Nonetheless the possibility for generalizing the policy analysis method to other programs exists since in the process of analysis, students develop insight into the process of inquiry and learn the technique of policy analysis, as they would if they were doing independent work.

Though presenting many problems in its implementation, the field component of the program was, on balance, an important feature of the course. The opportunity to interact with youths affected by the policies under discussion and with the agencies responsible for implementing these policies was of incalculable benefit. Students were able to move from stereotypic views of runaways to much more individualized conceptions. The course analysis reported earlier which suggested that existing categories were inadequate for the provision of helping services was enlivened by the ability to relate the analysis to case examples. Indeed, it was through the interviews that participants could discover that an "independent minor" category truly existed and that these youths required special helping relationships.

While students reported that they thought the four major areas of content introduced into the course (social welfare theory, labelling theory, historical analysis and

philosophy) were indispensable to their own perceptions of the problem, some question can be raised about this conclusion. The content areas selected introduced a perspective with a specific ideological focus designed to be consonant with the instructor's view of the relationship of social work values to the problems of adolescents. Hence more technical content analyzing cost effectiveness or discussing the inherent incentives which such policies create was not fully developed. The policy analysis performed was therefore not comprehensive since it did not cover certain issues. Given the time constraints of a fourteen-session course, these additional elements could not have been added without deleting other elements of the program. Hence the focus on values, and particularly the explicit preference for widening the rights of adolescents, carried with it constraints about content and the method for its delivery.

The limitations on content can be justified given one of the central purposes of the course, which was to develop a critical focus on social work practice in settings which deal with adolescents who run away, and by implication, with all social services which in some way are implicated in the control of deviance. This ambitious objective must, however, be considered within the context of a student's total educational experience. One course, while it can affect students' perceptions, cannot counteract the total experience of field and school with which the student is in contact. Indeed, if the total system of incentives to which students are exposed runs contrary to the objectives of a

single course, it is highly doubtful that one experience will have sufficient power to have a significant effect over time. Hence, objectives which have far-reaching behavioral consequences must be suffused throughout the total curriculum in order to offer more certainty of success.

Several important theoretical questions surfaced out of the experience of conducting the course. Perhaps the most critical question relates to the problem of identifying the role of values in shaping practitioner opinions about social policy options. Most social policy questions affect the family, an arena of deeply held values and beliefs. Since the course focused on the problem of the runaway and ultimately concluded with an appeal to permit more self-directed solutions for adolescents outside the family if necessary, individual values about the nature of parent-child relations invariably affected student perceptions of the problem.

At the beginning of the course when discussing values about parenting, there appeared to be little questioning of the rightness or appropriateness of what could be considered relatively Draconian child-rearing measures. This observation was in direct contrast, of course, to the test results which appeared to support a relatively open attitude toward activities which would free the adolescent from his or her home environment. Examples of the former attitude were abundant as students with children of their own related incidents from their parenting experiences which support the conclusion that they were relatively traditional in their child-rearing approaches. Yet with each session, changes in

attitude seemed to occur. During one session, discussion drifted onto the problem of child abuse as an example of another narrowly focused social program directed at protecting children and improving the family. During the session, question was raised about the appropriateness of using physical punishment to control children. There was little dissent from the traditional attitude that children should be beaten (if only moderately) when "necessary." Some weeks later in the semester, when the class discussed the question of children's rights, the concept that children were people who had explicit rights had clearly affected the thinking of students. This session, the most effective in terms of its impact on how students conceptualized problems, appeared to be a watershed. Question was raised about the use of physical violence again, and there appeared to be a change in attitude on this question based upon a re-evaluation of appropriate rights of children.

The introduction of philosophic argument about social issues into the social welfare curriculum requires further exploration. Philosophic discourse on values and ethics has direct relevance for social policy determination. Since human values shape the ends of policy, the use of philosophic scholarship in social work courses may have signal relevance.

The experience of conducting this course provided one of the most exciting moments in my teaching career. The mood of the class and my own was consistently elevated. There was a real sense of sharing, and as one student explained her reaction, she enjoyed the course more because she felt that

I was learning too and not simply teaching. Her perception was that she was being taken seriously and that her views might affect mine, just as I expected that mine would affect her. This was a new experience for most students and one that should be consciously sought in the teaching-learning interaction. Perhaps as I have noted earlier, the excess of enthusiasm noted can be attributed to a Hawthorne effect. If this is true, it seems worth pursuing in other educational programs more systematically. If students can be induced to feel that each educational experience is special, the purpose of education will be better served.

EPILOGUE:

Recapitulation of three major issues of concern to those who would replicate this project.

1. The use of andragogy as a teaching form greatly facilitated the substantive content of the labelling perspective insofar as alteration of student self-identification facilitated their capacity to consider the runaway in non-agency terms; i.e. as an independent minor.
2. The field research component allowed students to encounter runaways without defining them as clients hence new perspectives about the character and personality structure of the youths themselves could emerge.
3. The engagement of the entire class in the study of one social policy issue was a significant additive feature of the project and should be a part of any project of this nature, as it allowed more intense attention to one policy case which had features which are generalizeable to other policy arenas.

APPENDIX A

COURSE OUTLINE

WORKSHOP ON ADOLESCENT RUNAWAYS POLICY AND PROGRAM

S. Antler

SESSION I

Introduction to course

Purpose:

1. To explore the policies and programs which affect adolescents who leave home
2. To develop understanding of the context in which policies are shaped, i.e., values, norms, tradition
3. To develop a deeper appreciation of the many problems encountered by youth who leave home
4. To apprehend the multi-dimensional nature of adolescent behavior

Discussion of method of course including topics for exploration by student groups.

SESSION II

Evaluation - Pre-Test

Note: All students must take the pre-test. If you are not in class for this session, please see the instructor some time during the week to arrange a convenient time to take the test.

a) Discussion of interest groups
   1. legal issues
   2. runaway research
   3. background
      a) norms
      b) role of adolescent in family
      c) legislation
   4. program issues
      - practices of schools
      - police & social agencies
   5. interviewing

b) Scheduling of work, etc.

c) Break up into work groups

SESSION III

A. The Nature of Social Policy

1. The function of social policy
2. Values and their relation to policy
3. Alternative definitions and purposes
   "We must define social policy not just as the strategy of development of social services as defined by government but as the underlying as well as the professed rationale for institutionalized control of present and future social development."
   Peter Townsend

   as quoted in Gil, David
   Unravelling Social Policy, Schenkman Publ. Co., 1973, Cambridge, Mass.

   "Social policies are concerned with the right ordering of the network of relationships between men and women who live together in societies, or with the principles which should govern the activities of individuals and groups so far as they affect the lives and interests of other people."
   A. MacBeath

   Ibid, page 8

B. Key Concepts

1. Social policy involves distribution of rights
2. Social policy involves distribution of social resources
3. Social policy involves allocation of statuses

C. Introduction to Methods of Analyzing Policy

D. A Framework for Explicating Policy

1. Issues dealt with by the policy
   a) nature, scope and distribution
   b) causal theories
2. Objectives, value premises, effects
   a) policy objectives
   b) value premises and ideal orientation
   c) theories and hypotheses underlying policy objectives

   Etc. - see p. 34 & 35 - Gil, David, Unravelling Social Policies

SESSION IV

A Framework for Viewing Social Work Practice and Theory

Who is to be served
Under what condition
With what intention (outcomes) in mind
Under what auspice
For how long
With what intensity
By whom

SESSION V

Interviewing

Purpose: To develop skills in using the interview guide

SESSION VI

Youth Rights: The Policy Perspective

Objectives

1. To make explicit the framework of existing policy
2. To review historical perspectives on adolescent dependency
3. To propose alternative value perspectives on adolescents
   a) discussion of the rationale for inequality and its relation to other social arrangements

SESSION VII

The Labelling Perspective

SESSION VIII

Movie - "High School" - Frederich Wiseman

SESSION IX

The Adolescent and the Family

SESSION X

Policy and Runaways

Definitions of the runaway

Review of research into runaway behavior
Assumptions of the research about:
a) the nature of the problem
   1) behavioral
   2) sociological

3) psychological

b) the population being investigated

c) relationship of runaways to child welfare system

SESSION XI

The Agency and the Runaway

Panel Discussion

SESSION XII

Discussion of Findings and Preparation of Recommendations

SESSION XIII

Evaluation

Books Recommended for Purchase:

Gil, David, Unravelling Social Policy, Schenkman Publishers

Dorman, Michael, Under 21, Dell Publishers

Freidenberg, E., Coming of Age in America, Vintage Publishers

Schur, Edwin, Radical Non-Intervention, Prentice Hall

Report of the Panel on Youth of the President's Science Advisory Commission - Youth Transition to Adulthood

The Rights of Children, Nov. 1973; Feb. 1974, Harvard Educational Review

For SESSION III and IV Read:

Gil, David, Unravelling Social Policy, Schenkman, pp. 1-56

Rein, Martin, "Social Work in Search of a Radical Profession", Social Work, April 1970

Gelles, Richard, "Child Abuse as Psychopathology: A Sociological Critique and Reformulation," American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, July 1973

For SESSION VI Read:

Report of the Panel on Youth to the President's Advisory Committee, Youth Transition to Adulthood, Read Preface and pp. 1-91

Worsfold, Victor, "A Philosophic Justification for Children's Rights", Harvard Educational Review, Feb. 1974, pp. 142-147

Featherstone, Joseph, "Book Review" of Children and Youth in America: A Documentary History, Vol. 1 (1600-1685) and Vol. 2 (1866-1932) by Robert H. Bremner, et.al., Harvard Educational Review, Feb. 1972, pp. 160-168

For SESSION VII Read:

Schur, Edwin M., Radical Non-Intervention

APPENDIX B

TEST INSTRUMENT/CASE/DESCRIPTIONS

HWW 548

In each of the cases which follows you are to take the perspective of a trained social worker working for a youth service agency in a suburban community. You have considerable latitude in your professional decision making.

Take as much time as you need to answer each question. There is no right or wrong decision and the tests will not be graded, nor will answers in any way effect final marks.

Think carefully and be as candid as possible.

Thank you.

SA:am

CASE I

William R., 16 years of age, regularly attends youth functions in the agency and has been receiving on going counseling from youth service counselors for the past three months. William lives with both parents and a younger adoptive sister in a suburban development. His father, a man in his early 50's, is employed as a salesman for a sporting goods company while his mother works as a clerk in the local elementary school. William sought counseling initially due to confusion about his family relations and school work.

For the past year William's father has been a member of Alcoholics Anonymous. He began participating in AA after threats by Mrs. R. that she would leave him if he did not quit drinking. Nonetheless William's relationship with both parents has deteriorated. Particularly since they have started to concern themselves with William's behavior and association after several years of relative indifference to his activities.

Though never more than a reluctant student, William's school work has fallen off considerably and he has begun to stay out of school for several days at a time. This has led to further deterioration in relations at home. When in school he is restless and occasionally hostile to teachers and others, although his general peer relations are good. He has been warned that he will be expelled if there are further incidents in school and if he continues to stay out.

He has told the agency worker and his guidance counselor at school that he is going to leave home permanently, take an apartment with a friend, and get a job. Since he has spent several summers doing house painting and light carpentry he feels that he can manage. The school counselor believes William to be very immature and grandiose and has sought to encourage him to remain home and finish school.

Recently the agency learned that William was picked up by the Police while riding a stolen car with several youths. He claims he was unaware it was stolen. William's parents, now are even more angry at home and are convinced that a harsh dressing down by the court would be "good medicine." With this attitude it is likely that he will be placed on probation until he is 18.

William, in conversations with the agency worker, is bitter about his parents' attitudes and has stated that he will drop out of school next week and move in with a group of older youths who have an apartment. He has also located a job with a local carpenter willing to train him.

The agency has initiated counseling with William and

his family in order to make it possible for him to remain home. William is not optimistic about a successful outcome.

WILLIAM

1. Indicate how helpful each of the following approaches will be in resolving this situation. Do not place the same value on more than one alternative.

   A. Continued supportive counseling for William, and if possible his parents, to enable William to remain at home long enough to work through his court problem and if possible finish high school.

not helpful — very helpful

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

   B. William seems to require controls. The court involvement may help him understand the seriousness of his situation and help him to consider more carefully the consequences of his behavior. Service should focus on helping William accept parental supervision and helping William's parents provide that supervision in an evenhanded and supportive manner.

not helpful — very helpful

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

   C. The situation at home suggests that William be relocated into a group home or foster care where more supportive help can be provided. Once the problem of "family relations" is thus resolved it might be possible to work through William's legal, school and interpersonal difficulties.

not helpful — very helpful

1 2 2 4 5 6 7 8 9

   D. Intervention with the family and the court is required to assure that William's decision to leave home is accepted by his parents and the court. Since the parents' attitudes about the youth is important in judicial matters, work with the parents on William's behalf is necessary. If the parents are unwilling to change their attitude in regard to William's court hearing, the agency should advocate on his behalf. Irrespective of the court outcome the agency should continue to work with him during

his transition to independence from the family.

not helpful								very helpful
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

CASE II

Ronny K., 15, is alert, bright and mature. Though initially hesitant about discussing himself he indicates that while he gets along with his divorced mother, (he has never met his father since the divorce occurred prior to his birth) he would prefer to work and live on his own rather than attend school. He currently works part time in a radio repair shop and earns $30 per week "off the books."

Ronny's mother is something of a nonconformist in a middle class community. She is illegally on welfare and employed as a waitress. A succession of male friends have stayed in the home for various lengths of time. She makes no attempt to hide her love relationships from Ronny, his older sister, and their many friends. However, the family life style, which is more free and open than their neighbors, has set Ronny apart and has caused some of his friends parents to be openly hostile. They fear Ronny's influence and have instructed their teenage children to keep Ronny at arms length. Ronny knows this and reacts contemptuously to most adults, describing them as silly and untrustworthy. While he pretends coolness, he is hurt by adult attitudes toward him.

Ronny resents school and he is frequently truant though his grades are average. A year ago the school took him to court for truancy and placed him on informal probation through court intake. (No court process is required for this procedure). Ronny claims that the only reason he remains in school is that laws prevent him from dropping out and working full time. He particularly resents the many rules and regulations in school which he feels are more suitable for grade school than for high school. He is openly contemptuous of most adults in helping relationships.

On several occasions Ronny has left home for periods of from two weeks to eight weeks, usually to visit friends out of state. Each time Ronny's mother has reported him as a runaway to the Police and then withdrawn the report when Ronny called and told her he was coming home. Consequently, Ronny is known to the Police, and though they have not hassled him he fears them greatly.

Ronny is now in trouble in school over his repeated truancy. The school plans to take Ronny and his mother to court. The attendance officer has suggested to the agency that he will recommend a State Training School for Ronny and the probation department may concur. It is therefore possible that Ronny will be sent away. Ronny says he intends to run away in order to avoid institutionalization. The agency worker is counseling Ronny to remain at home while efforts are made to improve the home situation in hopes that his relationship with his mother and the school can be improved.

Ronny has strong doubts that this will work out.

RONNY

1. Indicate how helpful each of the following approaches will be in resolving this situation. Do not assign the same value to more than one alternative.

   A. Continued counseling should focus on encouraging Ronny to continue living at home and attend the school regularly then perhaps the school could be convinced to withdraw their petition from the court.

   not helpful — very helpful

   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

   B. Ronny should be placed in foster care to remove him from his disorganized home situation. The court and the school should be solicited as potential allies.

   not helpful — very helpful

   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

   C. Ronny's relative maturity suggests that there may be some justice in his claim that the school is irrelevant to him. Efforts should be made to work out an alternative program with the school that is more appropriate to Ronny's needs.

   not helpful — very helpful

   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

   D. A lawyer should be engaged to assist Ronny and if necessary to make a constitutional test of laws which permit institutionalization of young people for truancy. The American Civil Liberties Union should also be engaged in this case.

   not helpful — very helpful

   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

CASE III

Elwood A., a quiet, shy 15 year old has been known to various workers in the agency since he was 8 years old. At that time his older brother, then 12, had been referred by the school guidance counselor for repeated truancy and poor school performance. A home visit was made at that time and disclosed a disorganized and destructive home environment. Both parents were alcoholics, unemployed, and on welfare. The father, at one time an air force sergeant, and construction worker, was given to physical violence. On one occasion the police had been called by neighbors and the mother had been hospitalized due to injuries sustained as a result of her husband's outbursts. There was no evidence of the children being abused. On three occasions the father left the family for extended separations.

The family had moved to the community approximately 15 years ago at the height of the suburban construction boom. When the construction industry began to tighten up several years ago the father's employment became more sporadic and his personal difficulties increased.

Elwood's first involvement with the court occurred through a school referral for truancy when he was 12. Both parents were called into court and Elwood was placed on probation as a PINS (Person In Need of Supervision). For the next few years he was periodically returned to court for various minor offenses, and when he was 15 he was arrested for possession of marijuana. On that occasion a probation report was made to the court recommending removal from his home. The report cited the conditions previously mentioned, and Elwood was sent to the State Training School since no other alternative home situations appeared available.

Seven months ago Elwood returned from a three month sentence at the State Training School in upstate New York and is currently living with his older brother, Robert, who is employed as a taxi driver on the midnight to 8 a.m. shift. Elwood's brother has been a positive influence on him and is concerned about his welfare. This may be a partial explanation for Elwood's much improved school performance, and his new circle of friends. Recently, however, Robert has decided to ask his girlfriend to move in with him. The apartment is small and his girlfriend is not enthusiastic about having a younger brother in the apartment. Therefore, Robert has asked Elwood to move back with his parents, a step which his parents support since they would like him at home.

Elwood is strongly opposed to moving in with his parents given their past history despite the fact that his father is now employed and the family situation appears to

have stabilized. Though Elwood's school performance is much improved, he is prepared to drop out and find employment rather than return home, although he would prefer to stay in school.

Agency counselors have encouraged Elwood to return to his parents' home. Elwood feels this will not work out.

ELWOOD

1. Indicate how helpful each of the following approaches will be in resolving this situation. Do not assign the same value to more than one alternative.

A. Counseling with Elwood and his parents should focus on improving the home situation so Elwood can return home and continue his education. Ongoing family counseling should be provided.

not helpful — very helpful

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

B. A foster home or other relative should be sought to assume parental responsibility for Elwood.

not helpful — very helpful

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

C. A small group home appears to be most appropriate since it provides minimum supervision and will allow Elwood to complete his education.

not helpful — very helpful

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

D. Help should be provided in locating employment or financial aid and finding an apartment for Elwood. A part time high school program should be arranged with the school to enable Elwood to complete his education.

not helpful — very helpful

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

CASE IV

Todd B., 15, is a bright but hostile and suspicious youth. He first ran away at age 13 and was returned by the Police after travelling as far as Chicago. Todd was then remanded to his father's custody by the court. His father, a trainman for the LIRR and a widower for the past six years, is angry at Todd and regards him as a "delinquent and troublemaker" for the trouble he has caused, and appears unsympathetic and unbending. Reacting to relations at home, Todd ran away four months after his first episode and three weeks later was again picked up, this time in New York City. This time upon his return the Family Court Judge declared him a PINS at his father's request and placed him under probation supervision. The Judge told him that if he ran away again or was truant from school he would be sent to the State Training School.

Todd's school performance has been poor for the past three years, though prior to this time he seemed a promising student. Fearful of being sent away as the Judge threatened, Todd has remained at home though his father's disciplinary measures have become increasingly severe. Todd is not allowed out in the evening except with advance permission which is rarely given and he is not allowed to have friends visit at any time. Todd's father has been seen by school guidance personnel and has refused to relax his discipline. In three months Todd plans to leave again after he has passed his 16th birthday and can no longer be a ward of the court. He has no vocational plans.

Aside from a few close friends Todd does not appear to have strong peer relations. He is still a chronic truant from school but school authorities, knowing he will drop out anyway, do not attempt to force attendance.

Todd has established a relationship with a sympathetic agency worker and has asked for help in moving out of his home. He is communicative with the worker, seems unrealistic about the situation he will encounter once he leaves home.

Counseling with Todd has focused on encouraging him to remain at home, though Todd fears this will not work out.

TODD

1. Indicate how helpful each of the following approaches will be in resolving this situation. Do not assign the same value to more than one alternative.

   A. Continue encouraging Todd to remain at home till age 18 and offer supportive help to him and his father in order to (a) help Todd's father relax his

discipline, (b) help Todd increase his school performance.

not helpful — very helpful

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

B. Point out the harsh realities of independent living to Todd, the legal and social difficulties he would encounter and encourage him to move in with a foster family if things can't be worked out with his father.

not helpful — very helpful

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

C. Help Todd identify ways in which he would work out an alternative living situation and work with Todd's father to help him accept Todd's independence.

not helpful — very helpful

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

D. Help Todd locate employment and housing possibilities in preparation for moving out and try to get Todd's father to assist in the transition by offering financial and emotional support.

not helpful — very helpful

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

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2. Is there any further information necessary for you to make your decision? Please list.

____

____

____

____

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____

____

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____

____

3. Please summarize briefly the basis for your decision. Indicate any key factors which influence your decision.

____

____

____

____

____

A. Indicate key factors which influenced your decision:

1) ______________________________________

2) ______________________________________

3) ______________________________________

4) ______________________________________

4. Given the facts of the case and available alternatives, how easy or difficult was the decision (check one)?

_____a) very easy (clear choice, clear evidence)
_____b) quite easy (some doubt)
_____c) easy (weak evidence but favors choice)
_____d) difficult (evidence weak, does not favor one alternative)
_____e) quite difficult (more than one alternative indicated by evidence)
_____f) very difficult (evidence ambiguous or equal for more than one alternative)

5. In general, how well does each of the following interpretations explain this situation or condition? Do not place the same value on more than one.

A. The situation described is of a confused, uncertain, young person in need of psychological help to negotiate the difficult transition which characterizes adolescence.

not at all								very well
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

B. Unreasonable disciplinary measures at home can exacerbate a young person's problems. In this situation if the parent(s) could relax their demands many of the problems could be managed.

not at all								very well
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

C. Unsympathetic and unresponsive social institutions such as schools and courts play a significant role in the problems experienced by young people in resolving difficult personal problems.

not at all								very well
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

D. Adolescents, defined as dependents and lacking independent status have few rights and therefore limited options. Consequently, they are often expected to tolerate situations which are inappropriate to their needs.

not at all								very well
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

6. Indicate your priorities if you were able to command the support service or resource listed below in this situation.

	not at all	low priority	moderate priority	high	highest
a) counseling (youth)	1	2	3	4	5
b) psychiatric assistance (youth)	1	2	3	4	5
c) counseling (family)	1	2	3	4	5
d) psychiatric assistance (family)	1	2	3	4	5
e) foster care	1	2	3	4	5

		not at all	low priority	moderate priority	high	high-est
f)	residence with friends	1	2	3	4	5
g)	agency operated group home	1	2	3	4	5
h)	half way house	1	2	3	4	5
i)	income assistance to youth	1	2	3	4	5
j)	income assistance to family	1	2	3	4	5
k)	employment assis-tance (youth)	1	2	3	4	5
l)	employment assis-tance (family)	1	2	3	4	5
m)	educational coun-seling	1	2	3	4	5
n)	guidance counsel-ing	1	2	3	4	5
o)	tutoring	1	2	3	4	5
p)	legal help for youth	1	2	3	4	5
q)	advocacy by so-cial worker	1	2	3	4	5
r)	recreation and group work ser-vices	1	2	3	4	5
s)	crisis center (agency operated)	1	2	3	4	5
t)	self help group	1	2	3	4	5
u)	crash pad	1	2	3	4	5
v)	other	1	2	3	4	5

7. How necessary is it to sustain the youth in his own home given the situation described, the youth's age and experience and the legal issues involved?

_____a) not at all
_____b) slightly
_____c) moderately
_____d) very
_____e) extremely

8. How necessary is it to arrange for <u>alternatives to living in the family</u> given the situation described, the youth's age and experience and the legal issues involved?

_____a) not at all
_____b) slightly
_____c) moderately
_____d) very
_____e) extremely

9. How certain are you that you have made the right decision in this case? Check the point which best approximates your degree of certainty.

_____a) uncertain
_____b) some question
_____c) reasonably certain
_____d) quite certain
_____e) no doubt whatsoever

10. Do you believe the case situation described approximates situations which you might encounter in practice in a youth services agency?

_____Yes
_____No
_____Not sure

11. Given the situation described, is the youth's demand for living away from his parents' home one which you can personally support?

_____a) not at all (no possible justification)
_____b) possibly (small & insignificant reasons)
_____c) somewhat (some evidence but more work required to help him stay at home)
_____d) moderately (conditions may justify leaving home)
_____e) very (definite & significant reasons for leaving)

12. If the youth were one year younger, would this change your answer to question 11?

_____Yes
_____No

In what way? ______________________________________

____

13. If the youth were one year older, would this change your answer to question 11?

    _____Yes
    _____No

    In what way? ____

    ____

14. How willing would you be to argue for the positions you have chosen if it was in opposition to the agencies' policies?

    _____a) not at all
    _____b) slightly
    _____c) moderately
    _____d) fairly strongly
    _____e) strongly

15. Comments

    ____

    ____

APPENDIX C

TEST INSTRUMENT 2: DEMOGRAPHIC AND SOCIAL INFORMATION

EVALUATION

1. Name: ______________________________

2. Age: ____________

3. Student Status: a) 1st year _____ b) 2nd year _____

   c) Full Time ____ d) Park Time ____

   e) Undergrad ____ f) Graduate _____

4. Concentration: a) Intervention ___ b) Policy/Planning _____

   c) Social Strategies _____ (check all applicable)

5. Current Field Placement (or Employment if Park Time)

   Agency: ______________________________

   Location: ______________________________

   Position (type of work): ____________________

   Are you currently working with Adolescents? If yes, describe work fully.

   Yes _____ No _____

   ____

   ____

   ____

   Have you ever worked with Adolescents? If yes, describe work fully.

   Yes _____ No _____

   ____

   ____

   ____

6. Previous Social Work Experience:

   I. Agency: ______________________________

   Location: ______________________________

Position: ______________________________

Type of Work: ______________________________

Dates: From ___/___/___ To ___/___/___

II. Agency: ______________________________

Location: ______________________________

Position: ______________________________

Type of Work: ______________________________

Dates: From ___/___/___ To ___/___/___

III. Agency: ______________________________

Location: ______________________________

Position: ______________________________

Type of Work: ______________________________

Dates: From ___/___/___ To ___/___/___

7. Have you ever had a relationship with a youth under 18 who ran away or lived away from home?

Yes _____ No _____

If answer is yes, please describe the situation and your opinions regarding the youth, his/her family and the treatment afforded him/her.

____

____

____

8. Why did you decide to take this course? ______________

____

____

Page 3 EVALUATION

9. What specific learning do you hope to accomplish? _____

____

____

____

10. Do you intend to work with adolescents after graduation from school?

____

APPENDIX D

THE INDEPENDENT MINOR

The purpose of this paper is to identify the situation of the independent minor as a social problem of growing urgency as well as to review some of the conditions of the adolescent experience which generate momentum for independence from direct parental control. It is suggested that research will uncover significant numbers of adolescents living independently of their parents, though not necessarily defined as runaways or delinquents, groups which have received great attention from public authorities. Many are living much as other adolescents of the same age, attending school, working, or seeking work, or simply hanging out. However, they suffer from severe social and legal liabilities which hamper their ability to function and which prevent them from constructively growing as an outcome of their independence. In addition, many of these youths are pressed into deviant adaptations as services normally available to adolescents, adults, or to juveniles in trouble, are not available to them, as they may exhibit few anti-social traits and therefore do not represent a threat to the community. Moreover, since they have a vague legal status, these youths have limited legal entitlements.

The paper presents a rationale for action on behalf of these youths and offers a perspective from which to conceptualize an action research project whose outcome would be to sensitize the community to the existence of this phenomenon.

I. Definition of the Problem of the Independent Minor

Traditional concepts of the role and composition of

the family in society dominate public policy and the institutions which touch upon the lives of family members. These traditional concepts, assuming a nuclear family composed of married partners and their offspring, though subject to criticism as a norm applicable only to the middle class, have in the last few decades been severely shaken.

New attention and awareness of the shifting texture of family arrangements have considerably altered conceptions of the normative family.[1] These changes in the family have to some extent begun to receive recognition through numerous recent alterations in public policies. Easier and more painless divorce, abortion reform, homosexual and single adoption and a new emphasis on children's rights represent concessions to changed circumstances and to a more liberalized viewpoint.[2]

Though changes have occurred in the conception of rights of those children brought before the courts for whom community agencies have assumed responsibility, little recognition has been afforded the problems of another category of minor children--those who live independently of their own families. Children who live outside of parental supervision in places other than their own homes suffer severe liabilities in their civil rights, particularly those which involve rights of contract, residence, education and health care. Institutions with which children are normally affiliated assume confused and contradictory policies when a minor either has cause for separating from his home or when he has actually done so. So severe are these legal and social liabilities that evidence has accumulated suggesting

that a considerable amount of delinquent behavior involving runaways emanates from lack of entitlements to the rights, services and programs normally available to adults.[3]

That some youths will be unable to remain in their own homes has long been publicly recognized. As a consequence over the past hundred years the community has devised a child welfare system whose purpose is to provide children and youths with an alternative family in the event that the child's biological family cannot meet his needs.[4] Hundreds of thousands of children are currently in foster care, in institutions, or have been placed through adoptive mechanisms. These services are not, however, offered lightly. Entry into the substitute care framework of the Child Welfare System involves specific transfers of legal authority from biological parents to an agency of the state which retains guardianship of the child even as it delegates custody to foster parents, or to an institution. This transfer is accomplished either through voluntary means or through court process. The end result is that someone is then held accountable for a minor child. He is at no time fully responsible for himself if he is under the age of majority, unless he is married; the sine qua non of adult status.

Despite the existence of an elaborate system designed to provide care for youths not living in their own homes, many youths find that its services are inappropriate, or that they are ineligible for them. These youth are often the offspring of alcoholic, neglecting or abusing parents, primarily low income, although increasingly they are the

children of the middle class. Inappropriate responses of the social service system to their dilemma cause many of these youths to evade its services. Though not officially categorized as runaways, these youths seek to arrange "independent" living situations not sanctioned by courts and occasionally actively resisted by parental or legal guardians. Though actual numbers of youths so involved are not known, interviews with school guidance personnel, teachers and principals suggest that at least in one suburban community there are considerable numbers of youths who are not living at home and are not classified as runaways.[5] In our category rich professional jargon, we have no real descriptive phrase to describe this population. Some of these youths may be called "emancipated minors,"[6] but that is a legal fiction as it does not encompass true legal equality. We might describe some of them as independent or self-initiated foster placements and this category would apply for those who reside with relatives or adult neighbors and accept their authority. However, there are other arrangements which are considerably less formal, as for example, the youth who lives in a friend's garage, though the friend's parents are unaware of his presence, or the youth who simply moves in with older friends.

To avoid conceptual confusion, I will use the term independent minor to apply to children living outside of direct parental supervision either as informal, self-selected foster children in the homes of friends or living

in the community without any continuing adult supervision. Though these two groups appear to be substantially different, they are similar in that their living arrangements are self-selected rather than obtained through institutional channels.

II. Historical Background

During the past hundred years the duration of childhood dependency has been considerably lengthened from the early teens to the middle twenties.[7] During much of the 19th century children were expected to work in family enterprises or contribute wages to the family by the onset of their 13th birthday or younger. School was brief, informal, and structured so as to provide opportunities for seasonal work on family farms. The academies and public schools of the 1830's were not age graded and until late in the 19th century it was customary for children and youth between the ages of 12 and 20 to attend school together. It was therefore difficult for an age graded youth culture to emerge as distinctly as in our own times. Joseph Kett suggests that young people were part of a broader age grouping involving youths from 12 to 22 and were therefore less controlled by parents than contemporary children, since older youths could be expected to provide protection and supervision where necessary.[8] Broad age mixtures characterized both the school and the work place during the first half of the 19th century and since youths were often doing work similar to that of adults there was little sense of separateness from the adult world. A second facet of both the work and school in

the early 19th century was the seasonal nature of each. In agricultural communities, therefore, children as young as 6 or 7 years old might spend half their time at work and half in school.

By the late 19th century the modern school characterized by a 10-month school year and age-graded classes had begun to emerge. The schools increasingly became the primary institution for socialization, at least partly as a response to the need to Americanize huge numbers of immigrants entering the cities. The concept of an adolescent state, however, did not become popular until G. Stanley Hall published his two-volume thesis on adolescence in 1904.[9] Though many of the ideas in Hall's work were re-formulations of existing insights, the effect of his work was to focus attention on the age period 12-18 as a critical time for emotional development requiring special social accommodations.

Between the 1890's and 1920's new interest in youth led to the formation of numerous adult-sponsored and supervised youth organizations such as the Boy Scouts and the YMCA. These new developments sanctioned increasing adult control over youth activities, while at the same time an age-distinct peer culture was emerging which was later to be recognized as an important feature of teen socialization.

The period from 1880 to 1920 was also marked by development of separate facilities for adolescent criminals as well as continued development of the school as the primary association of youths. The advent of universal public

education was further reinforced by compulsory education laws and by increasing attention to restrictive child labor laws which, though designed to protect children from exploitation, were also viewed as methods to reduce the number of workers in the labor market.

As entry into work became more organized and impersonal, schooling and other forms of credentialling began to supplant family connections as the primary route to productive occupations. Greater affluence during the 20th century also made it possible for parents to forego the wages of adolescents. By the first decade of the 20th century evidence was beginning to mount that earnings and education were linked and the drive to keep youths in school for longer periods was accelerated.

The extension of dependency was supported by modern-day successors to G. Stanley Hall who, though they might disagree with Hall's primary emphasis on recapitulation of the stages of society during adolescence, nonetheless concurred that adolescence was a time for growth, maturation and movement toward autonomy that required a moratorium from adult responsibilities, as well as freedom from exposure to the more pernicious aspects of adult life.

Therefore children, viewed today as less responsible and more morally vulnerable than adults, are barred from voting, drinking, smoking, working at selected occupations, or attending the most interesting and culturally relevant movies. They are also required to spend a specific period of time in schools, usually until age 16, and can be

characterized as delinquent if they avail themselves of many of the desirable pleasures of adult life.

To explore the effect of these social restrictions on the lives of youths who live independently, we will first investigate some of the significant features of adolescent life which propel youths to independence, and then examine the problems which they confront once having moved from the protection of the family.

III. The Adolescent Experience: School, Family, and Society

The period which we now define as adolescence is transitional. It it a time when society prepares its young dependents for the assumption of independent adult roles. Consequently, adolescents are ordinarily expected to progress through a series of stages during which time they receive increasing amounts of autonomy. The attitudes of the family and of the institutions of society moderate during this period in order to allow the youth to assume increasing amounts of responsibility. Adolescents function with considerably less parental supervision than younger children and spend much more time with peers than with adults.

A. The School

The school and the peer group have become the primary avenues for adolescent achievement and self-realization, and there is evidence that for many youths they are inadequate arenas. Arthur Pearl has noted that there are four features of adult life, central to self-realization to which youths aspire, but which are lacking in the current youth experience. These four; a sense of competence,

usefulness, belongingness and power, he claims, are denied to adolescents and motivate much deviant or delinquent behavior.

Competence for adults is usually defined through the workplace, political involvement, recreation and through family responsibilities. A sense of competence is critical to the assumption of adult roles. For youths competence is usually established through academic accomplishment, which for many bears little relationship to adult achievement.

Power, the second salient feature of adult life, is normally experienced through one's ability to be heard and to influence events. But the young are locked into impotence and therefore are unable to experience a sense of power. Friedenberg notes:

> Compulsory school attendance . . . is provided by a law which recognizes no obligation of the school that the students can enforce. He cannot petition to withdraw if the school is inferior, does not maintain standards or treats him brutally . . . His position is purely that of a conscript who is protected by certain regulations but in no case permitted to use their breach as a cause for terminating his obligation.[11]

The third feature of adult life, usefulness, is normally accomplished (for males at least and incresingly for females) through access to meaningful employment. Denied such access men often turn to crime or to other deviant adaptations. For the young there is little sense of being useful or wanted, since they perform no important functions and assume few meaningful roles.

A sense of belongingness for adults is usually shaped through family and work associations. For youth,

belongingness is influenced by school affiliation as well as extracurricular activities. For youth unaffiliated or unidentified with school a sense of belongingness is particularly problemmatic.

As the primary institutions for preparing the young for independence, the schools are in an anomalous position that is reflected by the growing numbers of youths who choose to opt out rather than to remain until graduation. The school curbs and structures the youth's drive to independence as do the family and other institutions of society.

Yet, there are other pressures which propel many youths toward independence. Many own their own cars and therefore have considerable geographic mobility. Though dependent, many teenagers receive little supervision, control or real assistance from their parents. Possessing some of the independence of adult life without the attendant gratifications and responsibilities creates considerable confusion.

For those youths who are college bound, there is at least the expectation that their independence will increase with distance from family, but for other youths such anticipation may offer little solace.

Some of the reasons for the restless drive toward independence rests with the experience of the school which is central to the youth's perception of his environment. The comprehensive high school is an impersonal, highly segregated institution which tends to favor those youths who are able to achieve in the academic milieu.

But it is the authoritarian environment of the school that is often most problemmatic. Friedenberg, referring to the prison-like atmosphere of high school, notes:

> What adults generally . . . fail to grasp . . . is that there is no respite . . . no coffee break, no taking ten, for a smoke. No room like the teachers room, however poor, where the youngsters can get away from adults . . . A student cannot go to the library when he wants a book . . . his schedule provides a library period . . . One thing a high school student learns is that he can expect no provision for his need to give in to his feelings, or to swing out in his own style, or to creep off and pull himself together.[12]

Under a barrage of contemporary criticism, public schools have attempted to modify some of their most repressive features.[13] Many have sponsored alternative schools for small numbers of disaffected youths, or have permitted special programs to develop such as open classrooms. However, little change is evident in the basic structure of high schools. They remain authoritarian, rigid and out of touch with the interests of many youths. The failure of high schools to provide an attractive experience for large numbers of youths has led a recent presidential commission to recommend that the age of compulsory schooling be lowered to 14.

The critical importance of the school to the adolescent's emerging sense of self cannot be underestimated. It is in school that people first experience success or failure. For youths, school is a rough analogue to the adult workplace. If schools do not provide appropriate avenues for achievement, self-satisfaction and autonomy, then youths may be motivated to innovate alternate means for

self-realization.

Where young adults have been subjected to similarly confining regimentation, considerable resistance has of late emerged in contrast to the relative passivity of previous generations. Recent labor unrest at the Chevrolet Vega plants in Lordstown, Ohio, for example, has been traced to regimented and demeaning work patterns demanded by the assembly line. Industrial innovations in Sweden at the Volvo assembly plants emerged largely as a response to worker demands for more autonomy and creativity in their work. Even the military has been forced to adapt itself to the demands of a new generation by decreasing the harshness of military discipline.

What is perhaps most remarkable in view of this analysis is not that children choose to drop out of school but that such a large number decide to remain until graduation and continue their education.

B. The Family

Conventional views of the family have shifted considerably in the last few decades. It is not that people necessarily behave differently toward the institution of marriage and the family, but rather that their conception of its immutability and unchanging quality has undergone substantial revision. Consequently, people in large numbers still marry, but they also divorce and remarry more frequently. Between 1940 and 1970 divorce rates rose by 70%. One out of three marriages now ends in divorce.[14] Skolnick notes that marriage has lost its taken for granted

> lifelong quality . . . In a sense the Catholic view of marriage had a kind of emotional if not a doctrinal validity for most people until recently and this is what has changed. The possibility of divorce is an unspoken and significant part of marriage vows today . . . Thus the ground rules of marriage have changed so much that there are articles in women's magazines warning against getting divorced too easily . . . The main point about marriage now is that it seems to possess an unprecedented fragility no matter how many times people marry and remarry.[15]

If as Skolnick argues the family has lost some of its considerable authority, what then is the effect on children? Only two decades ago children knew little of divorce, now in many schools the child living with both biological parents may be part of an endangered species. For the growing adolescent, aware of frequent family breakup, consciousness of divorce as an adult reaction to family stress may influence his own decisions about how to respond to the pressures of family life. Significantly, many studies of runaways indicate that disporportionale numbers of them come from single-parent families.[16]

However there are other centripetal forces operating on the family. Geographic mobility, for example, may contribute to a sense of impermanence and fragmented family life. During the decade 1960-1970 more than half of all families moved once every five years. The frequency of executive shifts or desires for changes in environment all contribute to a loosening of family relations and generate increasing pressures.[17]

C. Youth Society and Social Change

The decade of the 60's marked a period of conflict

and change in the relations between youths, their families and social institutions. The appearance of flower children, hippies, yippies, the anti-war movement, counter culture advocates and utopian communards provide evidence of the shifting values and attachments of youth. Other indications previously mentioned include the rise of drug cultures and drop-out life styles, all of which reflect some disillusionment with the adult world on the part of many youths.

This cultural change is often perceived as a reduced commitment of youth to social convention and to adult institutions. Kohlberg, commenting on the emergence of a youth counter culture, has noted that this rejection may be more complex than it at first appears. He notes:

> the adult culture itself offers a very unsteady counter to the counterculture particularly from the viewpoint of the adolescent to whom it offers a dwindling number of jobs and a world already overcrowded and crying out for less rather than more. It is clearly seen that one result of affluence, technology and increased longevity has been to decrease the need of the adult community for its adolescents. Instead, it has some stake in keeping them in the youth culture since in one sense they only further threaten an already defensive adult social world with fewer jobs and still more people. Thus the adults at once produce and market a counter culture and present themselves as a less than appealing alternative to it.[18]

In a world where the future holds uncertain benefits for youths, the adoption of new values appears to coincide with changed realities that make adherence to existing conventions threatening and perhaps irrelevant.

In view of recent and rapid changes in family and school patterns and in the values to which youths ascribe,

some youths, experiencing a decreasing attachment to family, have sought satisfactions through independence for varying periods of time. While attention has focused on the runaway as the examplar of this movement toward autonomy, many independent youths may be found living relatively close to home, often in their own school district close to friends and school attachments.

IV. Independence and Youth

Deciding to leave home is a complex decision. Adolescents, although vulnerable and inexperienced, understand that they will encounter considerable difficulty in establishing themselves independently, particularly since there are few community services designed specifically to aid them in the transition between the relative security of the family and independence. For the runaway, who may not significantly differ from the independent minor in reasons for leaving home, the action may be an immediate crisis decision, a reaction to a family argument or an expedient to force changes in family relationships. For others, leaving home merely punctuates a destructive and threatening family environment. This is particularly true when there is evidence of abuse, alcoholism, or severe mental illness on the part of parents. For still another group leaving home may be a mutually agreed upon solution to continuing family breakdown.[19]

The "independent" minor, however, differs significantly from the runaway in that, to his advantage, he is not labelled as a delinquent, but, to his disadvantage, the

protections and services afforded court wards are not available to him.

A preliminary search has uncovered no research or relevant literature on children who live independently.[20] Only in the last few years, in fact, have guidance counsellors and youth workers become aware of this issue as it has been overshadowed by the more dramatic runaway phenomenon. In interviews with several youth workers issues have emerged about the circumstances of these children which require systematic investigation.

First, the legal problems encountered by independent minors appear to be particularly pressing. A recent article in Newsday illustrates some of the issues.[21] A girl of 16 from an affluent home applied for and received welfare as a foster care case after she left home and was refused re-entry by her mother. The welfare department provided interim support but instituted suit to force the mother to pay. The mother refused to support the girl unless she returned home under rigorous behavioral conditions outlined in three pages of rules. The judge encouraged the girl to return home noting "The family makes the rules." This case is unusual in that the welfare department actually provided help. Most often it will refuse to provide cash assistance for youths under 18 since the parents are technically responsible. Ordinarily the youth will be channeled into returning home.

Most importantly schools will often summarily expel independent minors as they maintain that they cannot hold any adult responsible for the youths misbehavior and in the

event of a medical emergency they cannot receive immediate parental permission to provide care.[22] Expulsion from school, however, may be totally unwarranted and destructive to the youth. It is likely that the recent Supreme Court decision, which requires due process in school suspension proceedings, will prevent schools from continuing to act arbitrarily toward independent minors.[23] This should mean that suspension from school will not occur as a result of independent status but only as a consequence of specific behaviors which are destructive to others. Independent minors also suffer frequent police harassment once they are known to be without parental supervision. Independent minors, since they cannot legally sign leases, are also barred from renting apartments under their own names and must establish residence with someone older or with an alternative family. Consequently, the independent minor suffers administrative and legal harassment despite the fact that no offense has been committed. It is not simply the action which is treated as deviant but also any claim to adult rights.

Youths between the ages of 16 and 18, beyond the age when they can be declared PINS but not yet past their majority, occupy a particularly ambiguous status. They can leave home and cannot be forced to return but their parents may sue another family providing help or assistance. On the other hand, the parents cannot be forced to provide support. Usually the welfare department refuses aid and the child will then be squeezed sufficiently so that he is forced to return home. While police cannot legally intervene or charge them

with being a runaway the youth can be arrested (and often is) for vagrancy, loitering, or other vague charges. Parents are then notified and the youth is induced to return home, with the alternative of remaining in jail overnight to face a court appearance the following day.

On the basis of preliminary explorations, there appear to be at least two major subtypes of independent minor: temporary short-term and permanent. These roughly coincide with similar runaway behaviors. The short-term runaway leaves home for anywhere from one day to several weeks, but eventually returns to his home, often with expectations that the situation which motivated his departure will be renegotiated with his family. For some this may be a temporary truce that will enable the youth to finish high school or make arrangements for a more permanent living situation. There is evidence that for runaways the home environment does change after a runaway episode.[24] The second category; the permanent independent minor, appears intent on remaining away from home permanently and cannot conceive of sufficient changes in his environment which would motivate his return. These appear to be the children of more disorganized homes suffering from alcoholism or severe mental disorder on the part of one or both parents.

V. Conclusion

There is a pressing need to explore the incidence and behavior of independent minors and the institutions with which they come in contact. If, as we have suggested, minors are often more prepared for independence than our

institutions and laws permit, then actions must be taken to alert the community and to change traditional attitudes toward adolescents who seek permanent or temporary independence from their families.

The runaway label is a deviant appelation and implies that the youth is somehow at fault. It does not recognize that motivation is complex and that in fact leaving home may be a positive act, one necessary for survival or continued growth. Most of our laws and institutions consider leaving home as a deviation if a minor is involved. These laws and institutions were developed in an historical epoch which required firm measures to protect the young from exploitation and manipulation. As is often the case, however, the institutional reforms of an earlier era become a subject for reform for later generations. While protection for adolescents is still clearly required, question can be raised about the appropriateness of existing practices oriented toward reuniting the child with his family and treating him as a delinquent.

What is required is sufficient flexibility to engage the youth in accord with his maturational needs and individual circumstances. This is a question both of value and knowledge which must ultimately be addressed within the context of two overarching issues. The first, the knowledge question, relates to the capacity of children and youth to accept and use the rights and responsibilities normally associated with adult status. The second, the value question, must be informed by perceptions of the rights of children

framed within common understandings about the nature of the just society.

The knowledge and value questions are clearly commingled in our own conception of justice for children, since it assumes that children do not have capacity to judge their own wants. Therefore, the rights of the parent or of the state are of pre-eminent concern in proceedings which involve children on the assumption that both are operating in the best interests of the child. Victor L. Worsfold suggests that Rawls' conception of fairness provides a basis for reconceptualizing justice for children.

Noting that under Rawls' conception of who is to be considered a full member of society the basic criteria is acceptance of the principle of fairness, Worsfold indicates[24] that children must be included as full members since, according to Rawls, all must be included who have the capacity, or will have it. Children, therefore, must have the right to pursue their own just ends. Consequently, those who would prevent children from asserting their own ends must bear the burden of proving that their judgment should prevail.

> ". . . there is a presumption of rationality, that is, of the full ability to decide for oneself. Only when it has been demonstrated that this presumption is unwarranted is it fair to act on another's behalf. This point has major implications for children's rights, shifting the burden of proof to those who would deny children the exercise of their own right. Although there are no doubt many areas where children are justifiably denied the exercise of freedom, the correctness of this denial is no longer taken for granted. On the contrary it must be shown to be just.[25]

Under such a value system youths would have the right

to make claims on society which adults would have to evaluate on their merits. In the case of independent minors the implications are clear. Each youth would suffer no greater disadvantage in the pursuit of his own interests than other members of society unless it could be proved by evidence of his own actions that he was incapable of acting independently. It is with this principle in mind that services should be afforded to independent youths.

SA:am

1/29/75

Footnotes to Appendix D

1. Arlene and Jerome H. Skolnick, Family in Transition (Boston: Little Brown and Company, 1971), pp. 1-32.

2. Alfred Kadushin, Child Welfare Services (New York: MacMillan and Company, 1973), pp. 53-77.

3. William A. Sheridan, "Juveniles Who Commit Non-Criminal Acts: Why Treat in a Correctional System?" Federal Probation 31 (March 1967):26-30.

   Thorstein Sellin and Marvin Wolfgang, The Measurement of Delinquency (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1964), pp. 71-86.

4. Kadushin, Child Welfare Services, Chapters 9, 11, 12.

5. Many of these interviews were conducted in 1974 while ascertaining the need for a Youth Board in a suburban town. There was surprising agreement between school districts about the importance of this problem.

6. Emancipated minor does not appear to be a true status. Courts cannot emancipate or give full legal rights to minors.

7. The material on historical background is taken from the following sources:

   Youth Transition to Adulthood: Report of the Panel on Youth of the President's Science Advisory Committee (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974), pp. 9-29.

   Oscar and Mary Handlin, Facing Life: Youth and the Family in American History (Boston: Atlantic Little Brown, 1971).

   Felipe Aries, Centuries of Childhood.

   John and Virginia Demos, "Adolescence in Historical Perspective" in Michael Gordon, ed., The American Family in Social-Historical Perspective (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1973).

   Also see the bibliographic note by C. John Sommerville, "Toward a History of Childhood and Youth," in Theodore Rabb and Robert Rotberg, eds., The Family in History: Interdisciplinary Essays (New York: Harper and Row, 1973).

8. Youth: Transition to Adulthood.

9. Dorothy Ross, G. Stanley Hall: The Psychologist as Prophet (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972).

10. U. S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Delinquency Prevention Through Youth Development, p. 4. Youth Development and Delinquency Prevention Administration.

11. Edgar Z. Friedenberg, Coming of Age in America (New York: Random House, 1965), p. 42.

12. Ibid., p. 32.

13. The regimentation of the high school has been criticized by many contemporary observers, among them Friedenberg, Goodman, Ginzberg, and Coleman. A recent film by Frederick Wiseman deftly illustrates the often humiliating behavior required of high school youngsters.

14. John Janeway Conger, Adolescence and Youth: Psychological Development in a Changing World (New York: Harper and Row, 1973, p. 175.

15. Arlene Skolnick and Jerome Skolnick, Family in Transition, p. 3.

16. See, for example, Rocco D. Angelo, Families of Sand: A Report Concerning the Flight of Adolescents from Their Families (School of Social Work, Ohio State University, 1974), and

    U. S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Bibliography on Runaway Youth, U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C.

17. Conger, Adolescence and Youth, p. 177.

18. Kohlberg is quoted in Conger, op. cit., p. 64

19. U. S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Bibliography on Runaway Youth. The discussion above summarizes a number of studies listed in the bibliography.

20. A computer search of the ERIC system and the Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature indicated no research has been done recently on youths who could be classified as independent minors.

21. Newsday, June 16, 1975

22. Interview with principal of Central Islip High School, January, 1973.

23. New York Times, January 27, 1975. The court ruled that the right to an education cannot be withdrawn on grounds of misconduct without "fundamentally fair procedures to determine whether the misconduct has occurred."

24. Victor, Worsfold, "A Philosophical Justification for Children's Rights," Harvard Educational Review 44 (February 1974):142-157.

25. Ibid., p. 156.

APPENDIX E

FIELD INTERVIEW FORM

Face Sheet Interviewer______________________

Date of Interview 1)______________________

2)______________________

Place of Interview 1)______________________

2)______________________

1. Interviewee's Name______________________
2. Sex: Male___ Female___
3. Date of Birth: ______________________
4. Education (No. of years): ______________________
   a) currently in school: Yes___ No___
   b) intend to return: Yes___ No___
   c) degree received: general___ academic___
   vocational___ none___
5. Religion: Protestant___ Jewish___ Catholic___
   Other______________________
6. Race: White___ Black___ Hispanic___
   Asiatic___ Other______________________
7. Ethnic Origin:______________________
8. Current residence (address):______________________

   ____
9. Parents' residence (address):______________________

   ____
10. Place of Birth:______________________

Family Characteristics

1. List name, sex and age of siblings:

   Name______________________ Sex_____ Age_____

   ______________________ _____ _____

Name________________________________ Sex_____ Age_____

________________________________ _____ _____

________________________________ _____ _____

________________________________ _____ _____

2. Mother's Name ________________________________

Age: ______________________

Occupation: ________________________________

Educational level: ________________________________

3. Father's Name ________________________________

Age: ______________________

Occupation: ________________________________

Educational level: ________________________________

4. Estimated family income: ____________________________

Family History

1. Length of residence in community: ____________________

a) number of family relocations in last ten years:

____

2. Status of parents:

a) divorced__________

b) separated_________

c) widowed___________

d) unknown___________

3. Other siblings living in home? Yes___ No___

If yes, indicate number:___________

If no, probe for reasons for leaving:_________________

____

____

<u>Characteristics of Youth</u>

A. What were your reasons for leaving home?

1. Probe for youth's reasons for deciding to leave. Where possible, state in own words. Indicate if primary reasons were:

   a) parental disapproval of lifestyle

   b) lack of independence

   c) school failure

   d) parents asked you to leave

   e) other (list)

   ____

   ____

   ____

   ____

   ____

   ____

   ____

2. What did you do at the time you decided things were bad at home? Did you talk to anyone or ask for help? (probe)

   a) friend

   b) older relative

   c) teacher

   d) guidance counselor

   e) parents

   Why did you ask that person? ____________________

   ____

____

____

____

____

3. What happened after you spoke with______________?
   Did he/she try to help or respond? (probe)

   ____

   ____

   ____

4. If no mention has been made of school or social agency personnel ask:
   Did you consider a guidance counselor or teacher in school, or youth agency staff for help?
   (probe--answer fully): Yes___ No___

   ____

   ____

   ____

   ____

   ____

5. Did you tell anyone you were planning on leaving home prior to doing so? Yes___ No___
   If yes, who did you tell? ______________________

6. When you left home, did you have plans as to how you would manage? Yes___ No___
   a) destination: Yes___ No___ Where? ___________

   ____

   b) resources: Yes___ No___ How much? ___________

   ____

Describe resources, job opportunities, etc. (probe)

____

____

____

____

____

____

7. Describe your situation upon leaving home. Where did you stay? How long? Did your parents know your whereabouts?

____

____

____

____

____

____

If youth is currently living away from home, discuss the following questions:

a) Does your family know where you live? Yes___ No___

b) If yes, how do they feel about your current living situation? (Opposed, unopposed, want you back, prefer you stay away)? (probe)

____

____

____

____

____

c) Do parents wish you to return home? Yes___ No___

d) Do you visit your parents? Yes___ No___

How frequently? ______________________________

e) Do you see brothers, sisters? Yes___ No___

How frequently? ______________________________

f) Do parents contribute to your support? Yes___ No___

If yes, how much? (Check those applicable)

1. full support - regular cash contributions, medical care, clothes, etc. ____________

2. partial support - regular cash contributions ____________

3. irregular cash contributions ____________

4. medical care only ____________

5. help with clothes ____________

6. nothing at all ____________

7. other ____________

g) Are you currently employed? Yes___ No___

If yes, describe: ______________________________

____

____

____

h) How much do you earn? ______________

i) Are you currently in school? Yes___ No___

If yes, discuss feelings about school, relations with teachers, peers, and administration, grades and future plans.

____

____

If no, discuss reasons for leaving, grades, relations with peers and teachers.

j) Did you have problems with police prior to leaving home? Yes___ No___

Describe:

Did you have involvement with the courts prior to leaving home? Yes___ No___

Describe:

Did you have involvement with probation prior to leaving home? Yes___ No___

Describe:

k) Have you had problems with police since leaving home?

Yes___ No___

Describe: ____

____

____

____

Have you had involvement with courts since leaving home? Yes___ No___

Describe: ____

____

____

____

Have you been involved with probation since leaving home? Yes___ No___

Describe: ____

____

____

____

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1/5/76

APPENDIX F

FINAL EVALUATION

Name: ______________________

1. Which topics introduced during the course of the semester did you think most important in clarifying your ideas about working with adolescents?

   1) ______________________
   2) ______________________
   3) ______________________
   4) ______________________
   5) ______________________
   6) ______________________
   7) ______________________
   8) ______________________
   9) ______________________
   10) ______________________

2. How significant were the interviews in improving your understanding of the problems of youth?

very		moderately		not at all	
1	2	3	4	5	6

3. Please list topics which should have been included, which were not included in the course.

   Added: Reason:

   ____
   ____
   ____
   ____
   ____

4. Please list topics which should have been deleted from the course.

   Deleted: Reason:

   ____

Name: ______________________________

4. (continued)

Deleted: Reason:

____

____

____

5. List the most useful readings:

1) ____

2) ____

3) ____

6. List the least useful readings:

1) ____

2) ____

3) ____

7. Please check any or all of the following statements that apply to your experience as a result of this training program.

_____A. I feel I have developed a greater understanding of problems and needs in working with adolescent situations.

_____B. I feel I have learned some useful techniques that I can apply in practice.

_____C. I have sharpened my ability to make case treatment judgments.

_____D. I have sharpened my ability to make case management decisions.

_____E. I have a better understanding of the relationship between policies and practices.

_____F. I can be more consistent in applying my knowledge to case situations.

_____G. I feel that adolescents need to be treated more fairly.

Name: ____________________

8. What are your negative reactions to and/or constructive criticisms of the program?

____

____

____

____

____

9. Please describe any new ideas, interests or concerns that the course raised for you.

____

____

____

____

____

10. Please list any additional comments you have regarding the:

    A. Course Format

    B. Curriculum

    C. Instructor

    D. Discussion in Class

    E. Reading Materials

Name: ______________________

10. (Continued)

    F. Planning Process of the Program

11. Additional comments or reactions:

    ____

    ____

    ____

    ____

    ____

    ____

12. Are you interested in employment with agencies serving adolescents?

    Yes _____ No _____ Not Sure _____

    If yes, what field of service are you interested in? (Check all applicable)

    a) correctional institutions ____

    b) school counseling ____

    c) community based youth agency ____

    d) family service agency ____

    e) Probation ____

    f) foster care/adoptions ____

    g) other (list): ______________________________

    ____

    ____

13. Indicate your general impressions of the fairness of treatment afforded adolescents by social institutions.

Name: ____________________________

13. (Continued)

	not fair at all	sometimes fair	generally fair	usually fair	always fair
a) social agencies	1	2	3	4	5
b) courts	1	2	3	4	5
c) police	1	2	3	4	5
d) schools	1	2	3	4	5

14. Do you have knowledge of the laws affecting juveniles?

    Yes ____ No ____

    If yes, do you have any opinions on the fairness of laws affecting juveniles? Yes ____ No ____

    If yes, indicate your impression of the fairness laws affecting juveniles. (Check the statement you agree with most.)

    a) the laws are totally unfair ____

    b) the laws are generally fair ____

    c) the laws are always fair ____

15. Do you believe that compulsory education laws requiring youths to remain in school till age 16 should be changed? Yes ____ No ____

    If yes, check one:

    There should be no compulsory education laws ____

    The age should be lowered ____

16. Do you believe that laws regulating adolescents working conditions should be changed? Yes ____ No ____

    If yes, indicate how you would change them:

    ____

    ____

    ____

Name: ______________________________

16. (Continued)

____

____

17. Are you a parent? Yes ____ No ____

18. If yes, list sex and age of children:

Sex:	age:	Sex:	age:

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4/76

APPENDIX G

NOTES ON METHODOLOGY

To measure participant responses, four similar case descriptions of runaways were used. Following each case description were four statements which proposed specific intervention strategies and were keyed to the specific case. The analytic queries, service prescriptions and opinion questions which followed were identical for all four cases. Utilizing four cases rather than one insured better reliability since students' scores could then be checked for consistency across the four responses to each variable.

In developing the statistical summaries, each student's mean score across the four pre-test or post-test responses to each question was calculated. It was assumed that minor variations in scores on individual responses would be cancelled out and major trends would be exposed on each variable by this method. Tests of significance were then calculated on the differences between pre-test and post-test aggregate scores on each question. Where two-tailed probability was greater than .05, the result was held to be significant.

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