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ASSOCIATION OF VOLUNTARY ACTION SCHOLARS

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The Association of Voluntary Action Scholars (AVAS) is an autonomous interdisciplinary and interprofessional association of scholars and professionals interested in and/or engaged in research, scholarship, or programs related to voluntary action in any of its many forms. By voluntary action is meant all kinds of non-coerced human behavior, collective or individual, that is engaged in because of commitment to values other than direct, immediate remuneration. Thus, voluntary action includes and emphasizes a focus on voluntary associations, social movements, cause groups, voluntarism, interest groups, pluralism, citizen participation, consumer groups, participatory democracy, volunteering, altruism, helping behavior, philanthropy, social clubs, leisure behavior, political participation, religious sects, etc.

The Association seeks not only to stimulate and aid the efforts of those engaged in voluntary action research, scholarship, and professional activity, but also to make the results of that research, scholarship, and action more readily available both to fellow professionals and scholars and to leaders of and participants in voluntary associations and voluntary action agencies. Thus, AVAS attempts to foster the dissemination and application of social science knowledge about voluntary action in order to enhance the quality of life and the general welfare of mankind through effective and appropriate voluntary action.

VOLUNTEER ADMINISTRATION was established in the Spring of 1967, founded by Marvin S. Arffa and originally published by The Center for Continuing Education, Northeastern University. It was later published privately by Dr. Arffa and then became an official publication of AVAS in 1975. The purpose of the Journal was to provide a dialogue among directors of volunteer services and other professional persons interested in or involved in the utilization of citizen volunteers. It was felt that the sharing of generic principles and cross-fertilization of ideas and experience is both necessary and desirable for the development of more effective organization of volunteer services. The original subtitle for VOLUNTEER ADMINISTRATION was, "A quarterly journal devoted to the promotion of research, theory, and creative programming of volunteer services."

The present editorial policy of VOLUNTEER ADMINISTRATION is to publish applied, practical, and policy relevant articles concerned with the management, administration, leadership and governance of organizations run by or involving volunteers. This orientation includes a concern for volunteer programs affiliated with any kind of larger institution (nonprofit, governmental or profit seeking) as well as a concern for more autonomous volunteer groups. The journal publishes both theoretical and empirical articles, but prefers a careful blend of thoughtful analysis and documented facts. The results of comparative studies with samples of organizations (or other cases) are preferred to case studies of single organizations. However, case studies that clearly illustrate important analytical conclusions are also published. All articles submitted are peer-reviewed anonymously by at least two experts in the field, in addition to being reviewed by the AVAS or AAVS Editor and the Editor-in-Chief. Further details on manuscript preparation, editorial procedures, etc., may be obtained from the Editors or AVAS.

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THE INVOLVEMENT OF VOLUNTEERS IN SOCIAL SERVICE DELIVERY SYSTEMS*

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Those who advocate involvement of volunteers in delivering direct services to clients or patients should be able to answer two basic questions:

1. Why should volunteers participate in the delivery of social services?
2. How could volunteers be incorporated in the present service systems?

I will attempt to deal with both these questions, though I will emphasize the second by discussing the way to successfully incorporate the volunteer in the service delivery of an educational institution.

The question "Why volunteers?" is traditionally being answered by using ideological arguments, i.e., volunteers represent the community, or volunteers represent involvement of lay people in decision making, which imply that their use should be encouraged in a democratic society. These arguments pertain to society's ideals, however, and can rarely convince agency directors whose decisions whether or not to use volunteers are influenced much more by what is good for their agencies and their clients rather than by what is good for society at large. Thus, in any discussion of

the need for volunteers, one has to be able to show that volunteers are an asset not only to society, but to the agency, also, in that their involvement is likely to give the clients improved service.

In a modern welfare state, social services are provided mostly by professionals, such as doctors, nurses, social workers, teachers, etc., who work in bureaucratic organizations. A "professional" is a person who has gone through specialized training in a specific field and who uses scientific knowledge and objective tools as a basis for diagnosis of his clients' problems and for intervention. Thus, a professional is, by definition, an expert in one field and not in others who uses his knowledge and skill to treat that aspect of the client's problem which he knows best. Other aspects are treated by other professionals who may or may not work in the same organization.

A "bureaucratic organization" is an organizational structure that is characterized by a hierarchy of functions and centralized control. Such a structure tends to use a legalistic approach in dealing with problems: The organization is set to deal with certain problems and not with others; decisions about the type of service available are made at the top and funneled down, so as to leave the officials at the lower part of the organization with the

* This is an English translation of an address originally in Hebrew, delivered at the Second Conference on Voluntarism, President's home, Jerusalem, Israel, October, 1975.

task of classifying people and fitting them into predetermined solutions, with little room for maneuverability.

Litwak (1968) suggests that such an organizational structure is best used in dealing with technical problems of large scale investment. When applied to dealings with human problems, however, such a structure can have dehumanizing effects on the service recipients, effects which often undermine the very goal of the organization. To mention just a few of these effects:

1. Human services are fragmented into categories which are arbitrary so as to fit organizational or professional criteria, whereas, as we know, human problems are rarely restricted to any particular aspect: sick people are likely to have economic, emotional and family problems, too.

2. In order to seek service, human beings have to be first categorized as "patients," "clients," "inmates," etc., categories that imply certain behavioral expectations which often carry with them a life-long stigma.

3. A human service provided through a bureaucratic structure tends to be uni-directional---service is given or administered by the official to the client, who is a passive recipient; yet, paradoxically, we know that in order to be helped, to grow, to develop, the recipient has to participate actively in the process.

It is very easy to criticize bureaucratic structures on account of their dehumanizing effects. The name of Franz Kafka is frequently mentioned in this context. However, if one takes into consideration the political realities involved, it is much more difficult to suggest alternative structures that will combine the benefits of central planning and equality in treatment with a high degree of autonomy on the local level which permits more personal and human treatment of each client.

If one is to be realistic, then, the question in the short run is not "How to replace the bureaucratic structure in delivering social services," but rather "How to make the existing system more human." The use of volunteers is often suggested

as one way to achieve that goal. That does not mean that the use of volunteers is the only way to humanize a bureaucratic system. Nor does it mean that any use of volunteers automatically humanizes such a system. There are cases where volunteers are used as a facade for human practices by staff (Stanton, 1970).

Nevertheless, in the overall framework of service delivery, the volunteer represents that element which does not categorize the service recipient, does not measure him according to scientific, pseudo-scientific or bureaucratic criteria, does not tell him what to do and what not to do, but does relate to him on a symmetrical rather than an asymmetrical basis. From the recipient's perspective, this means that the service includes somebody who is not a part of the organization, somebody who cares little about grades or blood pressure, but who is interested in the recipient as an individual and who attempts to see things from his subjective perspective. There is no doubt that such an element is needed in the processes of rehabilitation of a sick person, re-adjustment to the community of an ex-prisoner, or progress of a student with learning problems.

To summarize, then, to the question "Why volunteers?" I would answer: To accentuate, extend and deepen the human dimension of the social service delivery system.

This brings us to our second major question: "How could volunteers best be involved in the existing service systems in order to fulfill this humanizing function? This is an important issue, because while it is agreed that involvement of volunteers could give the service an additional dimension, many experts would usually add that this is more easily said than done and that practical problems make such involvement impossible.

According to this line of thought, there is a major incompatibility between the concepts "volunteer" and "bureaucratic organization," as we understand them. Bureaucratic

systems require a regular and orderly attendance of their workers as well as a long-term commitment to work in the system in order to create stability in service delivery. For accepting such conditions, the workers are compensated by a variety of economic rewards. But long-term commitments and economic rewards are foreign to volunteer work which is based on the idea that people work out of their own free will, without economic compensation. According to that logic, there is no room for volunteers in bureaucratic systems as one cannot be sure that they will come to work regularly since they do not receive a salary, whereas regular attendance by workers is a condition for their continued employment.

The major mistake in this line of thought is the implicit assumption that because volunteer work brings no economic rewards to the volunteer, it is an activity which does not entail any rewards at all; that because the bureaucratic system has nothing to offer to the volunteer for his work, it therefore cannot assure his participation over a long period. This mistake has to do, then, with the tendency to associate the term "volunteer" with concepts like "self-sacrifice," "altruism," etc.

In my view, many of the misunderstandings and disappointments concerning volunteer work stem from the fact that we fail to recognize or are reluctant to admit that people who volunteer on a regular basis for an extended period are simply doing something which they enjoy doing. In other words, they are engaged in goal-directed behavior which involves an exchange: For their time and energy they receive in return a variety of personal benefits which they value. It will be argued later that such a view of volunteers could become a possible basis for utilization of volunteers in service delivery systems. Before we can do that, it is important that we distinguish between two kinds of volunteer work and identify the rewards which volunteers expect from their work.

To volunteer means to do something out of one's own free will and for no material rewards. While this definition holds for all types of volunteer

involvement, we do distinguish between a person who volunteers to help another person on a one-time basis, and a person who volunteers every week in the same organization for an extended period. An example of the first would be someone who is driving on the highway, sees a stranded motorist, stops, and volunteers to help him. The person is a stranger to him, he does not know if he will ever see him again; his decision to help is spontaneous and the time for the decision is very short. When the driver decides to stop, he does not envisage any personal benefits accruing from his action. His decision to stop is based instead on his conception of human solidarity. Thus, once he extends his help, he probably gains satisfaction from helping another human being in need, but the satisfaction is a result of his deed and not the motivating factor behind it.

The same dynamic takes place on the battleground when a soldier volunteers to perform a dangerous task beyond the call of duty, even to the point of risking his own life. For example, a soldier may jump into a burning tank to save the life of a wounded friend who cannot get out. Such a decision, again, is a spontaneous one and is rarely influenced by the expectation to get a "purple heart" for the resultant action. It comes at the spur of the moment, the situation calls for it, and there is little time to weigh the risks versus the benefits or the opportunity will be missed.

A totally different dynamic takes place when a person volunteers regularly for an extended period at the same organization. Although still an act which is performed out of free will and for no material rewards, the decision to volunteer continuously is not made under pressure of time and situation, and it is not a spontaneous decision. It involves weighing the alternatives available to the volunteer at the time and deciding which one is the most attractive, or, in other words, deciding which alternative will provide him the most rewards that are valuable to him.

The volunteer, then, in this context, is not someone who is doing favors for people, nor is he sacrificing himself or his time; he is simply engaged in work which he has the option of stopping at any point. He will no doubt do so if his work becomes unattractive or less attractive to him, or if other more attractive options open up elsewhere.

The idea that volunteer work involves an element of exchange, from which the volunteer is personally benefitting and is not a uni-directional act, has been demonstrated by various researchers. Sills (1957), in his famous study of volunteers in the Polio Foundation, categorizes volunteers' motivations into self- and other-oriented and clearly illustrates that people have both kinds of motivations when they volunteer. This basic categorization has also been used by other researchers both in the U.S. and in other countries, who have obtained results similar to Sills'. In a recent study in Israel, for example, researchers demonstrated that people have both altruistic and personal reasons for volunteering. More significantly, they found that people who claimed they have personal reasons in addition to the altruistic ones devote more time to their volunteer work than those who claim only altruistic ones (Peress and Liss, 1975).

The question, then, is: "What are the rewards volunteers expect to receive from their work?" Knowledge in this area is not well developed, although from what is known it is clear that the answer cannot be universal because different people expect different rewards for doing volunteer work continuously. As it is impossible to categorize people on an individual basis, we will deal here with four groups and with the rewards that volunteers who belong to these groups are likely to expect. The groups are: (1) Young Volunteers, (2) Retired Persons, (3) Women, and (4) Ex-patients or Ex-clients.

1. Young Volunteers

Various studies show that young people see involvement in volunteer work in terms of the process of maturing and growing up. It is an

activity that gives them an opportunity to take responsibilities, to satisfy their curiosity, to be exposed to a new aspect of life, and to broaden their horizons. Some young people relate their volunteer work to the process of career testing. It gives them an opportunity to be exposed to and to try out in an uncommitted way the role which they might consider as a possible career. A successful volunteer experience might thus influence the decision concerning a specific career.

Rewards young people expect from their volunteer involvement, then, will probably be in terms of a meaningful assignment, an opportunity to see how what they are doing relates to other aspects of the service the agency provides, and a chance to ask questions and to share problems with others in a similar situation to their own and with professional staff.

2. Retired Persons

Retired people tend to see volunteer work as a substitute for paid work. Volunteer work gives the retired person an opportunity to combat the feelings of dependence and loneliness that often accompany the process of disengagement from work. Through volunteering, the elderly person proves both to himself and to society his self-worth and the fact that he is not only receiving from society but also contributing to it. This feeling of self-worth, which comes through participation in a creative activity, is an important element in keeping the retired person healthy both physically and mentally in a world that tends to show him that those who do not work are useless.

Therefore, the main rewards the retired person expects would be in terms of the chance to work and be productive along with the opportunity for social contacts that volunteer work gives him. The work must be meaningful, however, and the volunteer expects to see how what he does is related to what others in the agency do.

3. Women

Women with school aged or older children usually constitute the majority of the volunteer force in a society. Traditionally, in the U.S. volunteers from this group are fulfilling a social expectation. To the women themselves, a volunteer job provides an opportunity for social contacts with other people, a chance to meet new people, and, indirectly, a way to help the husband's business or career. This type of volunteer work for women has lately been bitterly attacked by the Feminist Movement in the U.S. which claims that it is exploiting women and leaves them in a subordinate position to men. Without getting involved in this argument, I would suggest that volunteer work for women at that stage of their lives does seem to mean, in addition to what was mentioned earlier, an opportunity to do something different from their routine work, to search for status. For women who have worked in the past and then stopped for a while, voluntarism provides an opportunity to get back gradually into the labor force, to learn a new skill, and, in some cases, to test a new projected career.

The rewards women tend to expect from their volunteer work, then, in addition to the social aspects of the job, are in terms of a task which represents a personal challenge through which they can express their individuality.

4. Ex-Service Recipients

Ex-service recipients, such as ex-prisoners or ex-mental patients, are an important category of volunteers not utilized enough in social service systems. In organizations where such volunteers are used an interesting dynamic occurs: The volunteer uses his own experience as a basis for help. The fact that the volunteer has experienced a similar problem to the one the client is experiencing creates new opportunities for help, which neither the professional nor other volunteers can offer. That the use of such volunteers in treating various kinds of clients might at times have merits is obvious. However, what are the rewards for the volunteer and why should he be willing to engage himself in an activity which will constantly remind him of his past, a past that he often would rather forget?

A person who volunteers in such a context has two kinds of rewards: (1) his volunteer job gives him an opportunity to re-pay a debt to the community which he feels helped him recover; (2) even more important, by helping others in his own position, he asserts his own well-being, his belief that he himself made it and that he is on the side of the helpers and not the helped. Thus, by helping others such a person is actually helping himself.

The common denominator in all the rewards mentioned which various volunteers expect from their work is that they are all related to the job: In most cases the task itself and the ability for self-expression through the task are the most important rewards for the volunteer. Yet to view volunteers in terms of what they personally receive and not just what they give does not mean that the whole act of volunteering loses its altruistic aspect and becomes a business transaction which one measures in terms of profit and loss. Not at all. A person who thinks only about himself and who does not care about others will not even consider doing volunteer work, let alone do it over an extended period. By the very fact that one volunteers, one stresses one's responsibilities for society and one's willingness to contribute to it.

Another point: The rewards related to volunteer work are not economic, i.e., they cannot be defined in concrete terms and cannot be negotiated. This is a basic difference which distinguishes volunteer work from paid work. While in paid work both sides, the employer and the employee, know exactly what each side is supposed to give and what he is getting for it (because objective measurements, i.e., hours and dollars, are used), this is not the case in volunteer work. It is of course possible to define the minimal expectations the organization has of the volunteer, and most organizations which use volunteers do so. But volunteer work is not limited to those expectations, and volunteers often devote to their work much more than what they originally expected. A volunteer also has certain expectations as to the rewards he is going to get for

his work. But as these rewards are largely subjective, rewards about which he cannot bargain, he might be disappointed, and then he will quit his job. However, he might also be pleasantly surprised, if the rewards he gets exceed his expectations, and he will thus be motivated to contribute more.

Defining continuous volunteer work in terms of an exchange, in which the volunteer not only gives but also receives, shatters certain widely held myths pertaining to volunteers. This approach, however, promises to provide a possible basis for volunteers' involvement in bureaucratic service organizations.

In this last part, I would like to come back to the second question posed earlier---"How can volunteers be involved in bureaucratic service delivery systems?"---and present some principles for such involvement, with an emphasis on volunteers in educational institutions.

It seems to me that an educational institution which is interested in involving volunteers will be able to do so successfully if it makes the following assumptions:

1. Volunteers have a unique role which will not be performed without them.
2. Volunteers are not a part of the bureaucratic organization in an administrative sense, and therefore cannot be expected to follow all the regulations that paid workers are expected to follow.
3. Volunteers work because they are rewarded by their work; they will quit if their rewards stop or diminish.

The task of the volunteer in the educational institution has to be defined in the context of these assumptions, and he has to be helped to perform it. This task should basically be a complementary or supplementary task to that of the professional teacher or instructor. The volunteer relates to an individual pupil or group on a symmetrical basis and on this basis he helps the particular pupil or group to achieve a previously defined goal. The fact

that this task would not be performed if the volunteer did not perform it makes it a unique task and creates a situation wherein the volunteer has responsibilities. Another element that makes this task unique is the fact that the volunteer uses a different approach from the teacher. He encourages the student to relate to him as a friend, and the relationship between them is based on mutual affection rather than authority.

To place the right volunteer in the right job requires a thorough knowledge of the job to be filled and also a thorough knowledge of the volunteer. Such knowledge goes beyond biographical data and should include knowledge of the volunteer's personal plans and goals in life. It is impossible to achieve a perfect fit between the job and the volunteer right away. Indeed, there is no need for it either. People are not machines and can adjust themselves to conditions which are less than perfect. What is important is to try to understand the subjective world of the volunteer and find him a task that is based on its unique phenomena.

The relationship between the volunteer and the professional with whom he works is the basis for any meaningful involvement of volunteers in the social service system of the school. In order to "get the most" out of a volunteer, the professional teacher has to know him well and help him perform his task, through it achieving his personal goals. In one study (Schmitthausler, 1966) which focused on the use of non-professionals in an educational system, the researcher found that a group of young volunteers who were motivated to volunteer, among other things, by the opportunity it gave them to test a possible career in teaching, expected to receive professional feedback from the teachers. They were disappointed when the teachers totally ignored that aspect; the teachers were sure the volunteers did not expect any rewards for their work.

The professional who understands that the volunteer has personal as well as altruistic goals will tend to be less suspicious of the volunteer

and less fearful of his criticism. On the other hand, he will be able to demand more from the volunteer. And the volunteer who is conscious of his personal goals will be less inclined to see himself as somebody who does favors for the teacher, the school, or the students.

The fact that the volunteer is not an integral part of the organization's bureaucracy and that he is not, therefore, in the administrative sense, the teacher's subordinate is a major reason for friction between them. The volunteer's use of methods differing from those of the teacher adds another dimension to this friction. In order to prevent such conflict from reaching the point of explosion, openness between the teacher and the volunteer is an important condition. Viewing the volunteer as receiving and not just giving can be a basis for such openness.

The rewards volunteers expect are usually related to interest, responsibility, and willingness to contribute to an important cause. The teacher has to help the volunteer get these rewards by frequently consulting with him and involving him in questions and issues in which the volunteer may be interested. The teacher should also report to the volunteer periodically on the progress of the overall effort of which he, the volunteer, is a part. If the teacher is successful in creating an atmosphere of cooperation between himself and the volunteer, he will have little trouble in motivating the volunteer to work continuously for an extended period.

To conclude, one of the basic goals of the school is to create an atmosphere in which learning can take place. Learning, it is agreed today, can take place in many forms and is not limited to the teacher-pupil relationship. By involving volunteers the school introduces to the process of learning people who can help the child experience a variety of new experiences while under the school's auspices and supervision. A school which recognizes that contribution will have little difficulty making the adjustments that are needed in order to involve volunteers in its program.

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VOLUNTARY ACTION: SPECULATIONS ON THE THING ITSELF*

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The purpose of this short paper is to speculate on the nature of voluntary action. My speculations are from the viewpoint of a sociologist who is interested in the study of voluntary associations, such as the Red Cross. I have tried, however, not to let this specialization narrow the focus of my speculations. If I may say so, I have tried to be philosophical in my approach.

I am using the word "speculation" in a particular sense. To speculate, as I am here, is to investigate the essence of some being by means of an examination of one example of itself (Fink, 1968:29). To speculate is to use a specific case of some phenomenon as a model or image of the entire phenomenon. In this paper the phenomenon itself is voluntary action. The specific case of this phenomenon is another of the social things I am interested in---play.

I hope play does not strike you as a strange choice for an example of voluntary action. Play represents almost pure voluntary action. The classic definition of play is from Homo Ludens (Huizinga, 1955:28) The definition begins by locating play within the category of things called "voluntary action":

*This paper was read at the meetings of the Association of Voluntary Action Scholars, September 26-30, 1975, Jeffersonville, Indiana.

Play is a voluntary activity or occupation executed within certain fixed limits of time and space, according to rules freely accepted but absolutely binding, having its aim in itself, and accompanied by a feeling of tension, joy and the consciousness that it is "different" from "ordinary life."

I have selected play to serve here as a specific and, I think, revealing instance of voluntary action. Three characteristics of play seem to me to be especially suitable for this speculative exercise:

First: Play is an authentic existential category in human life. Its complement is often understood to be "work," but this is a misleading notion, as I will suggest later.

Second: Play is an end in itself. It has its aim in itself. When we play "in-order-to", play has been perverted and has become merely a means to an end (Fink, 1968:21).

Third: Play is freely performed, although, at the same time, playing is bound by a set of absolutely binding rules of which the players are consciously aware.

These three selected characteristics of play will serve as the basis for three speculations on the nature of voluntary action, the thing itself:

- One: Voluntary action is an authentic existential category.
Two: Voluntary action is an end in itself.
Three: Voluntary action is freely performed.

Voluntary Action is an Existential Category

Voluntary action is an autonomous experience of human life. Its autonomy is like the autonomy of certain other life experiences---such experiences as work, leisure, deviance and love, for example. Like them, voluntary action cannot be comprehended as deriving from something else. Voluntary action is an authentic mode of behavior in itself. When men work, play, violate social rules, love---or volunteer---they are, in each case, behaving truly as men. Voluntary action is an authentic existential category.

However, the anthropology and sociology of voluntary action have tended to deal with voluntary action as if it were a negative or residual category. This residual treatment is particularly clear in the anthropology and sociology of voluntary associations, the study of those social groups within which voluntary action is said to occur. As Brown (1973:309) points out, the term "voluntary association" in anthropology has just such a negative or residual character: it refers to non-kinship and non-territorial groups. In sociology, too, the term "voluntary association" identifies those social groups which are not contained inside the political institution or imposed by the political institution. In Western societies the "free churches" are voluntary associations in this sociological sense. Interestingly, a widely-followed convention in the sociology of voluntary associations excludes churches---and labor unions---from the category "voluntary associations."

This exclusion shows the ambiguities of the term "voluntary association." In the study of voluntary associations some groups with voluntary characteristics are excluded, such as churches and labor unions. On the other hand, some groups with non-voluntary features are included, such as professional associations, veterans organizations and similar groups whose members may feel compelled to join. To make this latter point another way, the Red Cross is a voluntary association in which a significant degree of organizational power rests with non-voluntary staff personnel.

If some so-called "voluntary associations" are not free from compulsion and some "involuntary associations" contain voluntary elements, then the category "voluntary association" has limited usefulness. It includes too little---or too much. As Brown (1973:310) states, "If marginal cases were included it would be a rare grouping which was not a voluntary association."

An alternate strategy for the anthropology and sociology of "voluntariness" is suggested by the speculation I began with: namely, that "voluntary action is an authentic existential category." Instead of taking the voluntary association as the unit of study, an alternate strategy is to take the voluntary act as the unit of study. From this point of view the concept "voluntary association" takes on a different and clearer definition, I believe. From this point of view "voluntary associations" are social groups in which voluntary action predominates. (cf., Brown, 1973:310). Put another way, "voluntary associations" are social groups which voluntary action creates and maintains (cf., Silverman, 1970). From this point of view it becomes unnecessary to explain away---or ignore---either the involuntary characteristics of voluntary groups or the voluntary features of non-voluntary groups. Rather, we could get on with the investigation of voluntary action itself; we could get on with the investigation of an authentic category of human experience. And, of course, we can use that understanding to inform our study of voluntary associations.

Voluntary Action is an End in Itself

All social action is orderly. However, explanations for the orderliness of voluntary action and non-voluntary action are different. On the one hand, non-voluntary action is understandable in terms of some purpose or goal which can be said to motivate the action. A man wishes to attain (or avoid) some future state of affairs. This purpose makes him act in a particular way in the present. Non-voluntary action is action with a purpose. It is teleological action. If I know a man's purposes or goals, then I can explain his actions. I may or may not be satisfied with such an explanation. My point is only that such an explanation is possible.

A teleological understanding of voluntary action is not possible. Voluntary action is action engaged in for its own sake. It is action which is an end in itself, not action which is intended to be a means to some other end. Another way of putting this same point is to say that the time-orientation of voluntary action is the present; the time-orientation of non-voluntary action is the future. In contrast with future-oriented purposive action, voluntary action has no purpose beyond itself, no view beyond the present.

Yet another way of putting this same point is to say that voluntary action is fun. I will have a bit more to say about this idea later in this paper. Let me say now that the undeniable fun of voluntary action seems to me to be a characteristic of this phenomenon almost entirely overlooked in the literature. I know of very few acknowledgements of the fun of volunteering in either the practical or the scholarly literature on voluntary action.

To say that voluntary action is an end in itself is not to say that volunteers do not join together and create formal associations which have as their goals the attainment of some specified states of affairs. Volunteers do create such formal organizations. But these goals may properly be said to belong to the formal organizations, not necessarily to all (or any) of their members (cf., Babchuk and Gordon, 1962:123). The voluntary action of the members

of the organization is analytically separate from the organization's goals. Thus, if I study the members' voluntary action, I study social action which, like play, is an end in itself. But if I study the formal voluntary organization, I study a social group which is understood to be a means to another end. I expect that the research strategy appropriate for the study of (play-ful) voluntary action will differ from the strategy employed in the study of purposive formal organizations.

Voluntary Action is Freely Performed

What is free about play and voluntary action is not the action itself---not what is done---but the frame of mind with which the player or the volunteer accepts the constraints on his action. Let me elaborate a bit on this point.

Like play, voluntary action is serious action. The end-in-itself purposelessness of play and voluntary action to which I referred in the second part of this paper does not mean that play and voluntary action are therefore frivolous and insubstantial. Comic play's opposite is not seriousness, but tragic necessity. Just so, the opposite of voluntary action is not professional seriousness and skill, but compulsion. Both play and voluntary action are serious activities. Their seriousness lies in their rule-governed characters. Neither play nor voluntary action is likely without rules. Both are rule-governed and socially predictable actions.

Voluntary action is not free in the sense of being either rule-less or outside socially-shared expectations. It is not the action which is free at all, but the volunteer's frame of mind as he accepts the rules which will apply to his actions. The volunteer freely---voluntarily---submits to the rules which regulate the actions of members of the organization. This voluntary frame of mind---a freedom from compulsion and necessity---is a defining characteristic of voluntary action.

But this characteristic is not only an abstraction in a philosophy of voluntary action, it is also part of the conscious experience of volunteering. The volunteer himself is conscious of his voluntary state of mind. He knows---however much that knowledge may at times be reduced---that he performs his actions freely. He knows that he is not compelled to act. He also knows that, having freely volunteered, his actions will be regulated by the rules of the organization. Thus, he is at once both free and constrained: he has freely accepted the constraints on his actions.

This conscious knowledge of both freedom and constraint in the volunteer creates a kind of "double existence" (Fink, 1968:23). Humans are capable, after all, of living simultaneously in separate spheres; our capacity to see the comic comes from this double existence (Cox, 1969:154-55). In fact, I think that it is this consciousness of double existence that accounts for the fun of voluntary action to which I referred earlier. Fun, like its companion, laughter, derives from the perception of juxtaposed but incongruous objects, emotions or events. Freedom juxtaposed with constraint, for example. By contrast, "non-voluntary action" may be no fun, not because of an unfree state of mind, but because in such action both the state of mind and the action are the same---both are compulsory. (By the same logic, anarchy may also be no fun---because both the state of mind and the actions are unconstrained.)

Thus volunteers freely accept the compulsory social rules which constrain their action. And the opposite of voluntary action is not action which is regulated by compulsory rules, but rule-governed action which is compulsory. Interestingly, the volunteer's conscious knowledge of this difference between voluntary action and non-voluntary action contributes to the fun he gets from volunteering.

Summary

In this paper I have offered three speculative answers to the question, "What sort of phenomenon is voluntary action?" I have suggested (1) that voluntary action, like play, is a legitimate existential category for humans. It is experienced by those who engage in it as a type of action which is different from all other types of action. I have suggested (2) that voluntary action, like play, is an end in itself. Voluntary associations are often goal-directed social groups; the voluntary act is, in itself, its own end. Like play, it is fun. I have suggested (3) that voluntary action, like play, is freely performed. In common with much human action it is norm-governed, but voluntary action differs from other forms of human action because in it the actor freely agrees to follow its norms. Voluntary acts are voluntarily performed. Finally, volunteers are conscious of their double existence---their freedom and their constraints.

In these speculations I have tried to focus on the phenomenon itself---the voluntary act. I have tried to separate voluntary action from the social groups within which it occurs and the goals which direct these groups' activities. I have been speculating on voluntary action, the thing itself.

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CREATING NEW INSTITUTIONS TO SERVE COMMUNITIES*

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Attention is being increasingly directed to the adequacy of the existing institutional structure of American communities to deal with rapid, widespread, social and technological change. Most frequently cited is the inability of community institutions to change at a pace consistent with the changing needs of community residents. At the same time, it is also recognized that this institutional framework is a vital force for stability and order in both local communities and the larger society as well.

The key question becomes then, do we really need new institutions to serve our communities, or do we need flexible organizations that can readily adapt to changing needs of communities and their residents? This question is really a crucial one because most of us associate institution with the notions of "permanence," "inflexibility," "complexity" and "resistance to change." Yet, community as it exists today and is projected to be in the future needs organizational units which are flexible, responsive to change, and which may even "self-destruct" when they have achieved their purpose.

Before proceeding, let's clarify three key terms---community, institution and institutionalization. Community in this paper is taken to mean any group of people who live in close geographic proximity who have ready access to most of the things they need for everyday living and who have some common bond of identification with that geographic locality. This is a rather flexible definition---some people obviously require more than others to maintain their daily existence; consequently, for different people we may find different definitions of community. Institution refers generally to those relatively permanent organizational groupings which provide and/or administer the goods and services required by the residents of a community. While the corner gas station and the local bank are not institutions by themselves, according to our definitions, they are parts of the economic and business institutional sector which will be discussed shortly. Institutionalization is the process whereby an idea, program, product or activity that has been temporary in nature becomes a part of the ongoing program, product or activity of one of the more stable, routinized institutional structures of the community.

With the above in mind, is it possible to respond to the new challenges facing American communities by working through the existing institutional structure(s) that undergird our social organization? Before we throw the baby out with the bathwater, let's examine some alternatives

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Major Institutional Forms

Consider first the three major institutional forms that typify most communities, regardless of size. For one, there is the governmental segment which provides a host of services (including education, health and welfare in addition to the normal social control services), even though it may be limited in what it can potentially do by current levels of funding and by the safeguards that have been built into this institutional system to assure its continuance. A second institutional area vital to community continuation is the economic/business sector, which in our free enterprise system, is viable only as long as it delivers the goods and services that are purchased and consumed by the public at a level that permits a profit. A third sector is the voluntary one. In this sector are included all of our voluntary organizations, associations and clubs such as churches, civic groups, garden clubs, educational support groups, youth groups, service clubs, community clubs, farm organizations and fraternal orders to name a few.

Since we in our free society have created rules and policies to govern our existing institutions, we have in effect limited their potential for innovation. For instance, what happens to the elected public officials who are too innovative for their constituency? What about that governmental agency that does its assigned job too aggressively? What about that industry and/or business that innovates and sells a product or service that is ahead of the public recognition of this need---such as home video recorder-playback units and their manufacturers?

In reality, innovative ideas tend to be short lived. They are either picked up by one of the established institutional structures and soon become routine, or they wither away as a result of a lack of support. The innovations that are readily adapted by the existing institutional structure are those that carry with them limited threat to the established routine and are the ones that may be easily adapted to the existing mode of operation. However, there are many innovations that have

extreme merit but because of the risk involved, the existing institutional structures are limited in their potential to test out and adopt them because of many of the societally imposed rules and policies. Consequently, it remains for the third sector---the one so endowed with voluntary human "risk capital" to demonstrate the need for, and feasibility of, a variety of innovative ideas and practices. The voluntary sector is most effective in its change role when it receives encouragement, facilitation and support from the other institutional sectors.

Thus, the primary argument of this paper is that it is the responsibility and opportunity of the voluntary sector of our communities, and our nation, to invest their human resource risk capital in the development of flexible, limited life organizations or groups whose purpose is to devise and implement innovative ways of meeting problems facing communities and their residents. Further, once the strategy toward tackling a problem has been developed and set into motion, the method(s) can be picked up by one of the stable, routinized institutions operating in the community so that the human resource risk capital of voluntarism can be released to deal with other newly emerging problems and concerns.

IMPLANTING COMMUNITY CHANGE

Before any organization to implement change can be developed, there must be a general recognition of need---one felt by the participants, or one that is more generally felt by the community at large. But how is this need to be recognized? There are several sources.

For one, the need may already be recognized by the existing institutional structure, but the structure might not be able to respond to the need because of existing policy or a lack of the necessary resources. On the other hand, the need may not be recognized by the existing institutional structure and the

actions of individuals, or groups of citizens may put them in the position to recognize and articulate this need.

After the need has been recognized, whether by an individual or a group, alternative ways of dealing with the need may be explored. This may be termed the investigative stage. Realistically, most of the problems that face citizens and communities today are rather complex and require multi-faceted solutions rather than unilateral action. At the stage of assessing the problem situation, one finds generally that some aspects of the problem must be dealt with on the local level while other portions of the same problem entail assistance and action by groups that are based outside the community.

For example, one of the problems that faces rural communities in general is that there aren't enough of the right kinds of jobs to go around. Many young people who have been educated at the expense of the community are forced to leave after they finish school because of limited, or no employment opportunities. For the labor force that is employed, there are limited opportunities to utilize any increased skill levels that they might develop. Most rural communities feel that they face the problem of a rather limited employment mix and that diversification in their employment base could help them.

Well, where does a community start? Does it involve going out and hunting a new factory that requires a more skilled labor force; or perhaps working with existing employers on the possibility of expanding their operations so that they more adequately utilize the skills available in the existing labor pool; or improving the skills of the existing labor pool through vocational training; or improving the public facilities of the community; or by developing an organizational structure to instill community pride in community residents; or a mixture of these?

Increasing employment opportunities, and at the same time minimizing underemployment are rather complex problems. New employers moving into the community may be the answer, or

it might be the expansion and diversification of the existing employment base. However, unless that community has pretty well decided what it would like to become in the future and then thoroughly evaluated what needs to be done to get there, they might find themselves ten years down the road with no change, or with the addition of one more female labor intensive employer.

Too often a community looks at its need only in the short run. If it has the courage to view the employment problem in a broader perspective, it can begin to devise a plan and strategy of planned change to bring about maximal positive benefit. Although the need and hurt felt by the unemployed or underemployed individuals and families must be dealt with in the short run if they are to participate in the development of the long run plan for development of the community, only when they are able to see beyond their next pay check will they be willing to consider the future in a comprehensive fashion. But, if we are to assure that future, we need to look at and prepare for the long run as well as the short run.

Someone or some group must not only recognize that a need exists, but recognize that there is a potential for doing something about it. You can be that person who can recognize this need, and working through groups and/or organizations of which you are a part, can help them see how they might address this need. Looking ahead for a bit, we will see that there will be a series of logical steps that will be taken in the process of dealing with any problem that might be present in your community.

Making the Public Aware

Once you as an individual, or some group, has become generally aware of the problem or need, you will have to increase the public awareness of that need. The idea here will be to begin to create a climate within the community that will be ready and willing to accept change that might come along. Once the general

public has been made aware of the need, your task will be to thoroughly investigate that need so that you might identify any components that it has that are separate, or might be interrelated. It will be at this point as well that you will begin to determine which of the specific facets of the need you will deal with first---or we might say that you would begin to establish your priorities.

Contacting Legitimizers

During this whole time it will be extremely important to maintain contact with those key individuals and groups who might be directly, or indirectly, affected by any change in the current situation. In every community there are a few individuals or groups who can assist in bringing about change---or they can block it. These people and groups are quite often called legitimizers,¹ they can give their stamp of approval to some change, or they can withhold their support and block the potential for change. They must be kept abreast of any developments and their support must be obtained if any potential change is to be implemented in a smooth and orderly manner.

Developing and Implementing a Plan

The next logical step will be to begin to develop alternative action plans and strategies to deal with the problem, selecting the one plan, or complex of related plans, that has the highest potential for success. Once your action plan or plans have been determined, the time has come to organize for action. At this point new organizational structures might be developed, or existing organizations modified to take on new responsibilities. Here, too, is where these in the voluntary sector, having already created a climate for change, provide and develop leadership to carry out that plan to the point where the need has been met, or at least to the point where some other organization or institution picks up on the need.

Continuous Evaluation

Actually from the need assessment stage on throughout these latter stages, or phases, you will be evaluating not only the effectiveness of what has been going on, but the effectiveness of the process itself for doing some specified job.

Finally, as pointed out above, at some point activities initiated in the voluntary sector will have met the need, or will have involved the more permanent institutional framework in the continued monitoring of the need. The key purpose here is to release yourself and others in the voluntary sector so that you might have time and energy to re-direct your interests---perhaps to some newly recognized need that has surfaced, or to some facet of the existing need that you have not dealt with to date.

Unfortunately, national and world economic conditions can create difficulties for investing many resources in the investigation of alternative futures for a community. During the current economic downturn, there will be many people at the community level who will be investing all of their time and energy in holding the "status quo" and have none left for thinking about the future. However, it is precisely the fluctuations in the national and world economic cycle that point up the necessity for futures planning. When we are at the top of the economic cycle we generally have more available resources to deal with some of the pressing needs of our society---but too often we are so busy congratulating ourselves for the good state of affairs that we overlook the pervasive problems of our social order. When we are at the bottom of an economic cycle we more fully recognize our economic and social shortcomings and our inability to cope with the financial requirements for solving them. It is at this point where we may be more willing to look at our communities and ask "how can we best improve our quality of life" in ways other than through massive expenditures of public and private capital?

AN EXAMPLE

Let's go back to our example of underemployment, or unemployment. This need is widely recognized within the community; however, someone or some group will have to take the lead in the investigation of potential alternatives. If you are the one to take the lead, you will probably work through the groups or organizations to which you already have a tie. You will help these groups more fully recognize the existence of the problem and convince them that they have some responsibility for initiating an investigation that will review various alternatives. They may begin a preliminary investigation prior to including others that will be required to launch the comprehensive investigation, or they may have access to the various required resources so that they can launch the complex investigation themselves.

Let's assume that your major point of contact is the service club to which you belong. This group could focus a series of programs at their regular meetings on alternative futures for the community. They will be in the position to invite knowledgeable resource people from within, as well as outside the community to present various points of view. If this service club is typical of many small communities, included within the club membership will be elected public officials, representatives of major employers, professionals and other key people in the community. If your service club, through its focused program on alternative futures for the community, does the job for which the potential exists, the membership will become more aware of the problem and the related problems and/or forms of solution. With your support, and that of the service club, it should become possible for the club, or some other organization, to sponsor a public forum where many of the same points of view expressed at your regular meetings might be shared with a larger audience from the community---thus opening the channels of communication and creating further opportunities for two way interaction regarding the problem or need.

If the people of the community in general are convinced that they do, in fact, have some control over

their destiny, they should then be willing to join together to formalize a long range study---a study that will involve as many residents of the community as possible in the search for alternative futures. However, if this study is to have any potential for long range impact, it must be supported by not only the elected public officials, but by all other groups within the community who have control over various sorts of resources and/or power.

Whatever group sponsors the long range study, whether it is your service club or some newly formed ad hoc group, it will be important to garner the support of the groups and individuals mentioned above. If these groups and individuals are committed to the potential for change in the beginning, they will be much more likely to accept and support change in the long run.

Once the organizational sponsorship for a plan has been determined, the plan developed and presented to the public, there will be facets of the plan that might be executed immediately. Some of these facets will require governmental action, some may need to be handled by the private economic sector, but there will be many portions of the plan that can best be met by the voluntary sector investing a portion of its human resource risk capital. While the voluntary sector by itself may create few new jobs in a community, it is this sector that is best equipped to create the climate of openness, acceptance and progressiveness within the community. In creating this climate, the voluntary sector will develop a host of organizations and activities that will be the training ground for future enlightened leadership in the governmental and business/economic sectors. These activities of the voluntary sector will go a long way toward the institutionalization of the function of change and self renewal within the community.

ORGANIZATIONS FOR CHANGE

While some of the project activities envisioned by the long range plan might be picked up by existing organizations and institutions, in all

probability it will be more effective if "single-purpose" ad hoc organizations are developed to deal with specific problem areas. The single-purpose organization, or group, will then be able to invest all of its energies into the resolution of some specific problem and once resolution has been reached, they will be able to disband and redirect their energies. We have seen groups in our communities that were organized around a specific issue such as generating public support for a bond issue, for the provision of housing for senior citizens, or for the development of recreational facilities. Once they had either accomplished or failed at their assigned task, they disbanded and those involved were able to redirect their energies to other problems and concerns.

Unfortunately, too often when a "multi-purpose" organization takes on one of these projects, they not only are concerned with the resolution of the problem, but with the maintenance and existence of their multi-purpose organization. Consequently, they are able to direct only a portion of their energies toward the resolution of the problem and the remainder will be invested in maintenance of the organization. No doubt, we are all aware of either single-purpose, or multi-purpose organizations that have invested excessive energies in self-maintenance, and consequently, have become ineffective in the resolution of problems to which they are dedicated.

This is not to say that the multi-purpose organization should not, or cannot sponsor specific change oriented programs or projects, but in the long run it might be more effective if the multi-purpose organization were to "spin-off" a single-purpose organization to deal with the specific need while serving a sponsor role. Once the feasibility of the project or program has been demonstrated by the single-purpose organization, the function then can more legitimately be institutionalized within the context of one of the relatively stable structures within the community, or it might become an ongoing program of the multi-purpose organization. The point to consider here is that many social-change projects or activities have

a high risk factor built in, and only when the risk has been minimized will existing organizations and institutions be in a position to pick up the function with minimal threat. Further, the single-purpose organization can be conceived so that it has a limited life span and, consequently, many of the costs associated with "permanence" can be minimized.

With respect to the responsibility and opportunity of the voluntary sector, there have been some new patterns emerging for the resolution of pervasive social and economic problems. The voluntary sector has a potential abundance of "human resource risk capital," but it is generally short on financial risk capital. The newly emerging pattern is that public bodies provide some "financial risk capital" to the voluntary sector, and the merging of these two vital resources makes it possible to meet a variety of social and economic needs.

In recent years there have been a number of examples of direct financial subsidy to an existing voluntary agency where the agency or organization has provided not only the entree to a specific client system, but also the management required to carry on the specified activity. There are numerous instances from the annals of the War On Poverty that demonstrated new kinds of "public-private" partnerships between various levels of government and the voluntary sector. Examples include grants by various government agencies to religious, youth, social or fraternal groups to deliver various health, education or social service programs to selected audiences.

What About The Future?

Can "change" and "self-renewal" be institutionalized? Some would argue that it can---that structures can be developed that will foster continuous change and self renewal. Others will argue that the very structures that might be created to foster change and self renewal soon become ineffective in this task because they do not perceive that they have continued public support to foster change---which unfortunately usually includes pain for some or all---and they become

very conservative in their orientation as a result, and thus lose the reason for which they were established. Most communities have organizational structures that were initially established to foster continuous change---Chambers of Commerce, Community Development Foundations, Industrial Development Corporations, etc. Too often these structures dissipate excessive energies on organizational maintenance, and therefore have limited energies carry out the mission with which were charged.

I would hope that it is the "function" of the social and change that becomes institution and not some "structure" that may soon lose its spark and zest. While there may well be some structure created to serve as a vehicle to stimulate change---the function for continued self renewal must rest with the community itself if the structure that has been established is to be continually stimulated to carry out these responsibilities.

SUMMARY

In this paper we have discussed one approach to creating new mechanisms whereby the existing institutional structure of a community might become responsive to community need. The major point stressed was that individuals and groups who recognize a specific need do have the ability to effect change within the community. Several steps have been identified that will help guide the change process. Also, we discussed the role of the voluntary sector in the implementation of change and responsibility of the existing institutional structure to facilitate the institutionalization of the function that has been demonstrated by the voluntary sector. Further, we have discussed the merits of multi-purpose change oriented structures and single-purpose change-oriented structures.

While every community is different from all others---there are many more points of similarity between communities than there are differences. The attitude of "even though it worked there, it won't work here because..." will pretty well defeat any potential for change. However, if each individ-

ual will assume the responsibility of working with and through the organizations and structures with which they have contact, or have a tie, and are willing to stick their necks out for the good of the community---the possibility of change is there. Remember---"There is no limit to what a community can do if it wants to"---but you are a member of that community, and if you want the community to be a better place to live and work---you can make it happen!

Footnote

1. Individuals as well as groups may be legitimizers. The control of some source of power (economic, political, information, influence, etc.) is the factor that places certain individuals or groups in the position of being able to support or block certain community activities. In contemporary society there are few individuals or organizations who have legitimation power over a broad range of community activities. Because the power of local groups can be focused on a local problem, or because certain resources to deal with a problem may be located outside of the community, the individual who can develop the group, or provide the link to outside resources, may also perform the legitimation role.

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