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- 1 Pioneering a New Path for the
Journal of Volunteer Administration
Connie Baird, MSN
- 3 Images of the Future—Sequence II
Ivan Scheier, PhD
- 21 African-American Participation in Mainstream
Greater Richmond Voluntary Organizations: A
Report From the Field
Nelson Wikstrom, PhD
- 32 Using the Future Search Process for Senior Volunteer
Service in Long-Term Care
Laura B. Wilson, PhD
Jean Carroccio



ASSOCIATION FOR VOLUNTEER ADMINISTRATION

The mission of the Association for Volunteer Administration (AVA), an international membership organization, is to promote professionalism and strengthen leadership in volunteerism. Members include volunteer program administrators in a wide variety of settings: agency executives, association officers, educators, researchers, consultants, students—anyone who shares a commitment to the effective utilization of volunteers.

Individual membership is open to salaried and non-salaried persons in all types of public, nonprofit and for-profit settings. Organizational membership is available for international, regional, state/provincial, district and local organizations which choose to join with AVA to promote and support effective leadership in volunteerism.

AVA is an association run by its members. Active committees include: Public Information; Professional Development; Resource Development; and Public Policy. Members also plan the annual "International Conference on Volunteer Administration," a major event held each year in a different city in the United States or Canada. This Conference provides participants the opportunity to share common concerns and to focus on issues of importance to volunteerism.

AVA is divided into thirteen geographic regions, each of which develops a variety of programs to serve its members. These can include annual regional conferences, periodic local workshops, newsletters, and informal "cluster group" meetings.

Two major services that AVA performs, both for its members and for the field at large, are Certification and Educational Endorsement. Through the Certification process, which recognizes leaders of volunteer programs who demonstrate professional performance standards, AVA furthers respect for and appreciation of the profession of volunteer administration. Similarly, AVA Educational Endorsement is given to those workshops, courses, conferences and training events that provide opportunities for professional growth in volunteerism.

Finally, AVA produces publications, including informational newsletters and booklets, and THE JOURNAL OF VOLUNTEER ADMINISTRATION.

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Pioneering a New Path for the Journal of Volunteer Administration

Connie Baird, M.S.N.

Theodore Roosevelt said, "It is not the critic who counts, not the man who points out how the strong man stumbled. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena . . . who strives valiantly, who errs and comes short again and again, who knows the great enthusiasm . . . who spends himself on a worthy cause."

Our cause is a mighty one, reflected in our mission statement, "To promote professionalism and to strengthen leadership in volunteerism." Our values are further elaborated in a statement of professional ethics in *Volunteer Administration* which should cause all of us to strive valiantly to uphold in our practice.

I believe that *The Journal of Volunteer Administration* is our arena. It is the vehicle through which our collective knowledge and experience are both shared and expanded. Time and time again, you, our readership have identified TJOVA as one of the most valued resources available to you through the Association for Volunteer Administration.

In *The Journal*, we have access to our history, voices of leaders who have gone before us and paved the way. The annals of TJOVA record for us the state of our profession as it has been practiced in the past, the current state of the art and further, the future, a vision filled with challenges and opportunities. The reach of TJOVA is over ten thousand copies produced annually, stretching from our nation to countries abroad. The combined numbers of volunteers who are impacted by our programs are hundreds of thou-

sands of people and the commitment of hours they serve passes the millionth mark many times over.

As our newly elected AVA president, Mike Newman, stated, "The winds of change are blowing." As we face a changing economic climate and a technologically advanced society with burdening health care needs, our role as administrators of volunteer resources directly impacts the quality of life of the people we serve and that imperative stretches to the global community. What an opportunity we have to harness the winds and forge a new path.

For the past almost eight years I have served on the editorial staff of TJOVA, beginning as an apprentice review editor and moving up the ranks to Editor-in-Chief these past two years. In that time I have read the speeches of our leaders, heard the voices of scholars and writers, explored the profession in which I am employed, and learned from the sage advice and counsel of many people while I gave my best to assist in the task of maintaining the vitality and level of excellence expected in producing *The Journal of Volunteer Administration*.

No editor can stand alone; our review process was developed to insure that people who are practicing within the field of the author and have greater expertise within that specific discipline can evaluate the content of the manuscript and better judge the value of publishing the material. Additionally, papers submitted for publication are reviewed by editors within the aca-

Connie Baird, M.S.N., is outgoing Editor-in-Chief of *The Journal of Volunteer Administration*. Baird has worked in the field of volunteerism for over 20 years. She is employed at Southside Hospital in Bay Shore, N.Y., where she administers both the volunteer and pastoral care programs. She is a member of Sigma Theta Tau, International Honor Society for Nursing, and volunteers on the executive boards of the American Cancer Society and the Bay Shore Rotary.

ademic setting to assure proper word usage and grammar as well as evaluation of findings and tabulations. My commitment as I assumed the role of Editor-in-Chief was to gather our records, contact our colleagues, enlist support from our Board and forge ahead in grooming new leaders for the ongoing work of The Journal.

As I pass the blue pen to Mitzi Bhavnani, who has served as Senior Editor this past year, and who has a long history of commitment to our field with involvement spanning regional and Board appointments, I stand proud.

While at the AVA conference in Boston, I sat in the Board Room of the Boston Park Plaza (late into the evening) at an editorial board meeting chaired by Mitzi with people who have agreed to become editorial reviewers for TJOVA. The room was alive with provocative thought and direction for the future of The Journal of Volunteer Administration. I am excited, and urge you to look with great expectation to the Winter edition of TJOVA, when Marjorie (Mitzi) Bhavnani will become Editor-in-Chief. "Hats off to you Mitzi!"

And now, Anne Honer, to you I owe the growth and development of a timid soul who dared to follow your lead, knowing that you would stand in strong support; knowing too, that you followed in the steps

of Susan Ellis, who carved a path which she would never abandon or allow to veer too far off course, a leader whose vision spans the horizon. Thank you Susan.

Behind every editor there should be a Shirley Gravely Currie, who served as Public Information Chair. To have the staunch support of this woman who gives so greatly and is so just in her service, enables you to aspire to great deeds. Shirley, my heart will always remember your kindness.

Many more thanks to Tom Funston for all of the long and late night sessions to edit The Journal before the final printing. To all the editorial staff who assisted me and supported the review process, thank you for all your work.

To Martha Martin who began my editorial reign, Andy Hart and Jennifer Watson, thank you for all that forwarding and telephone support.

Thank you Jackie Norris and Mike Newman for your notes and cards of support.

To our printers at Johnson Printing and especially Peggy Naylor, thank you.

In closing, to all of you who have taken the time to share your thoughts, write the manuscript, send the letters, make the calls and practice the profession, thank you too.

Images of the Future—Sequence II

Ivan Scheier, PhD

PREFACE

Mind you, one expects challenge in dealing with the future, unless one happens to have an inside track on the supernatural. I do not, and have bruises to prove it! Perhaps in reaction to that, for a long time I tried to reduce future prediction to sheer mechanics and failed there, too, often quite spectacularly. I now believe a lot of what happens is art, as much metaphor as method, intuitive finesse enriching step-wise formula. Somewhere in this mix is a futurism which is useful, practical and do-able for busy mortals. I hope.

What follows is one of three main strategies I've been working with the past fifteen years, called MODELING or IMAGING. The other two strategies are VISIONING and OPPORTUNITY-THREAT ANALYSIS. Material on Visioning is available in many other references. Opportunity-Threat Analysis still needs some refining work. Both of these strategies are therefore omitted for purposes of manageability in this introduction to futuring.

There is a more positive reason for concentrating on Modeling as an approach. Consider the volunteer coordinator or other careerist-in-caring; she/he already needs a vast array of competencies and skills, and anyhow may not be particularly oriented to purely mechanical approaches. For her or him, *modeling is a relatively non-technical, intuition-friendly way of looking at the future. I also find the process motivating enough to grip and hold attention.*

There is furthermore, a sense in which modeling is a natural first phase in conceiving possible futures; the other two methods seem to fit more as filling in detail within the broad framework established by modeling. It is something like deciding the overall design and shape of your house, before you get to details of interior decoration and furnishing.

INTRODUCTION

Definitions

- "Futuring" is an attempt to anticipate what's coming down the road, then respond in ways which maximize potential opportunities and minimize potential dangers.
- "Modeling" or "Imaging" is one of three main strategies for futuring. The process assumes the future comes in many different shapes, including the following:
- A ROAD IN WESTERN KANSAS (Straight-Line Continuation): Things will keep happening in the future at the same rate and in the same way as in the past/present. This is usually wrong except in physical science.
- A ROLLER COASTER (Waveform): Current upward trends will tend to flatten (decelerate) and may even decline. Less certain, but possible, is that current downward trends will also flatten out and may even upswing again, eventually.

Over the past thirty years, *Ivan Scheier* has been a volunteer, a volunteer coordinator, director of a volunteer center, researcher, author, publisher, and—both in North America and overseas—a trainer and consultant in the field of volunteerism. Involvements have included President of the Association of Voluntary Action Scholars, Executive Director of the National Information Center on Volunteerism, and Chairperson of the Alliance for Volunteerism. Scheier is currently Director of the Center for Creative Community and Dreamcatcher-in-Residence at the VOLUNTAS Retreat Center, headquartered in Madrid, New Mexico.

Correction: We apologize to Ivan Scheier for the mistake on page seven of the Spring issue of TJOVA. The quotation of José Ortega should read, "Life is a series of collisions with the future; it is not so much a sum of what we have been, but what we yearn to be."—*Ed.*

- A GREAT RUBBER WALL OF CHINA (Trend Reversal): "The harder it hits, the harder it bounces back." Under certain circumstances, the strength of a trend only increases the likelihood of a counter-trend or reversal.
- A SLOW SPIRAL (Cyclical, but this circle is going somewhere): A trend may eventually return to its point of origin, though usually it does not "come round again" in exactly the same way.
- A PRESSURE COOKER (Quiescent/Eruptive): Sometimes, when it looks like nothing is happening, powerful forces may be incubating unseen, building up to erupt after some time, in visible/impactful ways. As in a volcano.
- CROSSROADS FADING IN THE FOG (A Lattice Work of Choices): The future is visualized as a series of crossroads. The futurist can predict and prepare for the choices we will have more easily than he/she can predict the choices we will make.
- A HOUSE OF MIRRORS (Transformation): The quality as well as the quantity of what we're interested in, changes over time (for example, the nature as well as the number of volunteers, women, elders, etc.).

Summary

The futurist should first select the most appropriate image(s) or model(s) on which to base a future projection, before fleshing it out with details. Otherwise, it will be like trying to travel with the wrong "map" as guide. Thus, steep rates of increase in volunteer recruiting early in a program are unlikely to continue at the same rate in the future. In other words, for this situation, a waveform map is more appropriate than a straight-line one.

There are three main steps in the imaging/modeling process:

- Select a KEY SITUATION whose future prospects deeply concern you as an individual, a program, organization, community, etc.;
- Define an approximate TIME-FRAME over which you want to consider the future for this key situation;
- Choose the MAP/MODEL/PARADIGM which best fits how this key situation is most likely to unfold in the future. This becomes your basic framework for futuring, which subsequent work fills in with more detail.

IMAGES OF THE FUTURE

Futuring attempts to anticipate what's coming down the road, then tries to respond in ways which maximize potential opportunities and minimize threats in times to come.

Easier said than done. One often overlooked complexity is that the future comes in many different shapes. Among these are:

- A ROAD IN WESTERN KANSAS (Straight-Line Projection); or
- A ROLLER COASTER (Waveform); or
- A GREAT RUBBER WALL OF CHINA (Trend Reversal); or
- A SLOW SPIRAL (Modified Cyclical); or
- A PRESSURE COOKER (Quiescent-Eruptive).

Along with or superimposed on any of these five models can be at least two others:

- CROSSROADS IN THE DISTANCE (A Latticework of Choices); and/or
- A HOUSE OF MIRRORS (Transformation).

The point is, if you're working with the wrong Image/Model/Map, you'll get lost. Take, for example, the OPEC oil boycott of the 1970s. An immediate result was that gasoline prices shot up suddenly and dramatically. If you had projected that trend straight-line to the present, (A ROAD IN WESTERN KANSAS), gas would cost about \$5 a thimbleful today and there probably wouldn't be many cars on the road. Instead, the shock led rather quickly to development of new oil fields, more fuel-efficient cars, and higher priority research on alternative fuels. This in turn drove gas prices back down (Trend Reversal: A GREAT RUBBER WALL OF CHINA).

Another example: you develop a successful program for preventing or “curing” vandalism by youth. Your futuring plan therefore provides for continuation and increase in the program. Meanwhile, expressions of youth “acting out” change dramatically from vandalism to drug usage (transformation), and your vandalism program is no longer particularly relevant.

The message is: first get the overall model or “map” of the future as accurately as possible, before adding in details. In other words, the model selected must fit the terrain ahead-in-time. If you’re planning a trip to Texas, don’t use a map of Rhode Island. But in fact, the situation is more complex in futuring, for here we are attempting to choose the best map for *unknown* or imperfectly known territory. Moreover, one map may be best for some stages in the futuring journey while other maps fit better on other parts of the trip. Or, two or more maps may apply in different ways to the *same* part of the trip!! The final section here begins to deal with such complications.

No one said it would be simple; respectable futuring rarely is. We’ll nevertheless simplify in what follows, primarily for purposes of familiarization and explanation.

There are three main steps in modeling the future:

- A. Select a “KEY SITUATION” whose future prospects most concern you as an individual, program, organization, community, planet, etc.);
- B. Define an APPROXIMATE, FLEXIBLE TIME-FRAME over which to consider your key situation;
- C. Identify the MAP(s) or MODEL(s) which seems the best fit to the way in which your key situation will unfold in the future timeframe selected.

A. Choosing The Key Situation: Importance and Workability

The key situation should be real and important. That usually means a complexity of conditions and factors, rather than single-issue “purity” or strict quantifiability.

Here are some examples of key situations. Your own would, of course, be modified, adapted, and probably expanded for your own best use. (Some possible variations are in parentheses.)

- A consensus demographic prediction could be that the number and proportion of elderly (youth, volunteers, some other group) in the population will increase (decrease) substantially (minimally). Do we agree with the probable accuracy of this demographic prediction, particularly as it applies to our specific locale (program, organization, etc.)? How can we best respond so as to capitalize on opportunities and deter dangers inherent in this demographic trend?
- To what extent will the motivation of volunteers change in the future? (or other kinds of people we’d like to involve, for example, as customers). Will we still want and need their participation in the future? If so, how can we best adapt to any such changes to ensure the continued (expanded) participation/affiliation of these people in the future?
- What does the future of my profession look like? (Profession can be volunteer administration, social work, real estate, law enforcement, community development, etc.) What can and should I do to help ensure the most positive possible development of the profession? What can and should I do to maximize my prospects for advancement and fulfillment in the profession? Alternatively, should I be considering a move to another profession/occupation?
- How will mandated community service impact traditional volunteering in the future? (Variations could include impact of any currently imminent or increasing factor on a more established one, for example, how will the North American Free Trade Agreement affect trade relations between the three nations initially involved and Japan? Europe?)
- Concerning the possibilities for growth in our program (organization, community, etc.): Do we want growth—slow, rapid, or none at all? Is growth of any

kind likely? If so, what are some of the alternative tracks growth might take? Which of these do we prefer? How can we help make our preferred growth track more likely?

- What change(s) does the future hold in the relationship between volunteer programs and their host agencies (or between any two entities of vital concern to us)? How can we best respond to these changes to maximize benefits to our organization (program, city, etc.)?

The foregoing examples are intended to illustrate situations which are real and important. A key situation must also be *workable*. This means you can see well enough ahead to predict developments in the situation, at least generally. Along with that, you must be able to *do* something about what you see.

If your proposed key situation doesn't seem sufficiently workable, there may be some ways you can make it more so. Shortening time-frame (see next section) usually makes prediction easier. It can be hard to predict the next President of the U.S. when the election is three years away; it's usually far easier the week before the election, or the night before. Trends in your profession are more predictable two years ahead than ten years ahead.¹

Moreover, simplifying the situation usually makes it more workable, though at the same time, less meaningful. Thus, predicting whether a first-term incumbent President will run again is more manageable than predicting who the next President will be. The future of only grant funding for your organization is probably more foreseeable than the future of five or six types of funding possibilities with all their interactions (though neither task is exactly easy!). The likelihood of salary increases over the next two years is usually simpler to foresee than the course of your total job reward and recognition package over the next *five* years.

Such simplification also tends to make it easier to *do* something about what you see ahead. But be sure you understand that doing something about a "future factor"

doesn't necessarily mean *changing* that factor. It may only mean having options in *responding* to that factor, more or less appropriately. We can't as yet stop hurricanes, but we do have many significant options in preparing and responding to them. A firm verdict of two months to live may still allow a person meaningful choices in *how* that time is lived. None of us can alter a demographic trend to increasing proportions of elderly in the U.S. population. But we have abundant alternatives among which to choose in capitalizing on the opportunities in that trend, and buffering against the potential dangers in it.

Indeed, it's almost impossible—in secular terms, at least—to conceive of a factor that allows no choice in response: lightning on the way to strike you, perhaps, or a fatal heart attack, the microsecond before it hits. Beyond that, the ability to do something about a factor or situation depends on having a reasonable (more than instantaneous) time in which to prepare appropriate responses to it. How long that must be will depend on the complexity of the key situation, among other things. But the lead time should not be so lengthy that one can't see ahead with reasonable accuracy (see discussion in next section).

In summary of this section: Awareness and reasonable care should enable selection of a key situation which is not only real and important, but with which the futurist can work reasonably well.

B. Choosing the Most Appropriate Time-frame

Once you've selected the key situation of most concern to you, the next decision is time-frame—how far ahead in the future you wish to look. The key situation itself tends to influence time-frame. For example, motivation of volunteers in the future generally implies a somewhat longer span than, say, budget planning for growth in your volunteer program.

Generally, I suggest six months to three years as a workable time span. Less than six months (say, next week) may be too easy, and, in any case doesn't usually

allow enough time to prepare thoroughly for predicted events, or react to them. Very long-term predictions may be more fun as fantasy than useful as strategy. This is because, as time distance increases, factors and alternatives are harder to see. Even when they can be seen, the number of possible choices (see later model) rapidly increases and can soon get beyond the realm of the ordinary person's ability to work or even comprehend. To be sure, I was once told by someone who lived in an Asian community that Asian people tend to plan successfully in twenty-year time-frames! Perhaps so. I only suggest, enviously, that they may cycle back to adjust predictions more often than once every twenty years.

C. Choosing the Map or Model Which Best Fits Your Key Situation

Any of us could think of models other than the seven given. Nevertheless, I believe these seven are a manageable number which pretty well cover main options in the shape of the future. The futurist is welcome to add his or her own or organize them differently, once familiar with the overall modeling process.

Each of the seven models or maps will be described and analyzed to help you decide which best fits the future of your key situation(s). A final section then begins to explore a more complicated—and realistic—condition in which several models may fit different aspects and/or sequences of the same key situation.

IMAGING

*A Road in Western Kansas
(Straight-line Projection)*

Images

From horizon to horizon, the road goes straight as an arrow. No curves. No dead ends. You can look at the road behind and predict perfectly where the road ahead will go.²

Implications

In this map of the future, the patterns of the past perfectly predict the patterns of the future: no transformations, no sur-

prises, scarcely any variations, and certainly no "mutant emergents" (an ominous phrase concocted by professional futurists). This is a linear constancy model of prediction.

True, without clairvoyance, our understanding of the past and present is the only realistic basis we have for predicting the future. But no one should expect perfect continuation. Seduced by the relative simplicity of straight-line projection, we're prone to underestimate the subtlety of nature. This happens when we go beyond acceptance of some past influence on the future to assume that the past continues with perfect consistency into the future. That usually doesn't happen. As we shall see, current trends accelerate, decelerate, disappear, reverse, transform, etc.

Actualities

As noted, this model is temptingly "easy" and almost automatic in unthinking acceptance. Faced with the uncertainties of prophecy, people can hardly be blamed for savoring a future of apparently solid calculations based on the present, for example, how many or how much of X there is now, multiplied by the current rate of change of X, gives a precise numerical prediction of X in the future.

Example

Today, 15% of the population is over 60 years of age. This segment of the population is increasing at the rate of one percent every two years. Therefore, by the year 2000 we can expect about 20% of the population to be over 60 years of age. We'd better get ready with more volunteer jobs attractive to seniors, and more volunteer programs serving the elderly.³

But a vast number of reasonably plausible things can distort this simplistic extrapolation. The rate of elderly increase in the population might decline if there were dilution of health care and other services, or perhaps a "revolt" of wage earners against "carrying" such heavy tax burdens for the elderly. The rate of elderly suicide might increase even more than it is

increasing now. In the other direction, a medical breakthrough might significantly prolong life and accelerate the rate of currently predicted increase. Just as important, the *nature* of elderly people and the conditions under which they live might change so that they more often want part-time paid or stipended positions rather than volunteer work. Thus, any long-range plan for serving the elderly is on hazardous ground insofar as it prescribes "more of the same" for the future—again because the people served will probably *not* be the same.

Another Example

The growth of a volunteer (or other) program. Let's say the number of volunteers in a new program doubled last year, with satisfying results. Does that mean continued doubling each year for the next five years will be equally satisfying? Or even *possible*? Probably not. For reasons I think are too obvious to need listing, this is a case where trend-bending is more realistic than straight-line continuation in our prediction and planning for a key situation (program growth).

Strategy

Mainly, at this point, the do-it-yourself futurist has to decide whether the factors/situations with which he or she is concerned, fit this linear model or the alternatives explained later on. Keep in mind that we are not suggesting the linear map be completely rejected out of hand. It is, for example, true that a kind of precise "linear projection" from past to future does work sometimes, especially with the laws of classical physics acting on the surface of the earth. Here we would have gravity, entropy and the like; for example, what goes up must come down. An apple loosened from a tree will fall every time and at the same predictable rate. The uncertainties come in forecasting whether or not Isaac Newton will happen to be underneath and what his reaction will be if hit—presumably ranging from unprintable Middle English to "Eureka, I've discovered the

__th law of motion!" In other words, immutable laws lose precision when it comes to human and humane matters. This is why research psychologists yearning for precision laws tend to prefer rats over humans.

My surmise at this point is that the linear model is more likely to apply insofar as:

- Your key situation involves physical or other scientific law (and to a somewhat lesser extent, partly quantifiable disciplines such as economics);
- You wish to predict for shorter time-spans (less time for trends to bend); and
- Your key situation is relatively simple.

The problem, of course, is that these kinds of situations tend also to be less meaningful in human and social terms. For more meaningful key situations, I believe, *straight-line extrapolation to the future is the most common mistake practical prophets make*. So let's look carefully at some alternative models.

A ROLLER COASTER (WAVEFORM)

Images

- A ROLLER COASTER. As you angle up, gravity slows you down. At the crest, you level out, almost stop. Then you start down, plunging ever faster until you flatten out at the bottom. Repeating now, as you angle up, gravity slows you down . . . ; or
- A Surfer, when the surf is up.
- VERBALLY; "What goes up, must come down." And even sometimes, "what goes down, can come up."

Implications

On the ROAD IN WESTERN KANSAS, the expectation was for things to keep happening in the future at the same rate and in the same way as in the past (Straight Line Projection). By contrast, the ROLLER COASTER map (Waveform) predicts that upward trends will tend to flatten out and may eventually decline. Less certain, but possible, is that downward trends will tend to level out and in due

course, even start to upswing. Generally, this map suggests caution, especially in assuming from a current upward trend, that the "upwardness" will continue in the same way.

Examples

- Suppose that, new and well-managed, your volunteer program has been increasing at the rate of 25% more volunteers each year for its first few years. It is hazardous to assume this rate of increase will continue year after year; more likely the increase will taper off.
- A sharply downward trend in volunteer morale might alert and alarm an agency enough so that "something is done about it" and the trend is halted, maybe even reversed. (It's also possible the trend will continue and destroy the program.)
- Suppose the stock market has been going up for awhile. It's hardly safe to assume the upswing will continue indefinitely.

Diagnosis For "Model Fit"

To Your Situation

Upward Trend

Let's consider first the likelihood that *an upward trend will "fatigue" and flatten out.* The things you should look for here are:

- a. *Exhaustion of a "supply"*
 - The rate of women entering the paid job market will tend to level off as we approach the point where most of the women likely to do so, have done so.
 - Insofar as you've successfully taught more adults to read, and built the model into the educational system for new adults there will be fewer adults left to teach, and your increase in literacy rate will tend to flatten. Generally, success in a program or service itself ensures that the supply of people needing the service will decline.
 - The rate of VCR sales increase, rapid at first, declines insofar as a higher proportion of people who want and can afford VCRs have purchased them. In other words, the "supply" of potential customers is more completely tapped

into (and VCRs are not wearing out too rapidly). I expect anyone planning increased manufacturing capacity based on the current healthy rate of FAX machine sales should keep the same kind of consideration in mind.

b. *Fads*

Look for a trend that seems to depend mostly on novelty without filling any "real" need. Here we have pet rocks and hula hoops, the latest "hit" song, etc. In such cases, seriously consider the possibility of a fairly early wearing out of the upward trend, and then, probably, a quite rapid decline.

But don't do this automatically. I can think of two possible exceptions to the above "rule." First, if you happen to correctly sense the very beginning of a fad (not easy to do, usually), the trend will likely continue or accelerate for at least a little while. Secondly, certain kinds of apparent fads can have a lot of perseverance (long-term fads?), particularly in food or clothing of the kind ordinary people wear (as distinct from "the latest" Paris or New York styles). Whoever dismissed the early interest in pizza as a mere fad or pantyhose as a passing fancy, dismissed the wrong items. The taste for owning personal computers also looks like much more than a whim. Even hairstyles, for some individuals, exhibit a certain general continuity over many years.

- c. Look for fatigue in an upward trend based on *someone promising too much and/or too soon.* The increasing popularity of a politician who promises too much is eroded by cynicism when the promises don't materialize. Allowing new volunteers to expect more staff support than they are realistically likely to get, may make an early surge in morale turn downward in dismay. Once again, there are exceptions, particularly when there's a strong emotional stake in believing the promises, or when the lack of promised results can be "finessed" or disguised. Thus, for years, Americans have been told that locking up more and more people will reduce crime. It has, if anything,

done just the opposite, even though the U.S. now incarcerates more people per capita than any country in the world. Yet, for many people the solution is still—more prisons.

- d. Be wary about increases which seem to depend on response to shortages, particularly shortages prone to panic response. Suppose a shortage of aeronautical engineers. University Administrators expand facilities and faculty to accommodate an increased enrollment of engineers (increasing trend). But since such planning is often "overshot," there is a surfeit of engineers within a few years, and formerly increasing enrollments level off and start to decline. A similar "overshoot" reaction occurred in response to perceived or optimistically predicted shortages of office space, some years ago in several Texas cities.

- e. Related to the preceding is when "*too much of a good thing*" tends to flatten an upward trend in benefits, as in exercise which is bad not to have at all, good within a moderate range, and bad or dangerous to excess. Similarly, food totally lacking is bad over the long run (malnutrition), good within a rather wide intermediate range, but can be very bad as overeating. A little bit of warmth is good as insurance against freezing; then okay within a wide normal range, but bad or even deadly once it reaches an extreme "heat wave" level.

The same curvilinear relation of benefits to increase in a substance or activity seems to hold very widely, though sometimes less clearly, in regard to money, sex, leisure time, volunteering, etc. Sayings which caution against excess and for "moderation" stem from this "overshoot" phenomenon. The message for the futurist is to watch for this "curvature effect" in any benefit-producing upward trend, *especially when the sense is that because of its history of being beneficial, the phenomenon is increasing or being increased deliberately to excess.*

As elsewhere, however, it is far more difficult to see how this effect would tend to flatten and perhaps reverse a

downward trend in our waveform model. Possibly, once overeating led to obesity, the reaction might be to under-eat so that eventually the resulting danger of malnutrition could be ameliorated by beginning to eat something again. But this strikes me as a rather labored explanation.

"Too much of a good thing" might have as a converse "Too little of a bad thing." I can hardly be blamed for not wanting to talk about this—except for a slight temptation to say this much: the kind of challenge ("bad thing") that at a higher intensity could produce a positive response, won't do so until it reaches a certain level (as in environmental insult). But this might fit better in our later section on the "PRESSURE COOKER" model.

- f. Definitely exercise caution in projecting the continuation of increases which seem to be based largely on fragile non-continuous resources. The one-year grant to provide more services to children of the homeless results in dramatic increases in such services. But then the year ends and the funder's expectation that the community will "pick it up" proves to be, as often, a fantasy. So the grant project's benefits erode. Similarly, be careful of an upswing which depends too much on the dedication, charisma or competence of a single individual; he/she might leave sometime during your time-frame.

None of the above denies the possibility that an upward trend in circumstances different from the above will continue as such, and possibly even accelerate. As noted, a new product or service that genuinely fills an important need might well continue upward in popularity. Any *new* trend is likely to increase or accelerate for a while before it begins to decelerate. All power to the practical prophet who identifies and capitalizes on such trends early in their emergence. Among other things, such futurists can get very rich!

The waveform shape is essentially a sequence of an upward trend that flattens and produces a downward trend, which in turn flattens and reverses. So, let us

now consider *the DOWNTREND* part of a waveform.

The erroneous preconception that an upward trend will continue upward in the same way has a counterpart assumption that a downtrend will continue down and vanish "off the scale," more or less. If anything, the downtrend assumption is even more reflexive than the uptrend continuation assumption. I tend to see some justification in this. As noted later, *downtrends do seem somewhat more irreversible than uptrends*, or at least they seem to take longer to flatten and perhaps reverse. In any event, there seems to be a *substantial predilection for apprentice futurists to leave uptrends in their future calculations and leave downtrends out*. As we have seen, leaving uptrends in could easily be wrong if the uptrend is destined to flatten or reverse. Leaving downtrends out could also be wrong in the same way, that is, if the downtrend is destined to flatten out. *But even if a downtrend is likely to keep going down, it shouldn't necessarily be ignored; this is because the disappearance of a phenomenon may be as important as its continuation*. For example, a continued decline in government funding for our type of program is something we had better take into account in our futuring, if in fact we have been depending on such funding, or would like to as part of future planning.

That having been said, it is still important to assess the likelihood a downtrend will continue or abate. Here are some cues:

Downtrends Unlikely to Flatten or Reverse Foreseeably

1. A decline which is the downside of a novelty/fad is likely to continue toward virtual or actual disappearance. The popular tune which has been slipping for several weeks in the ratings is unlikely to stage a sudden comeback, (though many years later it might enjoy a sentimental comeback).

2. A downtrend which represents a successfully replaced product or service, is unlikely to be reversed. The decline of the horse and buggy in the U.S. became per-

manent insofar as the automobile was accepted as an affordable and more effective mode of transportation.

Downtrends That Might Come Back, But It Will Usually Take A Long Time

1. Where there might be overconfidence that a problem has been eradicated. Examples: Major efforts increasingly make inroads on a problem such as illiteracy, tuberculosis, etc. until we believe the problem eradicated, and relax our efforts. As a direct or indirect consequence of this inattention, illiteracy, TB, etc., supposedly "conquered," reappear. Or, our workshops with staff on acceptance and support of volunteers have such positive effects we feel the workshop series is no longer needed. So, after a while, new staff coming in and old staff forgetting drive staff resistance up again.

2. The phenomenon of something apparently going away (declining), but then coming back again is expressed somewhat differently in two other models discussed later: the CYCLICAL and the QUIESCENT-ERUPTIVE. A third model, TREND REVERSAL, might also explain in some cases why a downtrend flattens and reverses to upward. This is particularly so where a decline is caused by a depleting supply of a valued commodity (gasoline, clean air, etc.). In such cases, the pain and inconvenience resulting from the decline may provoke an effective counter-reaction which increases the supply again.

One Conceivable Instance in Which A Downtrend Might Flatten and Reverse Relatively Rapidly

As noted earlier in this section, an upward trend of optimism or confidence produced by someone promising people too much too soon, can soon flatten and reverse to disappointment and cynicism when these promises aren't kept. But, alas for human frailty (or hurrah for invincible faith), the resulting downtrend in confidence might reverse to hope again, when someone new makes fresh promises persuasively.

A GREAT RUBBER WALL OF CHINA (TREND REVERSAL)

Images

- Going down that Road in Western Kansas, you encounter a high wall across the road, stretching from horizon to horizon. You push against the wall and bounce back (it's made of rubber).
- Related image: The harder you throw a ball against a wall, the harder it comes back.
- A great rubber band is fastened around your waist. The further you walk forward, the greater the tension on the rubber band, until finally it stops you and pulls you back.

Implications

The ROLLER COASTER or waveform model illustrated one pitfall in straight-line projection to the future: current rates of increase or decrease will accelerate or decelerate. They rarely remain the same. The GREAT RUBBER WALL or Trend Reversal model highlights another exception to linear thinking: that current trends may actually *reverse*. As in classical physics "To every action there is an equal and opposite reaction," though in this case, we may have only a rough, imperfect proportionality rather than exact equality between the forward "hit" and backward "bounce." The principle is: *a factor or trend, especially a powerful one, will not necessarily continue to have strong effects in its present direction. Its power may only increase the likelihood of counterreaction and reversal.*

Such reversal may be value-neutral, especially in the physical realm; a ball thrown against the wall is not morally superior to the ball bouncing back. But in psycho-social realms, it does seem that factors identifiable as "bad" or threatening often reverse to "good" consequences, while "good" factors bounce back to "bad" results. The following are examples in each direction.

Examples

Bad or Threatening Factors Reversing to Good or Promising Effects

- Increased difficulty in getting adequate grant funding for a non-profit leads to successful creativity in developing alternative funding sources.
- Environmental abuse leads progressively to alarmed awareness and more effective preservation efforts. (Let us hope it is not too late for that.)
- Almost any danger, illness, disability, setback, loss or challenge can mobilize positive reactions and "bring out the best" in an individual (up to the point where it overwhelms). The historian Arnold Toynbee made this kind of challenge and response a central tenet of his historical analysis. A parallel galvanizing effect can occur in organizations, for example, in response to budget cuts, the loss of a valued leader, the loss of relevance to current clients, etc.
- The 1980s threat of increasing liability for non-profit board members and rescue workers, producing reluctance to volunteer, is being responded to by protective legislation and better insurance.
- Far better that the terrible tragedy of AIDS had never been. But since it is with us still, it might yet lead to a vastly improved understanding of the immune system and how to strengthen it. That could ultimately mean longer and healthier lives for billions of people.
- The plight of the homeless in the U.S. might get visible and pervasive enough to provoke an appropriate, massive, positive response. (Or, negatively, we might just get numb, or just give up.)
- Inoculations or vaccinations give an individual a presumably mild case of a disease ("bad") to stimulate a positive reaction which protects against that disease in the future ("good"). Some people, however, would rather let the immune system do its work, more naturally, without such outside provocation.
- Sometimes, doomsday-type predictions are made more or less deliberately in hopes of galvanizing positive reactions. This can backfire, however, when prediction of a disaster actually helps to create one—which is why it's a crime to holler "fire" in a crowded theater unless you're sure there is.

The exception to virtually any of these bounce-back examples is when the threatening factor is so powerful, or the response so weak, that it breaks through and fulfills its noxious effects. The image here is a rubber band stretched until it breaks or a force so powerful it batters down the rubber wall. Some prominent professional futurists seem to favor such a view—that what's bad today will be worse tomorrow. The alternative view taken here is that what's bad today just possibly might be *better* tomorrow. You don't have to be Pollyanna to believe that.

In the Other Direction: A Good Influence Has a Bad Backlash

- The joy of love and friendship leaves you more vulnerable to loss.
- The same for caring about any cause, program, organization, etc.
- Improving your property, getting a nicer car or other possessions, makes you a more likely target for burglars.
- Becoming more popular and/or of higher status, can make you more vulnerable to unjust criticism which "cuts you down to size." Related to this, fame has its drawbacks.
- Your organization gets a large grant or bequest, fine. But with it comes the danger of going soft and/or getting obsessed with keeping money for its own sake and forgetting who you are and what you're supposed to be doing.
- Growth in a program/organization/community can seem an unblemished "good" at first. But as a result, there are often "'growing pains" due to overstressed resources, loss of intimacy, accountability, control etc.
- Assume your purpose is greater access to higher-paying jobs for women. Higher salaries in a predominantly women's profession (volunteer administration, etc.) are much deserved and appreciated, but rather soon lead to male competition which probably means fewer job openings overall for women in that profession. (Many, perhaps most people will say that's natural, even desirable in the long run. I'm only suggesting that in the short run the benefit can produce some pain.)

Diagnosis and Strategy

The lesson for the futurist is, first of all, to avoid the automatic assumption that what's bad today will be worse tomorrow and what's good today will be even better tomorrow. Instead, think bounceback or reversal as real possibilities. Here are some cues:

- A bad threatening factor might be more subject to reversal insofar as:
 - a. the factor is visibly and widely threatening enough to capture concerned attention on the part of people who can do something about it.
 - b. but not so powerful as to overwhelm any chance of positive response; and
 - c. acts and builds slowly enough so there is time to mobilize resources in response to the threat. (Not lightning on the way to hit you.)
- A good factor might be subject to reversal insofar as:
 - a. its benefits are likely to lull into complacency and dull coping skills;
 - b. the beneficiary is prone to become so obsessed with retaining the rewards that the purpose of the program, etc. is obscured or forgotten;
 - c. related to this, a dependency is created on things that can be taken away or lost, such as grant funding, fame, status, popularity, athletic ability, a powerful patron, etc.;
 - d. the factor itself had a curvature effect—a moderate amount of it is good, but too much of it reverses to bad (for example, heat, moisture, food; see previous discussion).

A SLOW SPIRAL
(MODIFIED CYCLICAL)
THE "FLAVOR," VERBALLY

"There's nothing new under the sun."
"The more things change, the more they are the same." "I've been there before."

Images

- A horse on a moving merry-go-round (except that socially significant cycles tend to take longer and usually are less obviously circular).

- A fairly long path in a park, ultimately returning to its starting point.
- A circular bus route which ends up where it began.

In both the last two cases, it might sometimes seem as if the path is going straight ahead or away from its point of origin, rather than towards it. Moreover, the examples are somewhat unrealistic in implying a return to *exactly* the same place as they began. In effect, usually “you can’t go home again”; that is, the place you come back to isn’t quite the same as the place you left.

Examples of this point:

- A reunion with a friend you haven’t seen in years. Things are the same and yet a little different, too.
- The railroad just west of Calgary, Alberta, as it climbs the vast carapace of the Canadian Rockies. The grade is too steep to conquer in a straight line, so the train climbs gradually in slow circles and sometimes almost “meets itself coming back.” However, each time around the train is a little bit higher (hence, “a circle going somewhere” or a spiral). But the “higher” part of the image in the train example might imply too much optimism; better to just say “different” each time around, and call this a “modified cyclical” model.

The Importance of Cycles in Futuring

The main benefit for the futurist is to capitalize on the experience of previous cycles as an aid in planning and reacting to present or predicted ones. Examples:

- Once we knew that Halley’s Comet comes around again every 76 years, we could be better prepared to observe it, next time it passed by.
- If your program is in healthy financial shape now but has suffered periodic funding crises in the past, it is prudent to do your futuring having learned as much as you can from these past crises, and with full awareness of the possibility they might recur.
- Suppose one sees today’s stipended and sometimes socially-pressured community service programs as radically new. The danger is you will miss

important lessons of history. Suppose instead, you are able to see these programs as part of a cycle which, “the previous time around” some fifty years ago, included programs like the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) and the Works Progress Administration (WPA). There is then at least the possibility of learning some important things from the previous cycle, even though kinship with present programs is far from perfect. That learning surely includes what to avoid as well as recommended positive steps. (The idea is not to make the same old mistakes; make some creative new ones, instead!)

A second and related benefit in the study of cycles is the possibility of intervening to interrupt and block negative or destructive repeating patterns.⁴ Some suggestions here are:

- It helps to gain awareness of how and why a negative pattern might have been rewarded in the past, why it is no longer rewarding and is in fact punishing today. See earlier reference to organizational amnesia.
- Simple avoidance of mistakes made “the last time around.”
- Another possible remedy is information or skills acquisition. Example: study of recurring patterns of vitality or apathy in your board helps explain the reasons for them, and provides hope of breaking the cycle through information, training, or policy changes.
- Finally, targeted application of available, relevant resources might help break a negative cycle. The crucial resource might be money, as in hiring more youth workers in a high-crime neighborhood, or for scholarships for deserving low-income youth. The cycle-breaking resource might involve people as volunteer mentors or companions; equipment for recreational or other purposes; or, most importantly of all, an attitude of trust and belief in people who have never had that. (That isn’t usually thought of as a “resource,” but it is.)
- Insofar as the negative cycle has the character of an addiction, we may be

able to apply the lessons learned from helping people break such chains.

Examples

Physical: Sunrise, the seasons, the tides are themes repeating but rarely in precisely the same way. This winter, for example, is winter, but not a duplicate of last winter.

Economic: cycles of "prosperity-recession" in relatively recent U.S. history. Deep recession is unmistakable misery, but the character of the misery seems to vary somewhat, each time around.

Social:

- Recurring problems some of us feel we experience in our relationships with other people.
- Cycles of healthy vigor or inactivity your board goes through.
- Cycles in political liberalism-conservatism many believe to exist.

SPOTTING CYCLES—DIAGNOSIS AND IDENTIFICATION

How does the futurist know that her or his key situation may be (at least, partly) cyclical in nature? Here are some clues:

- As noted, cycles are easiest to identify in physical phenomena, though these by themselves are usually of least interest to futurists.
- Be aware of, and deliberately try to counteract, a prevalent bias in Western Industrial Society that things always "move forward" or "move on"; it's all "progress." As one who grew up drenched in this presupposition, I'm uptight about missing the bus, for example, because deep down I'm sure it will never come back. I've missed it forever! For others, who could be excellent trainers of futurists, if you miss the bus, you need only remember that it is probably coming around again sometime; you might even consult a schedule to figure out just when.
- A study of past repeating patterns related to your key situation is a good way of anticipating them in the future. It is no accident that many of the best established cycles have been

identified by historians. But, since grassroots volunteer groups are notorious for organizational amnesia, gaining access to actual, as distinguished from rumored, history, may be a challenge.

- A driven, compulsive, addictive, quality in the organization or individual could signify proneness to recycling the same mistakes. "Well, we've always done it this way" rarely listens to: "Well, you've always had the same lousy results, too" or "Yes, it worked in 1975 (or 1875), but conditions have changed somewhat since then." Hardening of the categories invites recurrence of errors. It is a frequent but not inevitable characteristic of older organizations.
- The Cyclical model resembles the previously discussed Trend Reversal model in that both tend to return towards their point of origin; the Cyclical model just tends to do so by a more rounded route. Because of this kinship, the cues for identifying Trend Reversal, can apply to the Cyclical model, as well.

A PRESSURE COOKER (QUIESCENT/ERUPTIVE)

Images

- A Pressure Cooker (remember?)
- The "Old Faithful" geyser in Yellowstone Park (every hour on the hour)

Relatively less predictable examples include:

- Volcanoes
- Earthquakes in a fault zone
- Temper tantrums

COMMON CHARACTERISTICS AND SIGNIFICANCE FOR THE FUTURIST

For a relatively long period it looks like nothing is happening. But something is happening under the surface, a buildup of forces or pressures. When this buildup reaches a threshold intensity ("critical mass"), there is a sudden eruption, usually quite dramatic and impactful.

Social-Psychological Examples

- Tensions building up relatively unnoticed between members of a board, a

married couple, staff and volunteers, employees and a supervisor, etc. At some critical point they explode.

- Some observers feel that in the thirty years between the Los Angeles riots, there was indeed a steady accumulation of tensions. But relatively few people warned of this and they were largely ignored.
- An individual/group/organization entrusted with important responsibilities is in fact dishonest and/or incompetent. But this fact is not perceived clearly enough by others for a long time because of poor oversight procedures, deliberate cover-up or both. Exposure, when it finally occurs, produces shock, recrimination and even legal action.

But pressure cooker phenomena can also be "good." Examples are:

- We work hard to develop a new competency or product. Very little shows during all the planning, preparation and other groundwork. But suddenly, it all comes together.
- Similarly, an individual or group seems to be going around in circles struggling to achieve their dream. Then one day, the dream comes true!
- You spend time together apparently as acquaintances. After a time, it dawns on you that you have become good friends.

IMPORTANCE AND USE OF THE PRESSURE COOKER MODEL

The futurist should not automatically leave out of her/his calculations any factor or situation where nothing appears to be happening now. Something might be hibernating or incubating beneath the surface, with important consequences for the future.

But how can the futurist sense this sub-surface fermentation when little or nothing is overtly evident? Some cues:

- Have there been eruptions or explosions in the past with this kind of situation? If yes, there is some presumption of similar phenomena in the future. Moreover, the time period be-

tween past eruptions is a starting point in estimating when the next one will be.

- Related to this, other things being equal, as there has been a longer time since the last eruption, there is likely to be a shorter time before the next one.
- People may be suppressing or refusing to see unpleasant happenings, symptoms, or signals. Beyond this largely unconscious repression, someone in authority may be putting a deliberate spin on things as a political or other cover-up.
- Look for "the starvation phenomenon." Has some individual, group, or organization been deprived of something(s) vital to them over a long time, as would be the case for food with an intensive dieter, a prison inmate lacking just about every amenity, an unloved child, an individual organization desperately short of money, a race or gender deprived of basic rights, etc. If so, the intensive dieter may at some point be prone to splurge on food; the released prisoner on amenities of all kinds, etc. Generally, extreme prolonged deprivation, suddenly given opportunity, can explode in excessive indulgence.
- Try to improve your sensitivity to what's actually happening inside and underneath the pressure cooker. Researchers are getting better at measuring previously unregistered buildup events between volcanic eruptions and earthquakes. It may prove even more challenging to do this for social-psychological happenings, but we should try; for example, to understand better what, presently is unseen, underlies successful incubation of dreams.

TRANSITION

The five models described thus far have this in common: They visualize the future as a single line, a road, if you will. The line may bend, go up or down, circle back, reverse, etc., but it is still a single track.

The next two models involve: (1) a branching lattice rather than a line (CROSS-

ROADS FADING IN THE FOG); and (2) transformations in whatever is on the road (A HOUSE OF MIRRORS).

CROSSROADS IN THE DISTANCE (A LATTICE WORK)

Philosophy

There *is* such a thing as free will. Because of it, the decisions we make do count; they make a difference in the real world. And even refusal to choose is a choice.

Images

- A fishnet, a lattice, or a maze. The main difference from the conventional image is that the fishnet, lattice or maze widens with distance from the point of origin.

Examples

- Winter and you're driving west (towards Denver? Kansas City?) where you will need to decide between a more scenic northern route to the West Coast with more chance of snow, and a less scenic southern route more protected from winter.
- You're a volunteer coordinator in an organization that is planning to "downsize" (for example, lay people off). You can predict with considerable unhappy likelihood that relatively soon if not already, management will tell you to recruit volunteers to replace laid-off staff. You can at least dimly foresee your possible choices at that crossroads:
 - go along passively with the directive;
 - go along complainingly with the directive;
 - appear to go along, but do your best to subvert the directive;
 - flatly refuse and risk loss of any more choices regarding your present job;
 - think long enough and other possible responses may occur to you.
- Your 10-year-old child is bright and you're in reasonably good financial shape. About eight years in the future you and your child will likely reach a decision point . . . to go or not to go to

college. If it's "go," the decision points become "which college?" and, either concurrently or somewhat later, "what subject-matter focus?" The point is, it may be useful to begin anticipating these decisions at age 10, even though it is usually impossible to finalize them at that time.

- Assuming you are in the paid workforce and will continue in reasonably good physical and financial health to age 60-65 (maybe earlier, maybe later) you can anticipate major decision points involving "retirement"; for example, total or partial retirement? Stay where you are or move? If move, what will you be looking for? (Climate, environment, cost of living, near friends or not, etc.?)
- Consider a volunteer coordinator or anyone else in an altruistically-oriented, challenging, underpaid position. Quite predictably, at some point (if not already), he/she will be offered another job with more pay and less ethical satisfaction.
- At some point in the evolution of a volunteer or other healthy program, you can pretty well foresee encountering a growth/no growth choice-point. It might not be quite that cut-and-dried, of course, and more a matter of emphasis and priority.

Purpose and Process

What benefit is there for the futurist in anticipating the choices he/she will have in the future? The main benefit is more time to prepare for making the best possible choice when the crossroads is reached, as distinct from being surprised and "caught off balance."

Playing "choice and consequences" for comparable cases is one way of preparing for an anticipated crossroads. What do your friends, the Smiths, think of Florida, now that they've retired there? How does former volunteer coordinator, Mary Jones, feel about her new job in public relations with a distinctly profit-oriented corporation? The Millers' son, Tim: what are his pros and cons on State College, now that he's been there a year? When the drug ed-

ucation program had a chance for rapid growth two years ago, and took it, what happened to the program?

As you approach a crossroads you're able to gather more information on your specific decision (as distinct from other presumably similar cases). Thus, as you get nearer to Denver, the weather forecast gets more and more relevant in the decision on northern vs. southern route. As your retirement date approaches you'll have more up-to-date information relevant to your choices there; for example, the current state of your health and your finances, what you could sell your house for and what it would cost to get another one, what it's current conditions are and where might you want to move?

How do you decide whether the lattice work model will be helpful in understanding the future of your key situation? No problem; it's *always* applicable. Almost, anyhow. Unless you believe in total predestination (I do not), the lattice model is almost always relevant, and should at least be tried out as a fit to the future. This does not mean it *replaces* other models; rather, it is used in conjunction with them. Thus, a straight line projection to the future might be predicted to branch at some point; the same for any section of a Waveform, Spiral or Reversing Trend.

CAUTIONS IN USING THE CROSSROADS MODEL

Don't try to peer too far ahead; it gets foggy. A main reason is rapid proliferation of choices as you move through the lattice. If you go X-way instead of Y-way at the first crossroads, you then confront choices X1, X21, X3 etc. If you take X3, you're then looking at X3a, X3b, X3c, X3d etc. There's a comparable proliferation on the Y-side, of course. And this is simplifying matters. Clearly, after moving through only a few successive crossroads it would be nearly impossible to forecast reliably where we would be on the lattice.

Another problem with projecting the lattice very far into the future has already been described: solid information relevant

to a good choice is more likely to be available only as we get nearer to a crossroads.

Generally, living too much in the future can be dangerous because it neglects *present* dangers. This caution applies to every other model, too. But the lattice seems especially tempting to far-futuring; at least it is to me.

A House of Mirrors (Transformation)

Images

- As you walk through the House of Mirrors, each mirror reflects a changed image of yourself. It's you all right, but taller, rounder, differently proportioned, etc.
- Photos of a child in successive stages of growing up. Though still in some real sense, the same person, there are differences—she/he becomes something more than a larger child.

Implications

While you're counting apples they become oranges. What you're counting changes as you're counting it. In forecasting the future, you must consider not only how the *number* of elders might change but also alterations in the *nature* of elderliness itself. An increase in the number of older Americans does not necessarily mean a proportionate need for more shuffleboard courts—unless future elders happen to maintain that interest at today's level. Generally, insofar as tomorrow's elders differ in health, style, outlook or any other important characteristic, "more of the same" will be off the mark in programs involving them as clients, volunteers, citizens, workers, etc.

Another example: Take the forecast that Hispanics will be the largest minority group in the U.S. within 20–25 years. Suppose you go from that to recommending just "more of the same" as a response based only on what Hispanics tend to be like today. You could well miss important changes in this magnificent people in cultural awareness, economic progress, intermarriage with Anglos, the very impact of becoming a larger group, etc.

A final example: Look at how the nature of volunteers and the profession of volunteer administration have changed over the past thirty years, and dare, if you can, to suppose they will *not* change any more in the next thirty years! The 1975 forecaster planning a future involving more regularly scheduled ongoing jobs for daytime volunteers, would be way off in 1995.

Examples of such transformations-over-time could easily be multiplied for just about any individual, program, organization, race, gender, culture, age level, occupation. Almost certainly, over longer time spans, there will be changes in quality as well as quantity for anything alive the futurist wants to study. Put otherwise, "trait change" is frequently present along with "rate change."

Also subject to "trait change" are *functions* such as "management" and *characteristics* such as "professionalism." For example, my personal experience as an individual over the past forty years is that the meanings of management and professionalism are proliferating and perhaps also being applied less selectively. Therefore, recommendations for future training, certification, etc. should specify *which* management and *which* professionalism is meant—taking into account the possibility that over longer time frames any particular version might alter in nature.

Along with types of people and types of functions, *systems* can undergo transformations over time. Among other things, the inter-relationships which define the system, the rules of the game, as it were, may change. Therefore, any futuring designed to maintain or improve performance in a system must take account of the fact that the system itself may transmute over time. Examples:

- You learn to type and arrive at your first job to find a new, drastically different keyboard.
- You project future recommendations for an entirely volunteer group, as if it will continue to involve only volunteers and more of them. You could be missing a crucial system change if, in

fact, the group begins to hire paid staff (and the number of volunteers declines as it sometimes does in that circumstance). In any case, the addition of paid staff to the mix could well involve some qualitative changes in within-group relationships.

- A business school in 1970, forecasting future business education needs in 1995, projects mainly "more of the same" based on 1970 workplace inter-relationships. This forecast would be prone to neglect a crucial "system change" since then: increased awareness and willingness to confront sexual harassment in the workplace.
- A woman in 1975, planning a vocation in a liberal church, would have been well advised to anticipate changes in church rules which, by 1995, would offer far more choice in responsible church positions for women.
- Pity whomever, in 1939, was forecasting the future of the American Family, based on the prevalent situation at that time: both parents in the home, the man working outside the home, the woman working inside. The assumption of permanence in such characteristics, would have ignored crucial changes in today's predominance of single-parent families and/or two-parent homes with both parents working outside the home.
- The saying "generals are always prepared to fight the last war" reflects a perception that military planners do their futuring for the next war without taking sufficient account of transformations possible in the way enemies will "interact" in future wars (warfare system changes).

DIAGNOSIS AND EXPECTATIONS

How do we decide when trait change as well as rate change has to be taken into account in our futuring? Transformations often seem so slippery and uncontrolled. Yet there are some cues:

- Significant trait change is less probable over shorter time-frames. The nature of women, volunteers, youth, etc. is, of course, less likely to alter in a year than, say, in twenty years.

- A past history of trait change is a good clue that such change will continue in the future. Anyone knowing the changes in Western women over the past thirty years would be hard pressed to presume that somehow they'll now freeze in place.
- That the direction and nature of change in the past will hold in the future, seems to me a far more chancy proposition, in most cases. I don't think the dramatic increase in one-parent families in the past twenty years is necessarily, for that reason, going to continue into the far future. As a matter of fact, it can hardly do so, because of a ceiling effect in the number of possible one-parent families.
- In the kind of time-frames with which we'll probably work, there is little chance of significant trait change for natural inanimate objects such as rocks, mountains, etc. The probabilities of transformation rise: (1) with manufactured objects such as computers, TV sets, air conditioners, etc.; and (2) with manipulatable entities such as would be involved in genetic engineering. Substantial trait change might be somewhat more likely earlier in the history of manufacturing or manipulation for an object or entity.
- For the animate realm, any generalization is problematic. At first glance it would seem that transformative change would be more likely as one moves "higher" on the phylogenetic scale, for example, from microbes to plants to cats, to people at the social-psychological level. But what about natural mutations, as in a virus, and again, "deliberate mutations" as in biological or genetic engineering, which could have macro-effects on immunity, disease, etc.

When in doubt it's best to assume there will be at least some trait change as a factor in futuring for anything at the human-psychological level—what we're typically interested in. On the other hand, we should not lose sight of a persistent commonality or common essence in what we're studying. Thus, though the nature of elders may change significantly in the

future, and probably will, some constant core of "elderliness" will also remain, and needs to be taken into account.

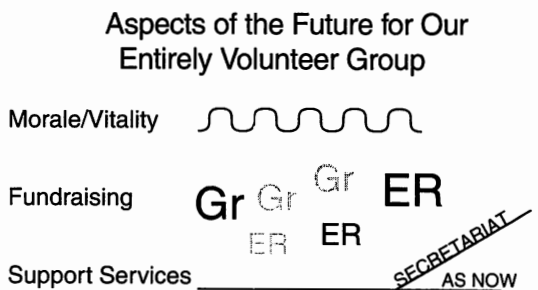
INTEGRATION, COMPLICATION AND REALISM

Seven models have been dealt with separately for purposes of simplification. For purposes of *realism*, we must now start to complicate things a little bit.

First, some of the separately presented models are to some extent different ways of saying much the same thing. Thus, both Trend Reversal and Cyclical models describe a future which eventually returns to its point of origin in the past or present. *Though in somewhat different ways*, I believe, and that justifies keeping them distinct. Similarly, the quiescent phase of the Pressure Cooker might explain or represent a persistent low point on a Roller Coaster waveform.

A second complication is in the application of the models (even when kept distinct). Several models might apply to different aspects of the same key situation. Also, different models might apply to the same aspect at different times.

As one example, consider as a key situation: the future of our entirely volunteer group. For expectable ups and downs in morale and vitality, a waveform might be the best fit to the future. Fundraising prospects might be productively phrased as more of a transformation, from a grant to an earned revenue emphasis. Thirdly, a crossroads might be anticipated in which the growth of the group creates pressure for a choice between raising a bit more money to hire paid secretarial services or to continue relying on part-time volunteers, as now. And so on. Schematically:



A second example—future recruiting prospects for a new agency volunteer program—illustrates how, at different times in the evolution of a key situation different models might apply. Early on, a best fit model for recruiting in a new volunteer program might look like the first part of a Waveform: flat during planning and start-up, then accelerating for a while until the trend “fatigues” and begins to flatten out, thus.



At some point later, perhaps, we might foresee a decision point—to include or not to include mandated service people along with traditional volunteers in our program. Including them might well be predicted to lead to a renewed increase in total numbers in our program, but a partial transformation in the nature of program participants. Deciding to stick only with volunteers might augur a continuing flatness or decline in total program numbers but would preserve the program as only for volunteers (no transformation). Here’s a rough diagram of this sequence, where x =traditional volunteers, and xy =traditional volunteers along with mandated service people.



What the diagram doesn’t show, of course, are the larger challenges that might go along with larger numbers, in the combined program.

SOME LAST WORDS

At times during the preparation of this manuscript, I was tempted to go into hiding immediately upon publication. Curiosity overcame temptation, however, and I’m therefore going to give both my address and phone number hoping for feedback in the struggle to make this presumably abstruse subject user-friendly and user-useful.

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ENDNOTES

¹Also, taking averages of large numbers usually makes for more accuracy than prediction of individual instances, for example the percentage of heavy smokers likely to get lung cancer before age 60 is easier to foresee than whether or not one individual heavy smoker will get lung cancer before age 60. I’m assuming here that we are more interested in the individual program, person, or situation, etc., so we won’t deal with such actuarial prediction here.

²To my few remaining friends in Western Kansas, let me say that a road arrowing to the far horizon can be pretty thrilling.

³Here and throughout, numbers are “for instance,” rounded, and for purposes of illustration only.

⁴Is it true, as it now seems to me, that there are more “negative” than “positive” or value-neutral cycles? Or is it just that we have more trouble recognizing them? In either case, it’s an area I want to think about much more.

African-American Participation in Mainstream Greater Richmond Voluntary Organizations: A Report From The Field

Nelson Wikstrom, PhD

Dr. Kingman Brewster, former President of Yale University, in his introductory remarks to Carl Milofsky's edited volume *Community Organizations: Studies in Resource Mobilization and Exchange* (1988:ix) noted:

The United States relies more heavily than any other country on the voluntary non-profit sector to conduct that nation's social, cultural, and economic business—to bring us into the world, to educate and entertain us, even to bury us. Indeed, the United States can be distinguished from all other societies by virtue of the work load it assigns to its "third sector," as compared to business firms or government agencies. Yet this non-profit universe has been the least well studied, the least well understood aspect of our national life.

Brewster's general remarks about our relative ignorance of "third sector" organizations and volunteerism apply with particular force to our lack of cognizance of the level of African-American participation in mainstream Greater Richmond voluntary organizations. This woeful state of ignorance is especially significant in view of the fact that Richmond, Virginia has a population which is approximately fifty percent of African-American heritage and this population category constitutes approximately twenty-five percent of the citizenry of the Richmond metropolitan area.

FOCUS OF THIS RESEARCH

The primary purpose of this study was to assess the extent of involvement of

African-American citizens in the ten following prominent "third sector" groups functioning in the Greater Richmond area: (1) American Cancer Society; (2) American Heart Association; (3) American Lung Association; (4) American Red Cross; (5) Big Brothers/Big Sisters; (6) Easter Seal Society; (7) March of Dimes; (8) Virginia League of Planned Parenthood; (9) Salvation Army; and, (10) Meals on Wheels.

By way of learning contrast, a secondary facet of this inquiry was to gain some familiarity with the organizational nature and activities of the Richmond chapters of the volunteer community-centered Concerned Black Men, and the Continental Societies, the latter composed exclusively of females. The membership of each of these organizations is exclusively African-American and both are involved in volunteer self-help efforts specifically centered on the African-American community.

METHODOLOGY

A semi-structured questionnaire (see Appendix A) was developed as a research tool to ascertain the involvement of African-Americans in mainstream voluntary organizations. A letter was forwarded in the Summer of 1990 to the Executive Director of each organization requesting an on-site personal interview. This was followed by a telephone call in order to arrange an appropriate time and place to conduct the interview. Although each of the executive directors (ultimately in several instances more than one telephone request was needed) agreed to be interviewed,

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several subsequently stressed at the time of the interview their desire to complete the interview schedule in writing at a later date and forward it to the investigator. It was clear that several of the executive directors displayed some measure of uneasiness concerning being queried about the subject matter. Finally, despite repeated requests, the Executive Director of one organization, Meals on Wheels, failed to provide most of the requested information.

The questionnaire administered to the executive directors of each of the mainstream voluntary organizations addressed a number of facets involving African-American participation in these groups including: Does the organization have a formal or informal policy promoting African-American participation? How many African-Americans volunteer their time to the organization? Has this number increased during the period 1980-1990? How many African-Americans are employed on your staff? What percentage of your voting membership is African-American? Concerning your Board of Directors, how many are African-American? What percentage of the leadership positions of the Board of Directors is held by African-Americans? Does your organization specifically "target" programs for the African-American community? Has your organization made a deliberate effort to increase African-American voluntary participation in your organization? What steps? How successful were these efforts? Do you feel that your organization is satisfactorily answering the needs of the African-American community?

In addition, informal interviews were conducted with a representative of the Concerned Black Men, and with a spokeswoman of the Continental Societies to gain some familiarity with the organizational nature, membership, and activities of these African-American organizations. These organizations, whose members are largely drawn from the professional strata of the African-American community, have enjoyed a long record of service in the Richmond region.

GENERAL FINDINGS: VOLUNTARY MAINSTREAM ORGANIZATIONS

As is demonstrated in the following section of this report, findings pertaining to the extent of African-American involvement in each of the mainstream voluntary organizations is somewhat specific for each organization. Nevertheless, bearing this qualification in mind, a broad generalization may be advanced concerning African American involvement in these organizations. These generalizations include: (1) African-American involvement in these organizations is generally less than their proportionate share of the citizens in the area; (2) most organizations have adopted a policy, either formal or informal, seeking to enhance African-American involvement in their organization; (3) organizations have generally made use of mass media, mailing lists, churches, and personal referrals to increase African-American involvement in their organization; (4) most organizations reported that African-American involvement has increased in their organization over the past decade; (5) most significantly, the example of African-Americans on staff serves to enhance African-American volunteerism in these organizations; and, (6) finally, African-American involvement in these organizations is hindered by their often low visibility in the African-American community, due to economic constraints felt by many African-Americans which serve to restrain volunteer efforts, and the perception of many African Americans that members of their ethnic group do not participate in the decision making of these organizations.

SPECIFIC FINDINGS: VOLUNTARY MAINSTREAM ORGANIZATION

Following below are some specific findings concerning the extent and level of African-American involvement in voluntary mainstream organizations. It should be emphasized that because these organizations generally do not maintain records according to race the resulting data, in many cases, is based upon informed estimates. Nevertheless, this estimated data

provides us with an understanding of the extent of African-American involvement in Greater Richmond voluntary mainstream organizations.

STRUCTURAL ORGANIZATION

In order to gain some familiarity with the nature of the leadership structure, executive directors were asked to identify the manner in which members of the board of directors of their organization are selected. Table I provides this information.

As can be learned from Table I, the board of directors of the vast majority of these organizations is chosen by incumbent board members. Only the governing board of the American Heart Association is chosen by the entire voting membership. What this infers, of course, is that efforts to increase African-American involvement in these organizations is heavily dependent upon the commitment of the organization's leadership.

SOLICITATION OF AFRICAN-AMERICAN COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Table II documents whether each organization has adopted a formal or infor-

mal policy of aggressively soliciting the involvement of the African-American community.

As can be seen in Table II, the following six organizations have adopted a formal or informal policy aggressively seeking to enhance African-American participation in their organization: American Cancer Society, American Heart Association, American Red Cross, Easter Seal Society, March of Dimes, and the Virginia League of Planned Parenthood. However, as is later documented in this report, the adoption of an affirmative action-type policy by these organizations seeking greater African-American involvement has generated mixed results.

Table III provides data concerning the extent of African-American volunteers and staff in leadership positions in voluntary mainstream organizations.

As can be gained from Table III, the extent of African-American volunteerism in these organizations varies considerably, although in terms of absolute numbers voluntary mainstream organizations have been able to secure a considerable amount of volunteer effort by African-Americans. Indeed, about one-out-of-every-three vol-

Table I
Method of Selection: Board of Directors

	A. Board of Directors Elected by Voting Membership	B. Self-perpetuating Board of Directors
American Cancer Society		x
American Heart Association	x	
American Lung Association		x
American Red Cross		x
Big Brothers/Big Sisters		x
Easter Seal Society		x
March of Dimes		x
Virginia League of Planned Parenthood		x
Salvation Army		x
Meals on Wheels	*	*
TOTAL	1	8
	10%	80%

Note: Tables I through VI are the tabled representations of the responses to the questionnaire found in Appendix A.

*Information not provided by Meals on Wheels

Table II
Adopted Policy: Solicitation of African-American Involvement

	YES	NO
American Cancer Society	x	
American Heart Association.	x	
American Lung Association		x
American Red Cross	x	
Big Brothers/Big Sisters		x
Easter Seal Society	x	
March of Dimes	x	
Virginia League of Planned Parenthood	x	
Salvation Army		x
Meals on Wheels	*	*
TOTAL	6	3
	60%	30%

*Information not provided by Meals on Wheels

Table III
Extent of African-American Volunteers, Staff, and Leadership Positions: Voluntary Mainstream Organizations

Organi- zation	3. Volunteers			4. Staff			5. Members			6. Directors			7. Leaders
	Total No.	A/A No.	A/A ¹ %	Total No.	A/A No.	A/A %	Voting No.	A/A No.	A/A %	Total No.	A/A No.	A/A %	A/A %
1.	6,000	1,000	16.6	60	15	25	700	75	11	30	4	13	17
2.	8,000	1,000	12.5	85	7	8	120	25	21	26	4	15	12
3.	100	30	30	5	0	0	30	3	1	30	3	1	0
4.	3,300	825	25	46	12	26	72	22	30	72	22	30	11
5.	240	60	25	11	3	27	21	2	9	21	2	9	0
6.	900	225	25	2.5	0	0	24	0	0	24	0	0	0
7.	300	100	33.3	13	1	7	7	1	14	7	1	14	0
8.	65	0	0	9	1	11	35	2	6	35	2	6	0
9.	8,715	2,000	23	38	14	37	27	2	7	27	2	7	0
10.	*	*	20	*	*	18	*	*	14	*	*	14	*
TOT.	27,620	5,235	21% Average	269	53	16% Average	1036	132	11% Average	272	40	11% Average	4% Average

Organization Key:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| 1. American Cancer Society | 6. Easter Seal Society |
| 2. American Heart Association | 7. March of Dimes |
| 3. American Lung Association | 8. Virginia League of Planned Parenthood |
| 4. American Red Cross | 9. Salvation Army |
| 5. Big Brothers/Big Sisters | 10. Meals on Wheels (*Information not provided) |

Response Key: (the following numbers correspond to questions in Appendix A)

- Total number of volunteers; number and percentage of African-American volunteers.
- Total paid staff; number and percentage of African-American paid staff.
- Total voting membership; number and percentage of African-American directors.
- Total number of board of directors members; number and percentage of African-American voting membership.
- Percentage of African-Americans who hold leadership positions on the board of directors.

¹A/A = African-Americans

unteers canvassing for the March of Dimes is African-American. Many organizations reported that about twenty-five percent of their volunteers are African-American. Only the Virginia League of Planned Parenthood noted a total absence of volunteer efforts by African-Americans on behalf of the organization.

Similarly, the percentage of African-American compensated staff retained by voluntary mainstream organizations varies considerably. On the average, about one-fifth of the paid staff employed by these organizations are African-American, although the Salvation Army reported that almost two-fifths of its compensated staff is African American in ethnic background. This study lends credence to the conjecture that there is a positive relationship between the extent of African-American compensated staff and the ability of the

organization of secure voluntary efforts by African-Americans.

“TARGETING” THE AFRICAN-AMERICAN COMMUNITY

Table IV contains data concerning whether or not voluntary mainstream organizations desire enhanced African-American voluntary participation and, in addition, whether these organizations have engaged in activities specifically designed to increase African-American voluntary participation in their organization, and if these activities were successful.

In addition, Table IV documents the number of these organizations which have specifically “targeted” programs for the African-American community.

As documented in Table IV, half of the organizations surveyed specifically target the African-American community in their

Table IV
“Targeting” the African-American (A/A) Community:
Mainstream Voluntary Organizations

	8. Programs Target A/A community		9. Desire participation of A/A community		10. Actively targeted A/A community	
	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
1.	x		x		x	
2.	x		x		x	
3.	x		x		x	
4.		x	x		x	
5.		x	x		x	
6.		x	x			x
7.	x		x		x	
8.	x		x		x	
9.		x	x		x	
10.	*	*	*	*	*	*
TOTAL	5	4	9	0	8	1
	56%	44%	100%		89%	11%

Organization Key:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| 1. American Cancer Society | 6. Easter Seal Society |
| 2. American Heart Association | 7. March of Dimes |
| 3. American Lung Association | 8. Virginia League of Planned Parenthood |
| 4. American Red Cross | 9. Salvation Army |
| 5. Big Brothers/Big Sisters | 10. Meals on Wheels (*Infomation not provided) |

Response Key: (the following numbers correspond to questions in Appendix A)

- 8. Direct specific programs to the African-American community.
- 9. Desire enhanced voluntary African-American participation in the organization.
- 10. Engaged in an aggressive program designed to increase voluntary African-American participation in the organization

programmatic efforts. All the responding organizations acknowledged that they are eager to gain more African-American volunteers; indeed, eight organizations have undertaken efforts specifically designed to enhance African-American volunteers.

Table V presents data pertaining to the various sources utilized by mainstream voluntary bodies designed to increase African-American voluntary efforts on behalf of their organizations. As can be readily gained from Table V, voluntary mainstream organizations have primarily relied upon churches (which is understandable, given the generally prominent role of the church in the African-American community), and informal person-to-person requests in seeking to enhance African-American voluntary participation.

In addition, in regard to the latter, voluntary mainstream organizations have made use of paid radio and television announcements, newspaper advertisements, and mass media public service announcements. As documented by Table V, the success of these varied efforts has been mixed.

The executive directors of voluntary mainstream organizations advanced a variety of reasons why their organizations enjoyed only a limited amount of success in attracting enhanced African-American voluntary efforts. These reasons include: (1) the often low visibility of these organizations in the African-American community; (2) the widespread popular perception held by African-Americans that members of their ethnic group play little

Table V
Specific Sources Utilized by Voluntary Mainstream Organization
Designed to Enhance African-American Voluntary Efforts:
Degree of Success

	What Media Sources were used to facilitate these program?								11. Success of Programs			
	Mailing Lists	Flyers	Churches	Referral	Radio Ads	TV Ads	Print Ads	Public Service Media	E	G	F	P
1.		x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x		
2.	x	x	x	x						x		
3.	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			x	
4.		x		x	x	x	x	x		x		
5.	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x				x
6.												
7.		x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x		
8.		x	x							x		
9.			x	x							x	
10.	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
TOTAL	3	3	8	7	5	5	5	5				
	33%	33%	87.5%	77%	55%	55%	55%	55%		55%	22%	11%

Organization Key:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| 1. American Cancer Society | 6. Easter Seal Society |
| 2. American Heart Association | 7. March of Dimes |
| 3. American Lung Association | 8. Virginia League of Planned Parenthood |
| 4. American Red Cross | 9. Salvation Army |
| 5. Big Brothers/Big Sisters | 10. Meals on Wheels (*Information not provided) |

Key to Symbols Utilized in Response to question Number 11.

- | | |
|---------------|----------|
| E = Excellent | F = Fair |
| G = Good | P = Poor |

role in the decision-making process of voluntary mainstream organizations; and, (3) the economic constraints under which many African-Americans labor, precluding their involvement in voluntary efforts.

Table VI contains a variety of data relating to voluntary mainstream organizations and the African-American community including (1) whether or not a voluntary mainstream organization has attempted to address those factors which

serve to impede African-American voluntary efforts; (2) the extent to which additional organizational appeals should be made to enhance African-American voluntary efforts; (3) whether ethnic groups and, more specifically, the African-American community is specifically "targeted" in terms of fund-raising efforts; (4) the approximate percentage of organizational funding derived from the African-American community; (5) whether or not the or-

Table VI
Voluntary Mainstream Organizations and the African-American Community:
Relevant Evaluative Data

	13.		14.			15.				16.	17.		18.		19.	
	Programmatic Responses		Extent of Effort			Fund Raising Ethnic Groups		Fund Raising Target A/A		% from A/A	Answering Needs		Addition of A/A		Participation Increase	
	Yes	No	Sig.	Mod.	Some	Yes	No	Yes	No		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
1.	x		x				x		x	N/A		x	x		x	
2.			x				x		x	10%		x	x		x	
3.	x		x				x		x	N/A		x	x			
4.	x		x				x		x	N/A	x		x			x
5.			x				x		x	0%		x		x		
6.					x		x		x	N/A	x		x			x
7.			x			x			x	N/A			x		x	
8.		x	x				x		x	N/A		x	x		x	
9.		x		x			x		x	N/A	x			x	x	
10.	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
TOTAL	3	2	7	1	1	1	8	0	9		3	5	7	2	5	2
	33%	22%	77%	11%	11%	11%	88%	0%	100%		33%	55%	77%	22%	55%	22%

Organization Key:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| 1. American Cancer Society | 6. Easter Seal Society |
| 2. American Heart Association | 7. March of Dimes |
| 3. American Lung Association | 8. Virginia League of Planned Parenthood |
| 4. American Red Cross | 9. Salvation Army |
| 5. Big Brothers/Big Sisters | 10. Meals on Wheels (*Information not provided) |

Response Key

13. Programmatic responses to overcome those factors which impede African-American voluntary efforts.
14. Extent of above effort: significant, moderate, or some.
15. Whether or not fund raising efforts are specifically "targeted" to ethnic groups, specifically the African-American community.
16. Approximate percentage of current funding derived from the African-American community.
17. Whether or not the organization is perceived by African-Americans as fully meeting the needs of the African-American community.
18. Whether the addition of paid African-American staff and the promotion of more African-Americans into organizational leadership roles would enhance African-American voluntary efforts.
19. Whether the organization has experienced enhanced African-American participation over the past five years.

ganization is basically meeting the needs of the African-American community; (6) whether the retention of increased numbers of paid African-American staff and the promotion of African-Americans into organizational leadership roles enhanced African-American participation over the past five-year period.

The data contained in Table VI allows us to posit the following general observations regarding the African-American community and voluntary mainstream organizations. First, about half of these organizations have adopted specific measures to increase their visibility in the African-American community and have encouraged and/or promoted African-Americans to assume leadership positions. Second, for the most part, voluntary mainstream organizations do not make specific, or "targeted," funding appeals to particular ethnic groups, including African-Americans. Third, because of the lack of pertinent record-keeping, executive directors were generally unable to advance an "informed estimate" of what amount of their funding is presently derived from the African-American community. Fourth, more than a majority of the executive directors subscribed to the belief that the retention of additional paid African-American staff and the promotion of African-Americans into leadership roles would encourage more African-American voluntary efforts on behalf of their organization. And finally, half of the voluntary mainstream organizations surveyed have experienced increased participation by African Americans, over the past five years.

AFRICAN-AMERICAN VOLUNTARY ORGANIZATIONS: CONCERNED BLACK MEN AND CONTINENTAL SOCIETIES

As previously noted, a secondary aspect of this inquiry was to gain some familiarity with the organizational structure and activities of the Concerned Black Men and the Continental Societies, each incorporated local chapters of a national African-American voluntary and self-help organization.

Concerned Black Men, organized in Richmond in 1987, has forty-five members who pay annual dues of \$50. This organization also relies upon a varied array of financial donations to support its activities. The membership of Concerned Black Men is drawn from the professional and business strata of the African-American community. Concerned Black Men is particularly dedicated to improving the self-esteem and self-respect of young African-American males. It focuses its activities, consisting of workshops, field trips, and camping experiences, on African-American males attending the Mosby Middle School, a public school located in the City of Richmond.

The Continental Societies, established in Richmond in 1965, has a total membership of twenty-five females who pay annual dues of \$100. The activities of the Continental Societies involve programs designed to promote individual self esteem and motivation among young African-Americans. Its activities center on children attending Richmond's Whitcomb Court Elementary School. On occasion, the Concerned Black Men and the Continental Societies have jointly sponsored field trips for young African-Americans to Virginia State University and Norfolk State University. The primary purpose of these field trips has been to help young African-Americans develop plans to achieve career and personal objectives.

Those volunteers involved in the Concerned Black Men and the Continental Societies are largely motivated by their desire to "pay back" the African-American community for the socio-economic success they currently enjoy, and to serve as successful "role models" for young African-Americans who are being raised most often in single-parent homes, and in a dysfunctional culture marked by poverty, drugs, and crime. The activities and volunteer efforts of both of these organizations have been well received by community residents, and these organizations enjoy a sense of visibility and rapport not usually experienced by the larger tradi-

tional mainstream voluntary organizations. Nevertheless, the voluntary efforts of the concerned Black Men and the Continental Societies are largely unknown by the larger community, due to their relative lack of coverage by the major local press.

CONCLUSION

This inquiry confirms that mainstream voluntary organizations in the Greater Richmond metropolitan area have attracted a considerable amount of voluntary effort from the African-American community. However, the vast majority of the volunteer members, compensated staff, and organizational leadership of mainstream voluntary organizations remain overwhelmingly white. Although these organizations are eager to attract greater voluntary efforts from the African-American community, and have engaged in various appeals to accomplish this result, these appeals have met with mixed success. The latter is largely because mainstream voluntary organizations appear to enjoy relatively low public visibility in the African-American community and are perceived by African-Americans as largely being devoid of African-American leadership. Further, economic constraints also serve to mitigate against increased African-American voluntary involvement with these organizations.

On the other hand, it should be recognized that "volunteerism" plays a significant role in the African-American community, particularly as is evidenced by the efforts of the Concerned Black Men and the Continental Societies. Through the voluntary efforts of their members, these organizations have enjoyed considerable success in providing young African-Americans with the appropriate varied assistance to develop personal skills and career objectives. Indeed, it is not rash to assert that whether or not the African-American community is successful in overcoming its myriad array of social problems will at least be partially determined by the extent to which volunteer effort is recruited to this cause.

NOTE

This paper is a significant revision of a report entitled "African-American Participation in Mainstream Richmond Voluntary Organizations" presented at the Center for Volunteer Development, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg, Virginia, December 4, 1990. Funding for the research involved in the study was provided by the Center for Volunteer Development. I wish to express my sincere gratitude to Ms. Sheri Thaxton, who assisted me in conducting the research.

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Appendix A

1. How is your organization structured?
 - a) Voting membership, Voluntary Board of Directors (appointed by voting membership), Board appointed Committees, with the support of a paid staff.
 - b) Self-perpetuating Board of Directors (Board appoints new Board members), Board appointed Committee, non-voting membership, with the support of a paid staff.
 - c) Situation "A" with a voluntary staff (no paid staff).
 - d) Situation "B" with a voluntary staff (no paid staff).
 - e) Other _____
2. Does your organization have any policy (formal or informal) in regard to African-American participation?
3. Please estimate the number of volunteers that actively participate in your organization.
4. How many paid staff positions does your organization have?
5. Approximately how many voting members does your organization have?
Approximately how many voting members are African-Americans?
6. How many members comprise the Board of Directors?
7. Approximately what percentage of the leadership positions of the Board of Directors are held by African-Americans?
8. Does your organization specifically target programs for the African-American Community?
9. Does your organization desire greater voluntary participation of African Americans?
10. Has your organization ever actively targeted African-Americans in programs designed to stimulate voluntary participation?
What media sources were used to facilitate these programs?
 - ___ a. Mailing lists
 - ___ b. Flyers
 - ___ c. Churches
 - ___ d. Referral of Current
 - ___ e. Radio Ads
 - ___ f. Television Ads
 - ___ g. Newspaper Ads
 - ___ h. Public Service Media
 - ___ i. Membership participation
 - ___ j. Other
11. Please indicate the success of these programs.
Excellent _____ Good _____ Fair _____ Poor _____
12. If these recruitment programs have not been as successful as desired, what factors do you feel preclude or limit more African-American participation?
13. Has your organization made any programmatic response to these factors?
14. To what extent does your organization feel it should make more appeals to the African-American community?
Significant effort _____ Moderate effort _____ Some effort _____
15. Does your organization target specific ethnic groups in fund raising?
Are African-Americans specifically targeted in fund raising efforts?
16. Approximately what percentage of voluntary contributions derive from the private African-American sector?
17. Does your organization feel it is satisfactorily answering the needs of the African-American community?
18. Does your organization believe its effectiveness in recruiting volunteers, fund raising efforts, and programmatic areas within the African-American community would be enhanced by the addition of African-American staff or increased African-American leadership roles within the membership?
19. Has African-American participation in your organization increased over the past 5 years?
20. What factors do you feel stimulated the greater participation?
21. Do you have any other thoughts concerning your organization's relationship to the Richmond African-American community?

ABSTRACT

This article describes the use of the well-tested Future Search approach to achieving a common goal through a peer-managed consensus model. The issues and planning strategies forged through the use of the Future Search process are relevant to both volunteerism in general and senior volunteerism in particular. With rapid changes in societal infrastructures, an unstable economy, and rising numbers of at-risk populations, the volunteer community has been and will continue to be called upon to respond. To provide the most effective volunteer service, organizations can employ consensus-building planning strategies such as the Future Search to reach mutually satisfactory conclusions about necessary directions for volunteerism. A specific example of utilization of the Future Search approach, in reviewing the inclusion of older volunteers in long-term care, is presented.

Using the Future Search Process for Senior Volunteer Service in Long-Term Care

Laura B. Wilson, PhD,
Jean Carroccio

WHAT IS A FUTURE SEARCH?

Did you ever wonder how you might effectively bring together a group of people with diverse interests and viewpoints and gain consensus as a part of a planning process? Have you struggled with a difficult to define problem or issue in your agency or as a general part of volunteerism and not been able to figure out how to approach a solution? Have you considered how to get a group with a history of inertia or conflict to confront a critical issue together? These are exactly the concepts which the Future Search conference process is designed to address. Created by Marvin Weisbord (1993), the Future Search is based on principles shown to make consensus planning possible. These key principles are:

- To bring together all organizations relevant to the issue in one place: the whole system united.
- To provide an open forum of self-managed peer group planners in which all ideas are considered valid and everyone has relevant information and expertise to contribute to the whole.
- To work toward an agreed-upon future.
- To achieve consensus which is translated into action planning.

The Future Search conference entails about 16 hours of group and individual work organized into four or five tasks that examine the past, present, and future of the issues being searched. Weisbord and his colleagues clearly state that the search itself is not a complex idea. In fact, the conference and the process are simple. In

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essence, the search is a group process to break down barriers and allow the development of a global view about the problem at hand. The most difficult aspects are getting the key stakeholders (as well as people who do not ordinarily meet together) into the room, to commit to participate as peers actively in the process.

The future search conference is an exploration of common ground based on the ability to learn from experience. The first task establishes the history of the issues viewed in the context of society and the individual, and defines the problem. The second task reviews current trends which affect the issue. The third task identifies the critical aspects to solve the problem at hand. The fourth task creates ideal future scenarios. The final task identifies common themes in the scenarios and develops plans to implement action.

THE FUTURE SEARCH PROCESS IN VOLUNTEERISM: AN EXAMPLE

The future search process, self-described as an optimal planning strategy for ambiguous problems without boundaries—thorny dilemmas posed by the economy, the environment, employment, technology, education, health care, and community planning (Weisbord, 1993), is an ideal way to deal with volunteerism and senior volunteerism. Volunteerism has problems due to complexities associated with the economy, downsizing, health-care cost containment, employment and retirement, and community development. Therefore, to be seen as part of a solution to these societal problems, volunteerism should be central to any planning process. In addition, volunteer agencies should be initiating their own strategic planning to identify their priorities and define their roles within societal issues. The Future Search conference process is ideally applicable.

The effectiveness of such a process can be demonstrated by the example of the Future Search on Senior Companions in Long Term Care. In August, 1994 the Visiting Nurse Associations of America (VNAA) hosted a Future Search confer-

ence in Denver, Colorado. Its purpose was to discover ways to expand the Senior Companion Program of non-medical, long-term care services provided by senior volunteers as a part of an overall care strategy. The VNAA and the Senior Companion Program (now a part of the Corporation for National and Community Service but formerly part of ACTION, the federal domestic volunteer program) had worked jointly in 18 sites conducting a national demonstration project which used low income senior volunteers.

These volunteers were stipended to do 20 hours per week of senior service as an extension of the home care team in providing non-medical support to frail elderly living in the community. The program had been well received by the agency participants, the clients, and the volunteers. The regular presence of a peer volunteer was evaluated as providing a way to expand home care services, have ongoing "eyes and ears in the home" when home care team members were not visiting, and meeting some of the interpersonal needs of the homebound older persons (Wilson, 1994). As a result of its excellent evaluation, the VNAA decided to hold a Future Search conference in order to bring together a variety of potentially interested organizational representatives to possibly expand this program.

The VNAA worked with the Corporation for National Service to identify the potential stakeholders for this senior volunteer concept. The attendees came from senior volunteer agencies including American Association of Retired Persons, Foster Grandparent Program, American Red Cross, and the Senior Companion Program; federal agencies including the Department of Health and Human Services, the Corporation for National Service, and Health Care Financing Administration, insurance companies, research and evaluation entities including universities; and potential funders including foundations, federal agencies, and insurers.

Approximately 50 stakeholders came to Denver for the two-day intensive Future

Search conference. All respondents were asked to actively participate in individual and group tasks—to encourage input from every group member and to create a collaborative atmosphere to tap the creativity, and personal experiences of all involved. All ideas were to be considered valid and all information created in small groups would be shared with the whole group. Crucial to the process was that there were no outside experts separate from the stakeholders. The stakeholders were the experts and through group interaction they would seek solutions to problems. No external assistance, no outside small group facilitator, and no other information would be made available.

OUTCOMES OF THE FUTURE SEARCH ON SENIOR COMPANIONS IN LONG-TERM CARE

Task One: Focus on the Past

The first task was to focus on the past. Each stakeholder worked alone to identify memorable past events for society, senior citizens and long-term care, and self. Each person listed memorable events, turning points, and major happenings for the past three decades related to individual/personal life, society as a whole, and older persons and long-term care. These lists were then transferred by each individual to large time lines on the wall categorizing the information into the personal, societal and age related over the past three decades.

Next, small groups met to create a more global view about either the personal, society, or seniors and long-term care time lines. They were instructed to glean from the timeline patterns and then to develop a cohesive picture to share with the group as a whole.

A variety of factors emerged. Critical influences in aging and long-term care were policy developments: Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security, the Older American's Act and the Administration on Aging, the formation of the National Institute on Aging, and the Corporation for National Service, Title V, health care reform, the Family and Medical Leave Act, and the Americans

with Disabilities Act. Broader societal events included increase in violence and homelessness over the life span, the Vietnam War, modern technology, the Peace Corps, double digit inflation, changes in the family structure, women's roles, demographics, AIDS, the aging of the baby boomers, and changing employment patterns. Personal themes were associated with education, family, birth, death, marriage, divorce, home purchase, illness, and employment markers.

Task Two: Focus on the Present/Identifying Critical Issues

The group moved to looking at current issues and trends which might affect the future of such a program. Small groups were again created to explore each person's perspective on current issues and trends that impact senior companions in long-term care. First was a small group discussion on current issues and trends which impact senior companions in long-term care. The first category identified was demographics and epidemiological issues, such as expected increases over the next decade of older persons with Alzheimer's Disease and other mental health disorders as well as those with disabilities. The limited size of the Senior Companion Program and its limited geographic distribution were seen as impacting on long-term care expansion despite a well-defined need, a need exacerbated by long distance caregiving and the need for inexpensive alternative forms of assistance for frail homebound elders. Specific demographic issues within the Senior Companion Program (SCP) included the low number of male participants, the existence of more volunteers than placements, difficulties in serving rural areas, the lack of ability to have back-up companions when a senior companion became ill, and the waiting list of patients in need of assistance.

A second issue or trend category was the political and economic environment within which the expansion of the senior companion program must exist. Health care reform efforts, changes in Congress,

federal government block grants to states, and concerns over entitlement programs were issues which would affect the Senior Companion Program. In addition, the economic environment within and external to the SCP program would entail the development of various long-term care insurance products, the need for salaried staff in home care agencies to supervise the volunteers, the insecurity of a changing marketplace, the need to define and demonstrate program effectiveness and cost, and the need to review corporate interest were listed as economic factors affecting the inclusion of senior volunteers into long-term care.

Social and societal attitudinal factors were the third category noted. Funders' lack of orientation to respite services, an increased interest in children and youth in preference to older persons in funding and services, the need for the SCP program to clearly define its focus and strengthen its universal principle of companionship, and questions over the medical versus the social models of health care were noted.

Task Three: Identifying the Ideal Future

Small groups were instructed to develop a creative presentation dramatizing the future of the SCP in long-term care concept. Weisbord sees this as an important part of consensus planning. He states that "by living our dreams as if they have already happened, we ground ourselves in what we really want and are willing to work for."

The format was to project the Senior Companion Care to the year 2000. The groups were to show what the program now looks like and identify what had occurred over the past six years to facilitate these changes. The depiction must define how the future should look and be a future which group members were willing to begin creating now. The formats for the presentation might be a skit, a magazine feature story, a TV talk show or a diorama and had to include the following: significant achievements of the past six years,

values and ideals, relationships between individuals and groups that work together, and any alignment or realignment of resources or processes that were important. The scenarios were to be technically feasible, socially viable (not violating community or legal standards), and acknowledge the relationship with other government and regulatory entities.

As each skit or dramatization was given, the members of the audience were asked to consider the following:

- What were the key themes?
- What is the role of information and communication?
- How does the presentation describe critical relationships?
- What is needed to make this future a reality? What conditions are necessary?

The future scenarios presented had various themes and overlapping hopes and wishes. Included were: a tenfold increase in the number of companions, standardized training and supervision, a nationwide computerized access system or eldercare assistance, enabling legislation which removes restrictions on payment methods for using volunteers, high program visibility, an intergenerational program component, and the use of non-stipended volunteers. In addition, the visions included having a program in every Visiting Nurse Association in the country, having many and varied organizational and funding partners, being able to use the program to provide long-term home support and services for homebound individuals of any age, and loosening restrictions to the degree that anyone could become a senior volunteer and anyone who needed a companion would be able to have one.

Task Four: Focus on Action: Creating the Necessary Conditions

Common themes identified in scenario presentations were reviewed to determine necessary conditions for the program and how to develop them. The whole group listed three necessary conditions and is-

sues which might affect the program's future. Separate small groups considered each of these items: mission and values, volunteers and raw materials, clients and funding. In each group, the specific issue was reviewed from the perspective of who needs to be involved; what information, relationships and resources are needed; what are the values and principles are, and what needs to happen.

The mission of the Senior Companion (SC) in long-term care was to support the independence of at-risk adults where they choose to live through volunteer opportunities for older persons. The values were defined as: people are better off where they want to live, volunteer service must be compassionate, client dignity must be protected, family preservation is important, client and volunteer must both receive high value, the opportunity to serve should be widely available, and the idea of older people as valued members of society needs to be supported.

The group reviewing volunteers defined the SC volunteer as a person age 55 or older who provides individualized support services and companionship to primarily frail and elderly adults and who may or may not receive a stipend. The values and principles defined for volunteers were maintaining mental health, building friendships, stipends, insurance, dignity, independence, recognition, self-esteem, career development, training, and a sense of esprit d' corps. The necessary condition needed was more evaluation research to study the values and benefits of the companions; rethinking the purpose of the stipend and looking at corollary issues such as income eligibility, funding sources, and alternative forms of incentive such as tax credits or service credits; providing for more flexibility in hours served and in income guidelines; and expanding skills and education.

In the working group discussing clients, values and vision centered on consumer empowerment and control, providing an integrated service system, and safeguarding the client-centered nature of the senior

volunteer in long-term care. The group discussed using the disability model where payment is made directly to the consumer, enabling the client to choose providers and remain in control of service needs. Increased service coordination and the incorporation of senior volunteers as a part of the continuum of care were deemed necessary.

The final group focused on funding. Ideas elicited: to protect the integrity of the client-centered program, and to maintain the service; increased funding and legislative reform to expand the funding base were necessary. It was suggested that SC representatives attend the National Medicaid Waiver Conference to look at how this might work for the SCP. It was also suggested that the program attain a place on the agenda for the annual conference of the Health Insurance Association of America to inform insurers of this option. Other suggestions included building the concept into the Prospective Payment System, campaigning with the state insurance commissioners to allow benefits to cover this service, and affiliation with a home health agency to acquire reimbursement.

CONCLUSION: THE IMPACT OF THE FUTURE SEARCH ON SENIOR VOLUNTEERISM

The Future Search is a Viable Planning Tool for Volunteerism

The issues and planning strategies forged through the Future Search process are relevant to both volunteerism in general and senior volunteerism in particular. The broad range discussions today concerning mission, funding, economics, the social environment, and organizational relationships are critical to the future of volunteerism. With rapid changes in societal infrastructures, an unstable economy, and rising numbers of at-risk populations, the volunteer community has been and will continue to be called upon to respond. To provide the most effective volunteer service, organizations can employ consensus building planning strategies such as the future search to reach mutually satisfac-

tory conclusions about necessary directions for volunteerism.

The Future Search is a Useful Method to Bring Together Diverse Organizations

The current demands being placed on volunteer and senior volunteer organizations require resolution through group interaction and group process. There are many potential stakeholders in the production of effective community-based volunteer efforts. However, these stakeholders come from many different sectors of the community and may not have opportunities to come together to share their diverse perspectives. The egalitarian nature of the Future Search and its widely-tested principles serve this purpose effectively.

The Bringing Together of Stakeholders in a Future Search Can Start an Interactive Process Immediately

The Denver SCP future search conference demonstrated how bringing together key organizational representatives (who may not otherwise interact) to focus on a potential mutually beneficial concept can catalyze new activity immediately. At the Denver meeting, several organizational representatives made plans for follow-up meetings with other agencies based upon their interaction at the meeting. Groups that had not formerly interacted found common ground and new ideas.

The Future Search is an Educational Tool

Through group activity, diverse organizations and individuals learned about a concept in volunteerism which they may not have known about or completely understood. The Future Search afforded an opportunity to share divergent perspectives and gain some insight into opposing viewpoints. Conference participants stated their new or renewed enthusiasm for the Senior Companion in long-term care.

The Future Search is a Starting Point

Volunteerism requires commitment and energy, constant vigilance, and a lead organization or individual. The Future Search process has shown its effectiveness in sustaining that commitment and en-

ergy, and facilitating that all-important ongoing process of making plans that become realities.

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Letters

We apologize to Carol Weinstein, President of Friends of Fort Tryon Park, Inc., for the typographical error in publishing her letter, and have chosen to reprint the entire letter. -Ed.

Dear Editor,

Thank you for publishing in your Spring 1994 issue, Marlene Wilson's "Polishing the Potential of Volunteer/Staff Teams" from your 1993 International Conference on Volunteer Administration. It was most interesting, stimulating and rang a chord with my own experience in developing mission statements with a group.

She is right, mission statements must "be short, snappy and inspiring." But I have seen people misinterpret this idea and confuse a mission statement with a slogan. The two are not the same. Surely Marlene would agree.

For example, the preamble to the United States Constitution exemplifies a "short, snappy," most "inspiring" mission statement. But phrases like "United we stand, divided we fall," "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness," while shorter, snappier, and "inspiring," are not mission statements, but slogans, which are verbal logos.

Our commendable desire to easily inspire people and make their work appear and be as hassle-free as possible can lead us to wishfully, unwittingly confuse mission statements with slogans. No slogan can replace a well thought out mission statement to which everyone on the team has contributed, and such a mission statement cannot be completely expressed in a simple slogan. One cannot substitute for the other. We need them both.

Sincerely,

Carol Weinstein
President, Friends of Fort Tryon Park, Inc.

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