ABSTRACT

The accompanying thesis, written as part of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Social Work, and entitled "Recidivism in Unmarried Mothers: Problems of the Social Work Approach", is designed to make the general public conscious of the part it should play in the prevention and treatment of unmarried motherhood.

It is taken as axiomatic that unmarried motherhood, in our culture, is but one presenting facet of a girl's disturbed personality. Social Casework with the unmarried mother is seen to be all the more important, because, if the personality difficulties of the mother are unresolved or heightened by unmarried parenthood, they can tend to produce a repetition of the experience which led to the first pregnancy. The degree of the unmarried mother's intelligence, and the time of her referral to the social agency, are seen as the critical factors which determine whether or not the caseworker is able to form a constructive relationship with her. With this in mind, cases of recidivists known to the Vancouver Children's Aid Society during the year 1946 are examined, with particular reference to (1) the intelligence of the girls concerned, and (2) whether or not they were referred to the agency before, or after the birth of the child.

The conclusion is reached that, in practice, the degree of the unmarried mother's intelligence is not the major issue facing the social worker, but that the difficulty lies basically in the weakness of her actual contact with the mother. This weakness is shown to be due to a number of factors: delayed referral; "peculiar personality" of the unmarried mother; emphasis on early establishment of paternity; pressure of work, and lack of psychiatric consultation. It is pointed out that the public, while it has come a long way in modifying its censurisious attitude to illegitimacy, has not yet achieved full understanding of its implications. The resources in the community for the treatment and rehabilitation of the unmarried mother are definitely limited, and at present, the social agency is bearing the full weight of the problem. Various suggestions are made as to the ways and means of remedying the situation.

The experience with unmarried mothers on which this study is based, has been obtained primarily while the writer was employed as a social worker for the British Columbia Provincial Field Service. It has been done with full awareness of its deficiencies, and it is hoped that this study will foreshadow further ones which will add the specialized experience of the private agencies to the knowledge which one worker has gained from the more general field of a public agency.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

Part I.

Chapter 1. The Attitude of Society


Chapter 2. The Causes

A general discussion of the theories regarding the causes of unmarried motherhood. The influence of heredity and environment. The emotional component.

Chapter 3. Attempts to Face Facts

A review of allied studies on the unmarried mother. The first case studies. The inconsistency of results. The "Peculiar Personal Equation" of the unmarried mother.

Part II.

Chapter 4. The Current Situation

The scope of the problem. General aspects of the situation in Canada, British Columbia, and Vancouver. The special characteristics of the Vancouver Children's Aid Society.

Chapter 5. The Facilities

Vancouver Children's Aid Society--its history and clientele. The services available; psychiatric clinic; maternity home care; financial and legal aspects; specialized resources.

Chapter 6. Casework Concepts

A "new" orientation in casework. The need for a "confident relationship" with the unmarried mother. Difficulties encountered and how to overcome them by the professional approach. The therapeutic process defined.
Part III.

Chapter 7. The Presenting Problem

The unmarried mother approaches the social agency. Typical personality patterns. Non-resolution of the mother's personality difficulties may precipitate another pregnancy. Queries as to assessment of factors involved. Basis of analysis for this assessment.

Chapter 8. Special Difficulties


Chapter 9. Case Differences

Cases Referred After Childbirth

Outlook more hopeful for casework with unmarried mothers of average or greater than average intelligence. The "client-worker" relationship. Professional approach of the worker. Time of referral again seen as critical point in establishment of constructive relationship.

Chapter 10. Case Differences

Cases Referred Before Childbirth

The worker "off base". Successful retrieve of a bad situation. Pathology too great for treatment. A "private" placement that misfired. Cases suggestive of prognostic value. Parallel situations found in cases referred before the birth of the child. More recent recidivists present typical picture of late referral and difficulties unresolved.

Part IV.

Chapter 11. Evaluation and Conclusion

The "common denominator". Weakness in casework treatment lies in actual contact with worker. Analysis of the factors contributing to this weakness; delayed referral; "peculiar personality" of unmarried mother; early establishment of paternity; pressure of work and lack of psychiatric consultation, defects in community organization. Needs for prevention and treatment.

Appendix:

Bibliography.
RECIDIVISM IN UNMARRIED MOTHERS:

PROBLEMS OF THE SOCIAL WORK APPROACH.
Part I.

Chapter 1. The Attitude of Society.

Chapter 2. The Causes.

Chapter 3. Attempts to Face Facts.
Chapter 1.

The Attitude of Society.

"A problem as old and unresolved as human existence itself. Through the ages, it has remained a matter of morals and policy, rather than scientific theory. It has been viewed as an evil occurrence calling for a distribution of blame, a manifestation of repentance, and an adjudication of rights and duties." (Kingsley Davis: "Illegitimacy and the Social Structure", American Journal of Sociology, Sept. 1939, p.215.)

Before concentrating attention specifically on recidivism in unmarried mothers, a preliminary reconnaissance of the general aspects of her situation through the years seems necessary to increase our knowledge and deepen our understanding. It is trite but true to say that "illegitimacy is as old as marital law, and, in one form or another, it has been a universal social phenomenon." Universal though it is, the problem of the unmarried mother has been accorded varying degrees of acceptance by society, according to the sex mores and marital regulations of the time. Primitive women in some cultures find their marriage value increased because they have demonstrated their fertility, and they and their children are given ready acceptance into the tribe. By contract, unmarried motherhood has, in other societies, meant death for the mother, or the child; sometimes it has meant death for both, according to the tribal customs.

Ironically, early Christianity worsened the status of the unmarried mother. In glorifying the family and attempting to put an end to unchastity, it placed emphasis on the

"sin" of extra-marital relationships. Naturally, condemnation fell most easily on the illegitimately pregnant woman, whose "sin" was self-evident. She had to "confess" before the congregation, and was forced to endure the humiliation of public castigation. Her child was neglected, and was made the object of discrimination. These repressive measures, as so often in other fields of human welfare, did not have the desired curative effect, but only resulted, as one writer has said, in "concealment, abortion, maternal mortality and infanticide". Indeed, infanticide became so prevalent, that the church had to take cognizance of it, and assume a more realistic approach. Thus the sixth century saw the establishment of the first foundling home. However, the church did not modify its censure of the mother, and she and her child were still publicly condemned.

The early settlers to America brought with them their old attitude and beliefs, but women were few and highly prized in the new land, hence the pioneer woman did not find herself materially handicapped by having a child out of wedlock. However, as the settlements became more firmly established, this tolerant attitude changed. This is in keeping with the thesis elaborated by Kingsley Davis, that "the stronger the family ties in the mores of society, the more distinct is the status of the illegitimate child (and its mother)".

Varying distinctions in the legal status of the unmarried mother and her child have always been apparent. Frank H. Hankins, the writer previously quoted, points out the ancient Roman Law was first based on the principle of agnation, and hence the illegitimate child had neither father nor mother.\(^1\)

Later, kinship became based on the broader concept of cognation, and then the illegitimate child had rights of support and succession from its mother. The Roman Law was superseded by that of the Christianized Empire, and the rights of all illegitimate children against their mothers were suppressed—except in the case of those born in concubinage. Christianity, which deepened the "sin" of the unmarried mother, classified her child according to her "guilt". The degree of this guilt was measured by the type of union which produced the child, and the illegitimate child's property rights depended upon whether he was \textit{ex damnato coitu} or \textit{liberi naturale}.\(^2\)

In the Middle Ages, though legal theory maintained that the illegitimate child had a right to support, he was often treated as a serf, and the combination of harsh punishment for the mother, and denial of legal rights to the child, was universal.\(^3\) English common-law had no gradations; the bastard (so called) was \textit{filius nullius}, and the mother herself could be punished as a "lewd woman". Interestingly enough, it was the very fact that the child here \underline{had} no one to support it, and was

---

1 Ibid, p. 580 et seq.
thus thrust upon the unwilling parish for maintenance, that
eventually won for it the right to legal support from its
parents.

The colonization of America by English settlers in the
seventeenth and eighteenth centuries meant that the beliefs,
attitudes, and practices of the common law of England were
transplanted with them, and took firm root in the new land.
Thus there, too, the emphasis was not on the welfare of the
mother and her child, but on the determination of the basis of
support.

There was an attempt during the French Revolution to
effect a radical change in the rights of the illegitimate child,
but it proved abortive, and the Code Napoleon (article 340)
flatly declared "la recherche de la paternite est interdite". ¹
Thus neither the unmarried mother nor her child had any rights.
It was not until the general social awakening of the late
nineteenth and early twentieth centuries that there was "a more
intelligent and humane approach to the problem of illegitimacy". ²

Then the trail was blazed by Norway, which enacted the famous
Castberg Law in 1915. This was the first radical departure
from the old morass which had mired both mother and child. It
recognized clearly and rationally that the child had two parents,
declared that they were equally responsible for its upbringing
(thus indirectly decreasing the stigma which had formerly been
attached to the mother), and placed on the State the respon-
sibility for establishing paternity.

The Castberg Law was given considerable publicity, and was discussed internationally; but, in general, there was little government care and planning for the unmarried mother and child until after the first World War. People appeared to become conscious of the value of these children as future citizens and potential warriors, and governments veered from the original purpose of protecting public funds, to attempt instead the better service of the interests of mother and child. Evidence of this change in public attitude can be seen in the now growing tendency in many countries to place responsibility for the maintenance of the unmarried mother and her child on local public welfare departments.

Over the years, the social and legal status accorded by society to the unmarried mother and her child has been invariably reflected by the various methods developed to care for them. For example, the first organized method of care was the Foundling Home, the origin of which is traceable to the Church in Italy, during the sixth century. This plan did not stem so much from an enlightened attempt to help the mother herself, as it did from a desire to curb the rising tide of infanticide brought on by the prevailing repressive measures against illegitimacy. These homes spread first to France, and eventually throughout Europe. In the twelfth century, as an additional inducement to women to use their facilities, the "tour", or turn box, was evolved, and so constructed that the child could be left at the home without the mother's identity
In England, the Foundling Homes were supplanted later by the infamous almshouses. Eventually, this provision too was carried to America by the colonists. Into the almshouse the unmarried mother was thrown, along with the old and the young, the diseased and the insane. Stigmatized, never given a chance to improve her position, she was usually pushed down to further degradation. It took a long time, even with the general social awakening during the nineteenth century, for sufficient people to cry out against such a barbarous method of "care" to get it changed. The reform was begun by groups of individuals who established private "rescue homes" and "shelters" for the unmarried mother.

In the course of the nineteenth century, these maternity homes, though uniform in their purpose of sheltering the unmarried mother from the scorn of the public, came to be divided into two groups in their policy regarding her child. One, which concentrated on missionary work with the mother, believed the "the child would be a potent factor in holding the mother to new ideals acquired through the influence of the home; that he would completely fill her life and leave no void or desire for her former associates". They therefore routinely discharged all babies along with their mothers. The other

---

1 The "tour" was a box built on a pivot, in the door of the home. The mother could pivot the box round toward her, place her child in it, turn it so that the child would face into the home, pull the bell and flee into the night.
group was motivated solely by a desire to shield the mother and "keep her secret"; accordingly, they developed a policy of discharging the mother while keeping her baby in care.

These homes actually did very little for the unmarried mother except give her shelter and care during confinement, though if it was their policy to "keep her secret", they sometimes arranged adoption for her child. They made no provision for the mother's after-care. If a woman were luckless enough to have a second illegitimate child she was looked upon as so hopelessly degraded, that a private rescue home receiving her was thereby somewhat discredited.¹

This same period saw the development of the commercial maternity home, many of which are still in existence in various parts of the United States and Canada. These are profit-making enterprises. They are not kept under control by Welfare Licencing Acts, and they make a good business of privately placing babies for adoption.

As Mary F. Smith points out, social work was just in its infancy (1890 - 1910), and the few workers who came in contact with the unmarried mother had an almost unquestioned authority to undertake the task of reclaiming the "fallen woman" to "right standards". ² Opinion, however, was divided as to whether the mother should or should not keep her child. If she did, the worker usually accepted without question that

¹ Mary S. Richmond: Social Diagnosis, p. 95.
"a healthy young woman can usually maintain herself and her child in a home with good people of moderate means who cannot pay high wages".\textsuperscript{1}

In the United States, it was the then recently-organized Children's Bureau that first called public attention to the social results of the current treatment accorded to unmarried mother and her child. It published an English translation of the Castberg Law, and later published a report on illegitimacy laws of the United States and other countries. In 1920, it organized a regional conference in Chicago and New York to study illegitimacy.\textsuperscript{2} Though this primarily called attention to the public health and child welfare aspects of the situation, it was the first real effort to give thoughtful study to the situation of the unmarried mother. Later it published a report on the regional conferences and the Inter-City conference on illegitimacy.\textsuperscript{3} This brought about widespread interest in the problems surrounding the unmarried mother and the child born out of wedlock. A number of research projects were set in motion, notably Percy G. Kammerer's \emph{The Unmarried Mother}, which was published in 1918 and showed the possibilities of individual case studies.

With the new interest aroused by Mary S. Richmond in her book \emph{Social Diagnosis}, and the stimulus given by the research studies to learning more about cause and effect,

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{1} Ibid. \\
\textsuperscript{2} Grace Abbott: \emph{The Child and the State}, Vol. 2, p. 500. \\
\textsuperscript{3} U.S. Children's Bureau Publication, No. 77, 1921.
\end{flushleft}
emphasis began to be laid on securing an adequate social history on the unmarried mother. In other words, she had moved from being lumped together with other women and their children as a "social problem", to the realm where she at last was being seen as a human being. Now it began to be realized that plans for her care should be made, and should be made on an individual basis. This thinking was outlined in Virginia Robinson's book, *A Changing Psychology in Social Case Work*, which was published in 1930. From this point on, social workers tried to seek an understanding of the clients' personality. They began to see that the unmarried mother had the right to decide whether or not she wished to keep her baby, certainly a radical departure from a few years previous, when it was righteously felt that the unmarried mother should keep her child to ensure its proper care, and so that it should help to "stabilize her".

Social workers soon became so concerned with the unmarried mother's "rights" to come to her decision without pressure, that they leaned over backwards to ensure that they would not influence her in any way. As a result, the all-too-familiar instance became evident, of the child trundled from foster home to foster home, while the mother was in the process of coming to her decision. Workers everywhere, as well as clients, were caught in this dilemma. During the depression years, social workers were primarily concerned with administering actual "relief in kind"; but towards the close of that period there was a revival in studies of the unmarried mother.
Two of the most interesting ones, referred to later, recommended the establishment of specialized services for them. It was felt that "after ... years of concentrated effort and study (a worker would be) more responsive to the problems of unmarried mothers, in much the way any specialist becomes sensitized to and steeped in a problem to which he has given his whole attention for a time".¹

From these studies came a firm conviction that fundamentally the unmarried mother was struggling with problems similar to those of other disturbed girls, and that it was merely her "presenting problem" that was unique.

Emphasis was laid on the warm, sustaining role of the worker which, it was felt, should supply the deficiencies in the girl's own mother.² To this view has lately been added the conviction that the worker has a responsibility to assist the unmarried mother in coming to a decision: that she should not let the girl flounder in an effort to make her own judgments, but should sustain and re-inforce those which are healthy.

A recent method of care, developed within the field of casework, is the use of supervised private work homes where the mother may go prior to confinement. Like other approaches, this cannot be used as a "blanket solution"; it must depend on the individual girl. Many girls who cannot accept the regimentation of a Maternity Home, respond well in the private home.

¹ "Case Work Services for Unmarried Mothers" (the report of a Seminar of St. Louis Children's Aid Society and the St. Louis Provident Association), The Family, Nov., 1941.
² Babette Black: "The Unmarried Mother--Is She Different?", The Family, July, 1945, p. 168.
Of course, much depends on the girl and even more on the character and maturity of her employer. Some communities have developed as a resource the licensed private boarding home for children, which makes it possible for the unmarried mother to leave her child in good care while she goes out to work. These homes, too, have to be carefully screened, as jealousies and differences are liable to arise between the natural mother and the foster mother over the care of the child. It is interesting to read in a recent British report on the subject that, "homes for unmarried mothers and their babies from which the mother can go out to work" are advocated. The report goes on to say "such homes might well be suitable for widowed or deserted mothers as well as for unmarried mothers and would help to make the child born out of wedlock less conspicuous since he would be merely one of the other fatherless children". A type of home has actually been established in Russia, which is somewhat like the old maternity home, but which is intended for unmarried mothers and widows: "who may remain with their children for three months before, and three months after childbirth".

It is a far cry from the days of the old foundling home, where the mother thrust her baby over the threshold and fled to preserve her anonymity, to the present era of personalized casework service for the unmarried mother. Nowadays it

is felt that there is no "blanket" care for the child or its mother. Instead, the social worker, with the co-operation of the mother, assesses each individual situation and makes use of whatever community resources seem indicated. Perhaps it is a private work home that is required, where the unmarried mother may share to some extent in the family life; or, again, the sheltered care of the maternity home may best be suited to her needs. Later on, public funds may assist the mother to maintain her child if she so desires, or she may wish to make use of the day nursery or boarding home to care for her child while she works to maintain it. If the girl decides that she does not wish to keep her child, the skilled social worker assists her with adoption home, or foster home placement as the case may be. However, there is still much for which to aim. Some of the goals to which people should be striving for the protection of the unmarried mother and her child have been defined. First, it is now generally recognized that all children should be issued a "short" birth certificate, containing only the name, date and place of birth, instead of one giving all the details of birth and parentage. This would do much to prevent the illegitimate child from being "set apart" from other children. Again, though so far public opinion has continued, for the most part, to censure the mother and hold her responsible for the care and support of her child, the feeling is becoming more prevalent that a man should be considered equally responsible for his children, whether they be born in or out of wedlock. Therefore the law should contain
provision for either the unmarried mother or the state to take legal action to establish paternity for the child. Once paternity is established, the child should have the right to the father's name and have the same inheritance rights from him as a legitimate child. However, the establishment of paternity does not legitimize a child; and there is also need for provision that if the parents subsequently marry, the child automatically becomes legitimized. It is also believed by Child Welfare authorities, that the state should have some control over the unmarried mother, so that she cannot place her child indiscriminately, and that the court should have continuing jurisdiction during the minority of the child both of custody and support. Finally, there would seem to be evidence that casework with the mother herself is often broken off too abruptly; it would appear that she is in need of as much support and guidance for a considerable period after the birth of the child, as she is before it.

It seems inevitable, since marriage is the recognized social institution within which to rear a child, that the unmarried mother and her child will always have to bear certain handicaps: at the least, that of nonconformity; at the worst, a crippling social stigma. The fact remains that just legislation, as outlined above, complemented by enlightened public opinion, can do much to give the unmarried mother and her child the chance for the happy, useful life which is the right of every individual.
Chapter 2.

The Causes.

"In general, those ideas which are still almost universally accepted in regard to man's nature, his proper conduct and his relations to God and his fellows, are far more ancient, and far less critical, than those which have to do with the movement of the stars, the stratification of the rocks, and the life of plants and animals." (James Harvey Robinson: The Mind in the Making, Chapter 6, p. 7.)

There was no theorizing at one time as to the causes of unmarried motherhood. Under the influence of Christian thinking, it was taken for granted that unchastity was all due to "original sin". As long as people were dogmatically convinced of this and of the necessity for enforcing "right" standards of living, there were no doubts in their minds to state their convictions. As has been noted, it was only in the general social awakening of the nineteenth century that people began to decry the customary attitude to the unmarried mother as "unchristian". Then followed the period when efforts were made to redeem the unmarried mother as a "fallen" woman. These efforts extended, however, only to the first child. The mother's first "offence" could be forgiven, but if she transgressed more than once, she was an object of hopeless depravity. There was still no doubt as to what "caused" her "sin". It was "weakness of the flesh". It was only as society was made aware of the tremendous social costs of unmarried motherhood in suffering and in life itself, that critical thinking began to be focused on these old ideas. In a book, Das Haltekinderwesen, published in Berlin in 1899, one writer stated his belief that the average mother of an illegitimate child was led
only by her emotions, without any consideration of the future, and without the slightest responsibility for the child's welfare. For this reason he advocated professional guardians appointed by the state to supervise the child. One of the first systematic studies of the mother as a person was made by P.G. Kammerer in 1918. From 500 cases of unmarried mothers, he painstakingly analysed the apparent "causes" of each woman's mis-step. Exclusive of cases involving mental deficiency, he listed bad environment, bad companions, recreational disadvantages, educational disadvantages, bad home conditions, early sexual experiences, sexual suggestibility, mental conflict, heredity, assault, incest, and rape, as amongst the causative factors. He emphasized that none of the factors operated singly in a given case, but that rather there was a "cluster" of causes. Shortly after this, another researcher substantiated much of Kammerer's finding but added the observation that "Frequently, if not usually, the mother of two illegitimate children is feeble minded or otherwise abnormal and therefore in need of a special form of care". Another report, published about the same time, stated that none of the mothers given service had had another child but that "all of those who have had a second or third child, have been those who were trying to support their illegitimate child, whether it was the first,

1 Cited in Percy G. Kammerer: The Unmarried Mother, p. 17.
2 Ibid.
second or third". So it was believed by inference, that keeping the child was a factor in recidivism.

The Encyclopedia of Social Reform, published in 1910, casts an interesting side-light on another theory as to the cause of unmarried motherhood. In an article on illegitimacy, it lists all the factors which cannot be proven to cause illegitimacy. For example, it states that illegitimacy cannot be due to differences in religious faith, as one Catholic or Protestant country, as the case may be, will have a high rate of illegitimacy, while another will have a low one. Census figures are quoted to support this statement. Again, it states that it cannot be due to crowded conditions in the city, as often the rate of illegitimacy is higher in the country than in large cities. Census figures are again quoted to prove this point. Finally, it states that illegitimacy cannot be due to poverty or chronic want, as a comparison of statistics obtained for the years 1901-1905, show that the poverty-stricken East End of London is less affected by illegitimate birth than the fashionable West End. So it concludes "For the real causes—one must look to certain hereditary influences".\(^1\) This is an interesting but not convincing conclusion. Too much weight has been placed here on simple negative correlations, and no attempt has been made to enumerate or prove the "certain hereditary factors" that are presumed to be the cause of illegitimacy.

\(^1\) Albert Liffingwell: "Illegitimacy", *Encyclopedia of Social Reform*. 
If there was one thing that these various studies revealed, it was the fact that there are no known characteristics which are peculiar only to the girl who becomes an unmarried mother. More and more it became evident that each girl had her own constellation of causes, and that the apparent factors which influenced her in becoming illegitimately pregnant, could appear as either very obvious, or very obscure.

Grace Abbott,¹ summed up the current thinking thus:

"... a study (of illegitimacy) . . . would have involved . . . such personal factors in the unmarried mothers as feeblemindedness, ignorance of the biological facts of life, high sexual suggestibility, lack of industrial proficiency and personality development . . . . The influence of family standards and ideals, poverty in the home, and immoral and unsympathetic parents. Education, early employment, and the type of employment . . . . The pressure of a socially inferior race, the position of women, and the community attitude to pre-marital relationships especially after betrothal, would also have been found to influence the illegitimacy rate of a nation."

One factor which had appeared with monotonous regularity in the social history of the unmarried mother, was that of the "broken" home. This appeared to give emphasis to the importance of the emotional component of family relationships in the early years of childhood as a determinant of the personality of the individual. This theory had been taught

by French and further expounded by Flugel.¹ Inconsistency of results in the other studies of the causes of illegitimacy, brought about a swing to the consideration of the "psychological factors" in unmarried motherhood.

Kasanin and Handschin,² in a most interesting paper published in 1941, point out that one authority as early as 1927 stated "... approaching the problem (of illegitimacy) in a scientific way, one at once seeks the causes within the individual herself". This aspect however was not much elaborated until the late 1930's and early 1940's when there grew more and more interest in this viewpoint. Helene Deutsch and Florence Clothier were notable in discussions of the psycho-dynamics of unmarried motherhood. Miss Clothier made the following trenchant statement which gives the essence of this school of thought: "Unmarried motherhood in our culture, represents a distorted and unrealistic way out of inner difficulties and is thus comparable to neurotic symptoms on the one hand and delinquent behaviour on the other".³

Another writer goes on to state that if the "inner difficulties" from which the original pregnancy arose are unresolved or heightened by motherhood, recidivism may follow in a continued attempt to reduce inner tension.⁴

---

Today it is accepted more and more that there is no one answer to the cause of illegitimacy. The viewpoint which is becoming generally acceptable is simply and clearly enunciated in the following statement: "The cause of the behaviour that results in unmarried motherhood may be fairly simple or extremely complex. Many (mothers) come from underprivileged homes of financial want, crowded housing, lack of wholesome recreation, family discord. Many feel they never had love and security from their parents. They have been denied this birth-right of normal childhood. Under these conditions, illegitimate pregnancy should not be looked upon merely as a sex experience and a violation of the moral code of the community, but as a symptom of behaviour expressing the needs of the individual".¹

It is interesting to note the gradual evolution from the moralistic theory of original sin, through the attempt to scientifically tabulate external factors to the present day concept that illegitimacy is merely one presenting form of a behaviour difficulty on the part of the individual concerned. In the next chapter, this change in thought is explored in more detail through discussion of the various studies on the unmarried mother.

Chapter 3.

Attempts to Understand the Facts

"It is unmistakable now, in contrast to the early years of the (present) century, that the main orientation of social work is not authoritative and moralistic but scientific and related to the modern world." (Bertha Capen Reynolds: Learning and Teaching In the Practice of Social Work, p. 20.)

While over the years there was much discussion regarding the various aspects of unmarried motherhood, there was really no scientific attempt to face up to the situation and understand it, until the beginning of this century. From 1918 on however, there are divers studies on the subject, although it has been possible to locate only one which deals with recidivism in unmarried mothers.¹ These studies, while varying in the individual approach, are all representative of the changing casework emphasis of this period.

The first study noted is the one of Percy G. Kammerer which was mentioned previously. The emphasis of this study was twofold. Primarily Kammerer was interested in the causative factors, but he was also concerned with the mother's relationship to her child. His work was scholarly and thorough and was really the first to show the possibilities of case studies.

Three years later, Mangold made a sociological study of illegitimacy. He devoted some time to studying the father of the child born out of wedlock, pointing out that they had received but scant attention from the workers. He came to the

interesting conclusion that the mentality of the putative father is distinctly higher than that of the mother. This was not conclusively proven, but drawn as a corollary to his statement that "It is not probable that very many are feeble minded as the subnormal male is more likely to use violence and come to grief".¹ He later mentioned that "frequently, if not usually, the mother of two (or more) illegitimate children is feeble minded or otherwise abnormal and therefore in need of a special form of care".²

In a study made a year later, the emphasis is different, and attempt being made to discover the outcome of unmarried motherhood. Dr. Guibord, a psychiatrist at the Church Home Society, Boston, Mass., and Ida Parker, the associate director of the Boston Research Bureau on Social Case Work, studied the cases of 82 unmarried mothers.³ They divided their work into two parts. The first consisted of an initial study of the mothers, comprising a social history plus a mental examination. The second, a follow-up study, scrutinized first the treatment given the mothers by social agencies (i.e. casework), and next their histories subsequent to care by the agencies.

At this time, caseworkers were divided as to whether or not the mother should keep her baby. Some argued it was the mother's duty to do so, and relied on the maternal instinct

² Loco cit.
to develop and strengthen her character. Others maintained permanent separation removed the stigma of illegitimacy from the child and gave the mother a chance to "live down" her mistake. The authors of this study therefore attempted to see which mothers kept their children and which gave them up, with a view to determining the ones that made the best social adjustment. They concluded that the theory that keeping the child "stabalizes the mother" was not necessarily true, since among the group who kept their children, more than one quarter had illicit sex relations. Almost one quarter of the total cases studied were repeaters, and cases occurred with equal incidence amongst the mothers who kept the child and those who gave it up. Their general conclusion was that, since less than one fifth of the group occupied a social position worse than at the time of motherhood, "motherhood without marriage, for this group at least, had a more disastrous import for society than for the mother herself".

Some of the studies made in the late 1930's and early 1940's show the direct movement away from looking for causes in the environment, to looking for them in the personality of the girl. A particularly interesting one was made by Lauretta Bender and Ruth Nottingham in 1937.¹ This applied to 40 unmarried pregnant girls who were residents of a Florence Crittenton "Rescue Home", in Columbia, Ohio. Each girl was

given a set of tests about one week after her admission to the Home, the purpose of the tests being two-fold. It was attempted to gain a complete picture of the girl's personality; and at the same time to assess her capabilities for future vocational training. It was hoped that some of the tests would show results that were characteristic for this group and thus "have prognostic value in selecting the girl who had tendencies toward this type of delinquency". But the hope that personal characteristics peculiar to this group would be found was not realized. The reports for individual girls, however, were of practical value, and assisted the court in making better disposition of some cases which came under their jurisdiction. They were also able to re-affirm that the broken home and the unskilled occupation were notable and recurring correlations in this particular type of delinquency, but that there was no evidence of certain separate personality traits.

Another study that endeavoured to assess particular personal characteristics of the unmarried mother, was the basis of a thesis by Ruth Rome.¹ In this an attempt was made to see if there was any correlation between certain characteristics of the mother and her decision regarding her child. The conclusion reached was that she was best fitted to keep her child if she seemed a "well-adjusted" person, if she had had a love relationship with the father of her child, if she expected to marry him, or if she had a "fairly mature" attitude to her state.

In a study made in the following year, Kasanin and Handschin pointed out the inconsistency of results shown in many studies of the unmarried mother and questioned whether there was any way of proving if the factors which occurred so frequently, for example, the broken home, bad companions, et cetera, were causative or merely contributive.\footnote{M.D. Kasanin and S. Handschin: Psychodynamic Factors in Illegitimacy, American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, Jan., 1941.} They isolated, as far as possible, the psychological problem or the "peculiar personal equation" of the girl herself. For this purpose, they made a careful selection of 20 cases, making sure to exclude the feeble-minded, borderline, or psychotic and those for whom there seemed to be no "outer reality" reasons to account for their behaviour. The group selected included all cases of multiple illegitimacy and a random sample of single illegitimacy cases. Their study was centered around the girl's relationship to her child, to the putative father and to her family. In 81 percent they noted a "flattened effect", a bland acceptance of pregnancy, brief unstable relationships with the putative father, and no desire to have anything more to do with him. The girls showed a great deal of fantasy and the need to "act out" and dramatize. Kasanin and Handschin therefore put forth the hypothesis that "Pregnancy in their case represented a hysterical dis-association state in which they acted out their incest fantasies as an expression of the Oedipus situation".

One small but intensive study has been made by Jane
S. Hosmer in an attempt to arrive at a formula for predicting the probable outcome of a mother's plan to keep her child. In a case-study of 26 unmarried mothers who retained their children, she re-affirms the findings of Ruth Rome and concludes that: "It would seem that judgments about the likelihood of success in the plan of keeping an illegitimate child and mother together should be based on . . . the girl's personal adjustment prior to pregnancy, the psychological healthiness of her home conditions, and the degree of maturity in her attitude to her pregnancy".  

In 1943, Ruth Riaborg studied comparative groups of recidivists and non-recidivists, choosing mothers who were neither feeble-minded nor psychotic and who had been know to the Agency during their first pregnancy. She concludes that a significant number of recidivists have an extremely casual relation with the putative father and lack emotional concern about their pregnancy. She also concludes, that in the entire group of recidivists studied only three girls had lacked initial casework treatment in the agency and that in the remainder, their problems had been too deep-seated for such treatment.

In a study directed to psychological factors, Florence Clothier has discussed the roles that three adolescent fantasies, rape, prostitution and immaculate conception, may play in producing illegitimacy. She prefaced her study by a discussion

of the normal role of motherhood and fatherhood in an individual, and suggested that normally, motherhood was a gateway to maturity in a woman. The following is a direct quotation: "Marriage and motherhood per se do not necessarily lead to a happy solution of a woman's childhood and adolescent conflicts . . . . Being loved exclusively by the husband and bearing a baby by him however, have inherent in them, the most direct solution of infantile conflicts which constitute the neuroses of adult women . . . and have the possibility . . . of bringing her to a satisfying life goal."¹

She argues that, on the other hand, paternity has quite a different psychological value for a man as physiologically his individual life is complete whether or not his sexual activity leads to the birth of children.² Unmarried motherhood, to her way of thinking, solves no conflict within the mother and produces more complications for her. Nor is unmarried fatherhood conducive, as is marriage, to the development of warm fatherly feelings for the child. She concludes with the view previously mentioned that "Unmarried motherhood . . . is comparable . . . on the one hand to neurotic symptoms, and on the other, to delinquent behaviour".

The final study warrants particular attention, considering as it does the girl who is at the very threshold of womanhood. It picks up Clothier's conclusion and tests it on

² loc. cit.
a very small number of unmarried mothers. These girls were all young, none being older than 16 years of age. They were not psychotic or mentally deficient but had all come to the attention of a psychiatrist. Predisposing, precipitating and exciting causes of the illegitimate pregnancies were studied. The major predisposing cause was stated to be inadequate parental care which was conducive to excess anxiety and impaired ego growth. Precipitating causes were believed to be recent pubertal maturation or any recent trauma that struck at the girls' security, self-esteem or sexuality. Exciting causes might be environmental opportunities and pressures such as might occur during wartime.¹

Part II.

Chapter 4. The Current Situation.

Chapter 5. The Facilities.

Chapter 4.

The Current Situation.

"So little done, so much to do." (A famous remark of Cecil Rhodes.)

The material outlined in the previous chapters throws into relief the current situation in Canada; the problems of the unmarried mother have never been adequately met, and on the whole they are increasing, even though the ratio of illegitimate live births to the total number of live births itself has not risen.

In 1946 the United States Census reported approximately 83,000 illegitimate births.\(^1\) This figure is an underestimate of the total number of such births because all states do not have uniform registration. In Canada, there were approximately 13,000 illegitimate births in 1945, which was approximately 4.48% of the total number of live births. In British Columbia, there were 1,121 illegitimate births registered or 5.9% of the total number of live births for the province.\(^2\) In 1946, 40 per cent of the new cases referred to the Vancouver Children's Aid Society were referred for service because of illegitimacy, and, in all, 700 unmarried mothers received casework service during that year. There are no statistics available regarding the percentage of recidivists as this factor has never been specifically isolated by the Society. From these figures, it can be seen that the task of providing adequate social as well as medical services for the unmarried mother in Canada, con-

---

1 U.S. Children's Bureau Publication No. 310, April 1945.  
2 Canada Year Book, 1946.
stitutes a major problem. Particularly is this so in view of the shortage of qualified social workers.¹

Originally, no specific provision at all was made for the unmarried mother in Canada. Welfare work had begun with the care of the most needy, the Maritimes reproducing the pattern of the New England states and the early English poor law institutions already referred to. The first almshouse was established in Halifax in 1752, for the care of the indigent, aged and infirm, and the unmarried mother, if necessary, was also housed therein. Indeed, she and her child continued to be cared for in such institutions until well into the nineteenth century.

Conditions were similar throughout Eastern Canada before Confederation. By the British North America Act (1867), the laws governing civil relations and the status, guardianship and protection of children, were placed almost exclusively within the provincial jurisdiction.² As a result, "there are nine sets of laws, regulations and practices dealing with the care and protection of unmarried mothers and children. These laws range from good to bad, depending on the wealth, traditions, customs and attitudes of the citizens of the province concerned."³

¹ According to the Social Worker (official publication of the Canadian Association of Social Workers), there were only 846 of their members known to be employed in Canada and only part of these workers dealt with family and child welfare. (Dec. 1947.).
³ Max Braithwaite: "Born out of Wedlock", McLean's Magazine; Nov. 15, 1947, p.16. The number of provinces is now, of course, ten. The text which follows, however, makes no reference to Newfoundland.
It is interesting to look at some of these provisions of the various provinces. Every province acknowledges that subsequent intermarriage of the parent legitimizes the child born out of wedlock, but only four provinces (Ontario, Alberta, British Columbia, and New Brunswick) issue "short" birth certificates to protect the child from the stigma of having "illegitimate" entered on his birth certificate. There is no barrier in any province, only long years of custom, to prevent the illegitimate child from assuming its father’s name, providing paternity has been established. In only five provinces is equal guardianship rights of parents recognized. In six provinces, the illegitimate child inherits from its mother as if legitimate, and in all provinces except Quebec, the mother may inherit from the child born out of wedlock. In only four provinces is maintenance for the unmarried mother and her child possible (in certain circumstances) under the Mother's Allowance Legislation. In all provinces, the mother may seek an affiliation order from the Court.

Throughout Canada, hospital services are available for all unmarried mothers on a private or "staff basis", the hospitals in turn being subsidized by an "indigent grant" from the province.¹ There are also, throughout the country, numerous maternity homes, children's homes and adoption centres organized under private or religious auspices. In most of the larger cities, private agencies provide casework services to

¹ By "staff patient" is meant one who receives free service in the public ward of a hospital.
the unmarried mother. Each province has a Children's Protection Act, and in nearly all the provinces, Children's Aid Societies have been organized under the Acts and render protective services to the unmarried mother and child. Here again, however, there is a great variation. For example in British Columbia, there are only three such societies. Alberta has none, and Ontario has forty-six! Each province has a Department of Welfare or its equivalent, and these take over the work where there are no Children's Aid Societies.

If the unmarried mother decides to give up her child, it may be placed for adoption, or, if this is not advisable, made a ward of the Children's Aid Society or the provincial government. Usually the child is then placed in a supervised foster home; but in Quebec, the practice is still to place these children in large institutions.¹

Thus it is seen that there is wide divergence in the quality of the casework service offered in Canada to the unmarried mother and her child. This is due in part to the varying laws in the province, to the extent of the territory to be covered, and to the small number of qualified social workers. The general trend of casework throughout the Dominion, however, is becoming more homogeneous in that its orientation is following closely that of the United States, and in this area, the two countries have an almost uniform approach.

¹ According to Braithwaite, in the Youville Creche, near Montreal, there are some 700 children, most of whom are illegitimate and under five years of age.
In British Columbia, legal provision for the unmarried mother and her child is contained primarily in four statutes: the Children of Unmarried Parents Act, the Protection of Children Act, the Legitimation Act, and the Equal Guardianship of Infants Act.

The Unmarried Parents Act makes provision that all illegitimate births must be reported to the Superintendent of Child Welfare who then through the Child Welfare Division, or by delegation of authority to a Children's Aid Society, offers casework services to the unmarried mother. The Act gives the privilege of initiating action to establish paternity to the mother, her next friend, or guardian, the guardian of the child or the Superintendent of Child Welfare. Provision is made for an agreement out of court. For the mother's protection, the Superintendent of Child Welfare must be made a party to this agreement. Use is made of the Protection of Children Act, primarily in those cases in which, for social reasons, the unmarried mother wishes to give up her child. Then evidence can be brought forward to show that the mother is "not capable" of giving the child proper care: the child, hence being in need of protection, is made a ward of the Children's Aid, or of the Superintendent of Child Welfare as the case may be. In this instance, provision for maintenance of the child is also made by the Act and is determined by the residence of the mother. In many instances, the determination of residence is long and involved, and materially hampers effective placement of the child in question.
The Legitimation Act provides for legitimation of the child born out of wedlock by the subsequent inter-marriage of its parents, and the Equal Guardianship of Infants Act provides that both parents share equally in the responsibilities of parenthood and have equal rights of guardianship.

If the unmarried mother keeps her child, and is judged unable to work, she may obtain social allowance, or if she lived with the child's father in the mistaken belief that she was married to him, she may receive Mother's Allowance. In any case, she will receive the federal Family Allowance for her child in the same way as any other mother.

The Social Welfare Branch of the Provincial Department of Health and Welfare operates throughout the five regions of the province, and social workers are empowered through the Superintendent of Child Welfare to offer their services to the unmarried mother. These comprise casework service and any legal assistance she may require. Service may also entail foster home care, adoption placement, or wardship for the child, as the case may be.

In Vancouver, the Superintendent of Child Welfare delegates authority to the two Children's Aid Societies (Catholic and Protestant), who are then empowered to render protective services under the Protection of Children Act. In the year 1946, the Vancouver Children's Aid Society rendered casework service to 700 unmarried. Forty per cent of the new cases referred to it during that year came to it because of illegitimacy. The scope of the problem had increased from the
300 unmarried mothers who received services in 1939, to the 700 who received them in 1946. In view of the mounting case load, workers were becoming more and more concerned as to the quality of the casework service they were giving to the unmarried mother.

With this question in mind, it was originally planned to study the case histories of unmarried mothers known to the Vancouver Children's Aid Society during 1946 with a view to delineating and refining the casework techniques involved therein. However, from a preliminary review of a sampling of these cases, it soon became evident that the recording (due to large case loads and resultant pressure of work) was too synopsized to provide sufficient details of the required casework processes. In the belief that the more conspicuous and intense cases would meet the objective of the study, it was then decided to examine the case histories of the recidivists among the unmarried mothers listed. Assistance was gained at this point from a list of "repeaters" obtained by a volunteer worker, from a survey made of new admissions in 1946. These records were much more fully recorded, including, in many instances, complete social histories prepared for the Child Guidance Clinic. The Children's Aid Society was interested in a study of recidivism because of the question which it raised, among others, of the efficacy of the casework contacts, and this was an added reason for following up this line of inquiry.

1 Mrs. R. Johnston (C.A.S. volunteer), unpublished survey.
Chapter 5.

The Facilities.

In consequence of public agitation for some protection of young children, the Legislature of the Province of British Columbia in 1901 passed the Children's Protection Act, and on July 17th of the same year, the Vancouver Children's Aid Society was incorporated under the Act. At the first annual meeting, it was reported 29 children had already been made over by law to the care of the Society. Since that time, the work of the Society has grown apace with the growth of the City. At present, in conjunction with the Catholic Children's Aid Society, it discharges two functions. It first functions as a private agency, in which capacity it:

1. "Offers preventive services to families who, for various reasons, find it difficult to rear their children according to accepted minimum standards of child care.

2. Provides counsel and guidance and tangible assistance for unmarried mothers who need help personally, and on behalf of their children.

3. Accepts children for adoption and makes adoption placements after careful study.

4. Accepts children for temporary placement as non-wards and supervises them in selected foster homes."

Secondly, it has authority delegated from the Superintendent of Child Welfare, to commit as wards of the Society, children who are neglected and in need of protection.

as specified by the Protection of Children Act. "Since its earliest inception, the Society has stressed that "each and every child shall be dealt with in accordance with its individuality both in temperament and adoptability . . . ."^1

However, its original attitude to the unmarried mother was not so far-seeing. An early report^2 reads:
"Applications are being made to make children over to the Society, and the request, and sometimes the demand, is made for most unheard of reasons; but too often the request is made to cover up the crime of bringing a child into the world without a name and permit the mother and the alleged father to pass through the world as being without a stain upon their character".

Today, however, the Society realizes that "unmarried mothers are in urgent need of wise and understanding assistance at this critical time of their lives, in order that they may plan adequately for their futures and for the futures of their children".3

The number of unmarried mothers referred to the Society has been increasing steadily each year and in 1946, a total of 700 unmarried mothers were carried by the case workers of the Society. Of these perhaps 10% were recidivists.

Work with the unmarried mother is centralized within the Family Work Department of the Society. Each case worker operates within a specified area in the city, and the unmarried mother is assigned to the worker in the area where she lives.

Each case worker gives the illegitimately pregnant girl

---

1 Annual Report of the Children's Aid Society for Vancouver, 1903, p.16.
2 Children's Aid Society Annual Report, 1912, p.11.
individualized service, making use if need be of the various resources which are at her disposal in the community. Two workers are assigned specifically to give casework service in the two Protestant maternity homes in the city, one of which is run by the Salvation Army, and the other by the United Church of Canada. One of these workers is also in charge of a list of approved work homes, where unmarried mothers may work until they are seven months pregnant, at which time they then enter one of the maternity homes.

Following discharge from the hospital after the birth of the child, the mother may return to the maternity home until such time as plans are completed for herself and her child. If the unmarried mother decides to keep her baby, she may be referred to one of the private boarding homes which is supervised by a Children's Aid worker. Here she may leave her child while she works. In this instance, the mother makes arrangements privately with the boarding home mother, paying maintenance directly to her for the child. Again, the child may be cared for by the Children's Aid Society on a temporary basis as a non-ward until the mother is able herself to make a permanent plan. This plan is now being used much less frequently than formerly, as all too often the "temporary" plans have been continued indefinitely, to the detriment of the child concerned.

Should the unmarried mother decide to give up her child, adoption is the usual procedure. The mother's case worker then arranges the details with the Adoption Section and
describes the proposed home and adoption procedure to the mother. If adoption is not possible, the child can be given security by being made a ward of the Society under one of the clauses of the Protection of Children Act; it may then be placed either on a long-term adoption basis, or in a "free" home.

Resources Used in Planning.

The Provincial Child Guidance Clinic was started on July 15, 1932 in a small house owned by the Provincial Government. In the beginning, the clinic was held once a week, for a half day only. Later it was increased to twice a week; today it is running six days a week to full capacity. The clinical service is the combined effort of a team consisting of a psychiatrist, a psychologist, two social workers, a public health nurse and stenographic staff.

The City Social Service Department was formed as far back as 1896, when the Local Council of Women organized a group known as the "Friendly Aid" to administer some form of Poor Relief in Vancouver. They gave financial aid from private funds until 1908 when the City made a grant of fifteen hundred dollars to them for their work. In 1909 the "Friendly Aid" merged into a larger group known as the Associated Charities.

1 The term "long-term" adoption placement is used to describe the placement of children in homes where the adoption is not legally completed until the child is old enough to be judged adoptable on its development, usually at about two years of age. "Free" home means a home where the child is accepted without any remuneration by foster parents who wish to consider it as truly one of the family as possible without legal adoption procedure.
the City continuing its annual grant until 1912 when they decided to do their own relief work.¹

Today the City Social Service Department in Vancouver administers the "Social Assistance Act". The purpose of this Act is to provide for individuals and families suffering from loss of income from illness, accident, death of the breadwinner, infirmity, or other disabling causes. Thus, if the unmarried mother is without funds, she is referred to one of these offices for financial assistance. A co-operative basis has been worked out by the City and the Children's Aid workers so that the unmarried mother is given as much consideration as possible. If the mother does not have residence in the city, assistance is granted on a compassionate basis and the charge placed on the responsible municipality. In the event that a child is deemed to be a permanent charge, but is not a responsibility of the Province of British Columbia, repatriation to the place of legal residence can be authorized.

Maternity Home care is available in two Maternity Homes for the Protestant unmarried mother who is known to the Children's Aid Society. One of these, the United Church Home, was begun in 1913 under the leadership of the late Rev. J.G. Shearer, Secretary of the Board of Social Service and Moral Reform of the Presbyterian Church of Canada.² The home can take up to twenty girls. The fee is fifteen dollars per month

¹ Information from a paper given at the Annual Meeting of the Social Worker's Club on May 18, 1934 by Lilian M. Nelson, formerly of the City Relief Department.
² Originally two houses were leased on Gladstone Avenue, but in a few months the Home was moved to Cambie Street, and ten years later to the present site on Sussex Avenue.
for board and room, if the girls can afford to pay. If not, the care is free.

The girls are taken regularly from the home to the Out-patient Clinic at the Vancouver General Hospital. In the home is a resident registered nurse, who is in charge of the nursery, and a resident matron, a cook, and a gardener. Referrals usually come to the home through the Children's Aid Society, but may come from any source. If the unmarried mother does not wish to see a social worker she does not have to, unless she is requesting adoption placement of her child. The purpose of the home is to provide seclusion and quiet for the mother. She has her allotted tasks which are performed in the morning with a rest period in the afternoon. The atmosphere of the home is religious and redemptive. A Bible lesson is read before leaving the breakfast table, and there is a sing-song of hymns and a Bible story at night with a mid-week prayer service.

The girls are admitted when they are about six or seven months pregnant, and may return to the home following the birth of the child until plans are made. Visiting is restricted to relatives or one special friend. For a long time the work of the home was carried on in a free-lance fashion; but with the growth of the Social Agencies, the home was licensed by the Provincial Government and is now inspected annually.

The other unit is the Salvation Army Home. The Salvation Army in Canada is, of course, part of an international organization operating places of worship and social rehabilitation in 97 different countries and territories in the world.
The major portion of the work of the Army is evangelical. Founded originally for the religious enlightenment of the masses, its primary aim is still to "proclaim through song, word and deed, the message of the scriptures". Its social service work embraces shelter hostels and food depots; men's industrial institutions, employment bureaus, children's homes, maternity homes, and hospitals.

The Salvation Army came first from Victoria to Vancouver in 1886. Two years later they opened a Rescue Home for girls. The present Maternity Home is known as the Maywood Home. It was originally at the site of the old Grace Hospital and run in conjunction with it. When the new hospital was built, the old building was maintained as a Maternity Home. It is licensed for a maximum of 26 girls. The girls share rooms and do not have much privacy. The atmosphere of the home is religious but not so much so as the United Church Home. The girls rise by the bell, and have allotted household tasks to perform. There is a short devotional service every morning, and on Wednesday night and Sunday afternoon they have a short meeting.

The Home administration prefer girls to be admitted at least two months before the baby is due, and requires them to stay for one month afterwards in order to ensure their physical recuperation. When the girl is admitted to the Home, she has to signify that she is willing to use the services of a social agency, even if she has made private arrangements for the care of her child. The girls are taken to weekly pre-natal
clinics at the Grace Hospital. The fee for the Home is $15.00 per month and, for confinement at the Hospital, $40. However, if a girl is unable to pay, she is not required to do so. In the home a nurse is in charge of the nursery, but the girls take turns on nursery duty. Each girl is required to feed her own child, do its own personal washing, and other general duties.

The Children's Aid worker is permitted to interview the girls privately and a very workable arrangement seems to have been evolved between the Home and the Agency. The chief difference between the two Homes is that the United Church Home can refuse admission to a girl with decided personality difficulties, and has done so on occasion. The Salvation Army Home, on the other hand, is obliged to take in any girl who comes for assistance and care.

The Child Welfare Division administers the province's child welfare legislation which in all instances is protective in nature. In particular, it is responsible for the administration of the "Children of Unmarried Parents Act". This provides that the unmarried mother may lay a charge against the father of the child in order to obtain a Court order for the support of the child. Until 1947, it was the policy of the Child Welfare Division to interview personally all unmarried mothers resident in Vancouver to determine paternity and obtain the maintenance for the child. It was recognized that this practice was unsatisfactory, and that such information could be obtained much more easily and naturally by the worker at the Children's Aid who was helping the mother with plans for herself and child.
This practice was therefore discontinued in 1947.

Within the Children's Aid Society itself there are some specialized resources. There is a small "preventive" fund, out of which the unmarried mother may be provided with petty cash for a temporary period. If the need for financial assistance is continuous, referral is made to the City for social allowance. Sometimes the Agency makes use of work homes for girls who are known to them early in pregnancy: about 20 of these homes are known to the Agency. The worker interviews the would-be employer, but no definite study is made of the home, nor are references contacted. The usual wage is $10.00 per month and the girls are required to do light housework.

If a girl wishes to keep her baby after birth, she may be referred to a private boarding home. As of the end of 1947, the Children's Aid had 113 of these homes. The homes are investigated by a Children's Aid worker, who recommends it to the City for a licensing permit if she finds it suitable. The mother assumes responsibility for placing the child in the private boarding home, and also makes the necessary financial arrangements directly with this home. The Metropolitan Health nurse is notified after the mother has placed her child and supervises the health of the home.

This C.A.S. service has expanded very rapidly, from about 20 homes in 1944 to over a hundred more three years later. At present the Society is looking for homes that would enable a working mother to become part of the child's every-day life instead of an occasional visitor as in the usual arrangement.
In addition to these boarding homes, there are foster homes approved by the Agency in which children may be placed on a non-ward or ward basis, and adoption homes which enable the child to become a permanent part of a new family.
Chapter 6.

Casework Concepts.


It is not so long ago since the term "social work" brought to mind the picture of the destitute, poor and sick who had to be fed, clothed and housed, or the "unfortunate" girl who had to be "redeemed". Some people may still retain this idea, but, generally speaking, the public now accepts that social work today is not concerned merely with the poor and unfortunate, but is actively interested in the needs, adjustments and adaptations of human beings in their various life situations.¹

As the conception of the scope of social work has gradually enlarged, so too has the interpretation of the practice of social casework. Social casework has been very simply defined as the art of helping people to help themselves. As one authority points out, it has always been based on the assumption that each person differs from others and so it has always attempted to help people in terms of their individual differences.²

However, until the last five or ten years, individual differences in people have been attributed largely to the force of external circumstances and there was little insight into the

motivation of human behaviour. Today, "the case worker is educated to understand not only the external objective facts in a social situation but also the person's behaviour toward his situation and his feelings about himself in his situation".¹

As insight into the development of personality and the motivation of human behaviour has increased, the tendency to classify people according to their "presenting problem" into various categories for special treatment has diminished. Thus it is now generally accepted that casework in generic, i.e., its application is basic to all situations, and that the unmarried mother does not require any different treatment from that accorded any other individual in trouble, though she may require a greater depth of treatment.

To appreciate how social casework functions, it must first be realized that it is not a service that is superimposed on the client by the workers. It is a shared enterprise.² Thus in order to be of any help, the social worker must first be able to foster a constructive relationship between herself and her client. It is imperative that this relationship be established as quickly as possible; indeed it should start to germinate in the unmarried mother's very first contact with the agency. As can well be imagined, this is much easier said than done, and the case worker usually finds it an extremely difficult task. This is due to the "peculiar personality" of these girls. Experience makes it clear that the unmarried mother is notably a poorly adjusted person and has difficulty in her interpersonal relations. Sometimes, indeed, the personality of the

¹ Gordon Hamilton, loc. cit. ² ibid.
unmarried mother has been so damaged, or she is so disturbed, that she appears to be incapable of displaying any affect, and thus apparently is incapable of placing any confidence in the worker. Most commonly, the unmarried mother is very immature, with a characteristic pattern of "getting" and "hanging on to" things instead of the more adult pattern of "giving and taking". Of often she is still in the throes of adolescence, and very jealous of her so-called independence. Again, she may be very infantile; demanding in many ways, and utterly dependent. It is important to realize that it is the weaker or more disturbed girls who come to the agencies. Of course, there are exceptions, but usually the unmarried mother with a better integrated personality is able to work out some arrangements for this problem without seeking the assistance of a social agency; or of course, she may avoid pregnancy altogether by the use of contraceptives, or by abortions.

It is particularly difficult to establish a relationship between the worker and the unmarried mother who has "been through all this before". The feelings engendered towards the worker and the agency in her first pregnancy are now all re-activated. Some of the comments of workers on the personality of these girls are significant: "Mother is a quiet, reserved girl who says very little"; "M. is sulky, wilful, untruthful and inclined to be stubborn and difficult"; "D. has a very reticent

1 "Case-work Service for Unmarried Mothers": (Report of a Seminar of St. Louis Children's Aid Society and the St. Louis Provident Association), The Family, Nov. 1941.
2 loc. cit.
manner and is hesitant about discussing her affairs"; or again, "A. was tense and secretive, and did not volunteer information willingly"; "B. is depressed and moody, but with wide swings in mood often becoming hysterical". And so it goes.

It must be granted that sometimes it appears virtually impossible for the social worker to "get through" to the mother. However, there are other occasions when the situation is not so hopeless. A confident relationship between the girl and the worker can never be forced; but it can be encouraged. One way to do this is to see that, from the very first moment of contact, the mother gets the feeling that the case worker has a "warm" genuine interest in her and her difficulties. This can best be expressed by the worker in doing the natural kindly things for the client, and meeting her at the level of her factual requests. Too often in the past, influenced by all the speculation and interest aroused in the psychological factors of unmarried motherhood, the worker, in mistaken zeal, has immediately attempted to find out "all the facts". This questioning about the girl's intimate relationship naturally aroused hostility and distrust and often brought forth evasions in response. Thus we read a worker recording, "Dorothy was interested in discussing her plans with visitor, but not anxious to give information regarding the maternal relatives, or the father of her child". It is now realized that, if the worker shows genuine warmth and concern for the mother's immediate needs, she will be much more likely to "relate" to the worker, i.e., to accept her as someone she can trust and in
whom she can confide. This of course implies that the worker, as well as the mother, must be free from undue pressure, whether of time, shortage of workers, or agency policy. They both need to be permitted to work out their relationship with each other at their own pace. As one writer phrases it: "We must be sensitive to the forces that press in upon the girl, and must use both imagination and intuition in our first contact with her. If we are hesitant or uncertain, or are slow or fail to respond to the undercurrents or sources of her anxiety, we may fail to reach her. On the other hand, if from the beginning, we let her feel our understanding of her tension and anxiety and our acceptance of her, she will undoubtedly respond, for her need is great".\(^1\)

Sometimes the social worker is afraid to "do too much" for her client lest she foster dependency and take away the client's initiative. This attitude on the part of a worker can be very damaging to the establishment of any "relationship". Pregnancy normally implies a certain amount of dependency; the case worker should be aware of this, and should not be afraid to permit the unmarried mother to be dependent on her. Sympathetic understanding and support may be all that is necessary to enable the girl to carry on with her plans; though usually the worker will have to take a more active role, and literally emulate the part of the "good" mother in caring for her. The nice point is to handle the situation so that the

\(^{1}\) Mildred Corner: "Importance of the Initial Interview with the Unmarried Mother", Developing Insight in Initial Interviews, Family Service Association of America, New York, 1947.
girl is permitted to shoulder as much responsibility as she can. It is readily understandable that the earlier the social worker comes in contact with the unmarried mother, the greater is the worker's opportunity to foster a feeling of mutual acceptance. The worker to whom the mother comes in late pregnancy is obviously handicapped in this regard. In the latter instance, the worker is "pressured" by the imminent approach of the child, and thus sometimes loses sight of the client in her anxiety to have an adequate plan made for the child. Thus it is apparent that there should be continuous interpretation to the community of the advisability of early referral of the unmarried mother to the social agency.

Sometimes it may be that the deterrent to the establishment of a confident relationship between the worker and mother lies partly in the personality of the social worker as well as that of the mother. The unmarried mother is usually hostile and wary of women, and the case worker has to be very aware of her own feelings lest she herself respond to some of the girl's latent hostility, by feeling hurt, inadequate or antagonistic. This of course implies that the "relationship" being engendered between the worker and the girl is used in a professional manner. As one authority says: "(The social worker) must be in the situation, but above it enough to use foresight in gauging the probable outcome of what she does. She must watch what she is doing enough to be able to change if something is going wrong. She must have some notion of how her own feelings are complicating the situation, and be able to make allowance
This self-discipline does not mean that the worker has her emotions so in control that she is a "cold" remote person. On the contrary, she must respect her client as an individual and have such an ingrained sense of "responsible caring" for her, that the mother is helped towards the best possible solution of her difficulties.

What does the case worker hope to accomplish after a relationship of mutual acceptance and confidence has been built between herself and the unmarried mother? That depends on what she has to work with. It must be admitted that sometimes the mother is so disturbed that she is beyond the helping skill of the social worker. If so, it is at this point that it is important for the worker to "take stock" and assess the mother's degree of adjustment to reality. Clues to this can be picked up by careful scrutiny of her mode of reaction to her situation. Does the mother, for example, cover up with a "don't care" attitude; or does she completely deny the pregnancy? Does she project all the blame, or live in a little dream world of fantasy, or does she take a realistic view of the situation? If the mother is not too far divorced from reality and the case worker has instilled confidence in her, the worker's goal is to make the whole experience constructive, so that the girl may emerge from motherhood with a more integrated personality and hence be able to make a better future adjustment to life.

2 Mildred Corner: "Importance of the Initial Interview with the Unmarried Mother", Developing Insight in Initial Interviews, Family Service Association of America, New York, 1947.
How does the case worker accomplish this? As Franz Alexander points out, it is because of anxiety and preoccupation with her symptoms (in this case an illegitimate pregnancy), that the client is unable to handle her problem and seeks help. The case worker gives emotional support in order to ease the mother's tension. She consciously implements this by an "objective, understanding attitude", which has the purpose of giving the mother "an opportunity to get a better perspective of her difficulties".¹ All this has the purpose of making the client feel more adequate to face her actual situation and her own part in it. As the mother is thus supported and strengthened by the worker, she is encouraged to talk about herself, her family, her friends, her feelings about life in general. How does she feel about the father of her child? How would she feel if she kept her baby; or if she gave it up? This again relieves emotional tension and prepares the way for the worker to give the mother insight into some of her behaviour patterns.

Formerly it was common for the worker to plunge into intimate details, especially in order to establish paternity as quickly as possible. It is now recognized that this is an unusually painful area to explore, and that the mother will only be freed to talk about it when she has acquired faith in her worker. While workers are becoming more and more aware of the mother's need to talk about herself and the father of her child when the time is ripe to do so, they still do not wholly realize

the full implications of their position with regard to the putative father. One authority states: "Most people forget the unmarried father's side of the story. Our sympathy has always been asked for the poor unfortunate mother. Yet the unmarried father's emotional problems are often as great as the girl's and in some instances even greater". The same authority goes on to point out that "the biggest social problem is to change our thinking so that an unmarried father can admit paternity without fear and provide for the well-being of the child. Under present laws, the unmarried father is made to feel like a criminal and the important thing is for him not to get caught".

In discussing the same topic, Dr. Norman Reider points out that in Sweden, where a tolerant and non-primitive tradition has evolved over the past thirty years, it is a rare thing for a man to deny paternity. This same authority, while stressing the psychological implications of unmarried fatherhood, believes that the conscious or unconscious desire to have a child is much less frequent among unmarried men than among unmarried women.

As workers are becoming more aware of the fact that unmarried fathers have unresolved emotional problems, the conviction is growing that they would welcome an opportunity to

1 I. L. Harris, Judge of the Juvenile Court, San Francisco, cited in Eugene Burus: "What about the unmarried father?" Cosmopolitan Magazine, July 1948, p. 68.
2 ibid, p. 69.
tell their story, preferably to a male social worker. However, whether by male or female worker, he should be approached in an atmosphere of objectivity, fairness and understanding.

When the child is born, and the unmarried mother is faced with the need to come to a decision about its care, the social worker must continue with her supportive, interpretive role. At this point, the worker needs to be on guard lest her anxiety for the ultimate fate of the child overshadows her concern for the mother. Yet she cannot "sit on the fence" while the girl struggles to come to a decision. There is a part of every girl that wants to keep her baby; but whether she keeps it or gives it up, the experience involves suffering and renunciation for her. The case worker therefore attempts to help the girl to realize it is her baby; that she has a right to make a decision about it, and that she can use the help of the case worker in arriving at that decision. The case worker's responsibility at this time is to point out the reality of the situation plainly and honestly to the mother. The girl is still in a dependent position and needs mature counselling at this point, so the case worker should reinforce that part of her thinking which is healthy and sound. If the girl does decide to give up her child, she then can give it up to a person she believes to be helping her to make the best possible plan for it.

1 Opal Jacobs: "What About the Unmarried Father?", Proceedings of the National Conference of Social Work, April 16, 1947.
Usually, termination of agency service is made after the mother has borne her child and completed her plans for its care. However, the worker should maintain contact with her if it is humanly possible to do so. The mother has come through a period of great stress and strain, both physically and emotionally. Often she is lonelier and more remote from people than she was when she was carrying her child, and thus even more vulnerable. This, therefore, is the time when aptitude tests and vocational guidance could be used to assist in getting the mother into more satisfactory work and better contacts with people. If the girl has kept her child, there will be need for additional counselling and interpreting as to the manner in which she is going to tell the child about his identity. Finally, as the mother becomes more self-reliant, the relationship between her and the worker should be gradually diminished, until such time as the mother is able to function by herself.

Clearly, social casework today is a studied art. It may truly be said that: "It is focused upon a diagnostic understanding of the people and situations with which it deals. It sees people as dynamic forces in the situations in which they are, and expects to influence them only by becoming a part of the situation, as a person with professional awareness and experience. It uses the invigorating power of the relationship between the personality of the social worker and that of the persons worked with, and uses it in a professional way, that is, with mutual confidence and co-operation, with conscious up-building of self-respect, with rigorous discipline of the
worker's self in order that, freed from personal preoccupations, she may give her best skills in service.\textsuperscript{1}

\textsuperscript{1} Bertha Capen Reynolds: Learning and Teaching In the Practice of Social Work, Farrar and Rinehart, New York, 1942, p. 30.
Part III.

Chapter 7. The Presenting Problem.

Chapter 8. Special Difficulties.

Chapter 9. Case Differences:
Cases Referred After Childbirth.

Chapter 10. Case Differences:
Cases Referred Before Childbirth.
Chapter 7.

The Presenting Problem.

"Social work is concerned to understand the . . . relationship of human beings to their world of other persons and social situations." (Bertha Capen Reynolds: Learning and Teaching in the Practice of Social Work, p. 22.)

Unmarried mothers range in age from early adolescence to late maturity. They can be representative of all walks in life. But the one who comes to the social agency is usually in her late 'teens or early twenties, and commonly has behind her a history of both emotional and financial deprivation. Often she is handicapped by lack of education and thus has found employment in dull, routine jobs, which give her a minimum amount of satisfaction and pride in her work, and which limit her choice of friends and recreation. She tends to be unrealistic and insecure in her relationships with people (especially with men), and appears to be totally unprepared to meet the realities of living and adjust satisfactorily to them. Unable to achieve happiness and satisfaction in the conventional manner of girls of her age, she seems to be impelled to obtain it unconventionally.

Almost inevitably, she is caught in the trap of an illegitimate pregnancy, and then left to fend for herself. As one authority has expressed the situation: "She (the unmarried mother) must (then) sustain not only her problem, but the emotions of her family . . . their shame, their rejection, their desire to punish or, at best, their grief and concern . . . as well as the traditional moral attitude of the community and the
legal, economic, and social restrictions inherent in her situation. There are those who would have her keep her baby, there are those who would have her give him up, but seldom are there any who are free enough of their own conflict to help her come to a decision that represents her real feelings and her capacity to operate within the practical limitations of her world.  

It is at this point—alone, bewildered, often disillusioned and embittered—that the unmarried mother comes to the attention of the social agency. The social worker is now faced with the task of gaining her confidence and "setting up a case-work procedure and process through which she can find her own answer to her dilemma."  

It is difficult to do so. The girl is under stress and strain both physically and emotionally. Conscious of social stigma, at one moment she wants to keep her child, at another to give it up. Usually she is desperately anxious to conceal her plight. Often too, she has little or no money. The social worker finds the young mother somewhat fearful and suspicious of the agency (which she usually thinks of as "the Welfare"), anxious for help with immediate plans for herself and her child, but wary of anyone going beyond that point. Should she come to the agency in the early months of her pregnancy, the worker has a greater chance of establishing a realistic and constructive relationship with her and thus getting beyond the mere presenting problem of the baby. If,

2 loc. cit.
however, she comes at the birth, or after, the worker has not the same opportunity to form a meaningful relationship with the mother and thus can usually deal only with the immediate reality problem, which is the child. In addition to these obvious difficulties, there are few workers who do not have to struggle with their own feelings in the matter. There is perhaps no other area in social work which can rouse greater feelings of fear and insecurity within the worker herself, or in which she feels a greater sense of responsibility than in the work with the unmarried mother.

It is very difficult to define the intangible quality that is loosely labelled as the "worker-client relationship". For years it has been known that some people have the ability to inspire trust and confidence more readily than others, and to make people at ease in their presence. It is now believed that this ability can be cultivated, and can become an integral part of the case worker's professional approach to the client, provided the case worker is basically a well integrated person who is genuinely interested in the welfare of the client. Miss. Reynolds expresses it thus: "It is not that we (social workers) do not gain satisfaction for ourselves as all other people do, but that we become professional by shifting our satisfactions to a level different from that of controlling others, venting hostility or liking upon them, getting gratitude, affection or the thrill of a new experience which we can dramatize in a good story . . . . We must . . . be rugged in our honesty with ourselves, and in our ability to admit mistakes, prejudice, inter-
ferred, anxieties and claims for attention to ourselves".¹

Social casework is all the more important in work with the unmarried mother because if the personality difficulties of the client are unresolved or heightened by unmarried parenthood, they can tend to produce a repetition of the experience that led to the first pregnancy. The question therefore arises, for recidivists previously known to the social agency: is the "non-resolution" of the girl's difficulties due, primarily, to a lack of facilities and casework services within the agency, or is it attributable to inherent shortcomings within the girl's personality which are too deep-seated to be helped by these services? At this point it is proposed to examine a sample group of cases (recidivists known to the Children's Aid Society during 1946), to see what conclusions can be reached in this regard.

Nature of the Study.

The files of the Vancouver Children's Aid Society were chosen as representing the best available volume of recorded casework with unmarried mothers. It was decided to study cases known to the agency during 1946, in the belief that these would throw light on the current trends in techniques. To obtain the records desired, it was necessary to tabulate all the cases of illegitimacy known to the Family Work Department of the Children's Aid Society during the year 1946. This involved listing all the cases of illegitimacy in the 1947 current

index that were not newly opened that year. Then, to get the complete load, it was necessary in addition to list cases closed during 1946 as well as those closed in 1947 which had not been newly opened that year. This resulted in a total of some 700 cases. These cases were then screened to obtain the recidivists among the unmarried mothers listed. The unmarried mothers in these cases are girls who (a), were not married, widowed, divorced, separated or living common-law at the time of the original referral to the agency; (b), and who had been illegitimately pregnant more than once up to the time of the enquiry.

It is believed this broad basis of selection will give a comprehensive picture of recidivists who have been known to the agency for some years back, and will thus highlight any differences in casework emphasis within the agency over that space of time. The girl who is mentally defective is not excluded, on the ground that she is a part of the normal caseload, and because it is reasonable to ask how far she is representative of the total problem. On this basis, the number of recidivists constitute 66 cases out of the 700 unmarried mothers known to the Agency during 1946.¹

The cases are analyzed on the following basis. First, an attempt is made to gain as complete a picture of the girl as possible. Her age, intelligence, training, degree of self-

¹ This excludes 13 cases involving common-law relationships, and 2 cases which had been included in the preliminary number but which could not be located in the Agency over a two month period and hence necessarily were omitted.
support, ethnic background, et cetera, are all gleaned for this purpose. Second, the case is scrutinized to see what her relationship is to her parents; to her brothers and sisters; to her job; to the fathers of her children and to her children. From all these facts, some measure of each girl's personality can be formed and her availability to casework treatment determined. Then, by noting whether the mother was referred to the agency "early-on" or late in her pregnancy; the emotional "tone" set in her first contact with the agency; her relation to the worker in the casework situation; and the total length of time the mother was known to the agency, an evaluation can be made of the quality of the relationship formed with the worker and the possible changes that took place in the girl's attitude during casework treatment.

The files are complete with reports from the Provincial Guidance Clinic, or the Psychiatrist at the Vancouver General Hospital, and copies of reports and summaries of case contacts from the Child Welfare Division and the City Social Service Department are recorded in detail. In the main, however, the recording does not reflect the casework processes. Throughout, the concern of the worker is evident in the record, though it usually appears to be weighted for the child more than for the mother.

Preliminary Statistics.

Of the 700 cases of unmarried mothers known to the Children's Aid in 1946, 66, or slightly under 10 per cent, are
recidivists. Of these, 48 mothers have had two illegitimate pregnancies; 18 had more than two. In 1942, when the Agency made a survey of the 377 cases of unmarried mothers active with them that year, 40, or slightly over 10 per cent were recidivists. It would appear then that the ratio of recidivists to the total number of unmarried mothers known to the Agency, is relatively constant.

In the cases studied, the oldest age at the birth of the first child is 33 years; the youngest is 14 years. Two unmarried mothers are over 30 years of age; fifteen are between the ages of 17 and 22; six between the years of 14 and 16 and one is of unknown age. The most typical age is between 17 and 22 years.

Of the 66 girls comprised in this study, 32 have been seen by a psychiatrist either at the Provincial Child Guidance Clinic or at the Vancouver General Hospital, and have also had a psychometric test. The remainder of the girls have been classified by the worker concerned as "average" or "dull". Of the 32 given psychometric tests, 19 are rated as "average" or "above average" intelligence, 6 are "slow" to "dull", 7 are of "borderline" or less intelligence. Of the 34 who have no formal test, 2 are considered by the worker to be of "superior" intelligence; 19 to be "average"; 11 to be "dull" and in two instances no estimate of intelligence is given by the worker.

In summary, over one half of these recidivists are of "average" or "above average" intelligence and therefore open to constructive casework. The remainder are below normal intell-
igence and are therefore special problems. This division is followed as the method of discussing the problems and the differences they present.
"The social sciences, . . . are concerned too much with man's intelligence, and not enough with man's heart", (John A. Irving: "The Social Philosophy of E. J. Urwick", The Values of Life, University of Toronto Press, 1948, p. 60.)

It is obvious that the girl with limited intelligence has "one strike against her", so to speak, in that the possibility of her becoming an unmarried mother is greater in the first place, than that of the girl with sufficient intelligence to take better care of herself. Such a girl needs protection; the lower her intelligence, the greater is her need for protection. It might therefore logically be expected that the greater percentage of recidivism in the unmarried mothers known to the agency would be amongst those girls whose intelligence is limited. However, this is not true in the sample group of cases studies, more than half of whom are of average or above-average intelligence. In addition to this, without exception, each girl of limited intelligence reveals in addition a background of emotional deprivation and financial insecurity.

It would therefore seem from these facts that it is not just the matter of the degree of intelligence that is involved in the problem of the recidivist unmarried mother. The complications are certainly clear in the case of Alice, who when tested at the clinic was rated in the "dull normal" group
of general intelligence. Alice was of English-Swiss descent. Born on a prairie farm, she was the youngest of seven children. Her father deserted the home when she was about six years old, leaving her mother to bring up her family on the limited income supplied by social allowance. To economize as much as possible, Alice's mother went to live with relatives. Consequently Alice was one of ten people crowded together into the one inadequate home. Because the portion of the social allowance being paid into the home on Alice's behalf was automatically cancelled when she reached sixteen, Alice was early forced to work to maintain herself. During the war years, Alice and her mother came to Vancouver along with the many immigrants from the Prairies who moved there to reap the benefit of the steady work and high wages of the war industries. Alice soon got a job in a war plant as a spray painter and helped to support her mother. Within only a month or so she became pregnant, following a very casual relationship with a fellow employee, and gave birth to a child when she was about twenty years of age. Alice did not come to the attention of the social agency until she was referred to it following the birth of her child in hospital. The social worker continued to keep in contact with Alice for some 6½ months, visiting frequently in the home. However, as it was Alice's mother who looked after the child, the worker slipped into the habit of discussing matters with her instead of with Alice. Consequently the worker never did manage to gain Alice's confidence, and when Alice went back to work, the worker terminated her contact with her, assuming that she was
managing matters very competently. The facts refute it. To date, Alice has had three children born out of wedlock.

Another case in point is that of Beulah, who when tested rated in the "moron" group of general intelligence. Beulah was of English racial origin and was born and brought up in the city of Vancouver. She was one of four children all of whom but herself were stated to be "intelligent and capable of caring for themselves." Beulah's parents were in ill health for a period of years, and when Beulah was 14 years, her father died of cancer, as had several of his relatives. As the financial resources of the family were exhausted at this point, Beulah's mother had to then apply for the Mother's Allowance. Later she too developed cancer and died. Beulah's relationships with her family were poor from her earliest years. She was a source of irritation to her mother, who had no patience with her "laziness"; and she was also taunted for her stupidity by her brothers and sisters. Beulah was eneuritic for a very large part of her childhood. In her early teens she showed pre-delinquent tendencies and consorted with undesirable friends. She stopped school soon after her father died when she was about 16 years of age and went to work in a laundry. She remained here for about five years and it was here that she made contacts with men which eventually resulted in her becoming pregnant. At this time she was 21 years of age. Beulah's relationship with the putative father was not meaningful. He refused to admit paternity, saying she was promiscuous and "made passes at him." Possibly her behaviour was aggravated
by the death of her mother which also occurred about this time. Beulah became known to the Children's Aid Society worker about four months prior to the birth of her child and the worker records that "Beulah really had little to say for herself and was quite sullen". As can well be imagined, this worker, in her turn, was unable to form any constructive relationship with the unmarried mother at this point. The child proved to be a Mongolian and though the mother would have liked foster home placement, this could not be arranged. Beulah kept the child, but it died at an early age. In a few short months after this, she again became pregnant, and in due course gave birth to another illegitimate child.

Alice is an example of a girl who lost her father at a critical age in her emotional development. She was brought up on a minimum subsistence level, and at an early age had to make the best use of her limited capacities to support herself. She managed adequately until she moved from a Prairie farm to Vancouver. This change from a rural to an urban centre, together with exposure to the free and easy mingling of the sexes in a war plant, appears to have precipitated her into an illegitimate pregnancy. With Beulah, the home atmosphere was one of continual tension, doubtless due to the suffering and fear that seems to be engendered in every cancer victim. Beulah appeared to have been the target for a great deal of her mother's anxiety, and we find her responding by becoming eneuritic and seeking companionship on the streets. She, too, had to become self-supporting at an early age. Despite her
low intelligence, however, she managed to keep out of difficulties until the death of her mother. In this instance, this appears to be the event which peaked up Beulah's difficulties and thrust her into the relationship which resulted in pregnancy.

The foregoing, which are merely two examples of "typical" histories in this group of "special problem" cases, would seem to affirm for these girls at least, that the "repeater" unmarried mother is fundamentally a "difficult" person and that her lack of intelligence is but one facet of the difficulties that precipitated her into an illegitimate pregnancy. It is clear to see that the social worker in these instances is faced with a peculiarly difficult task. She has to use all the warmth of her personality and all the professional skill of which she is capable to establish a constructive relationship with the girl, but even when this is established, the possibility of giving the mother insight into her difficulties, with the consequent "reorganization of her inner psychic forces", ¹ is small. The case worker then must be on guard lest she prejudice her client and unconsciously feel that casework service cannot be of much value to the unmarried mother of limited intelligence. On the contrary, the case worker must realize that it is doubly important in working with such mothers for her to inspire a feeling of liking and confidence

in the client. The worker's role in such instances is primarily to offer the mother the warmth of emotional support, so that the girl may be guided to the wisest decision for herself and child. Fortunately, it is not intelligence that governs a person's emotional attachment to others, and the case worker therefore has just as much opportunity to form a meaningful relationship, though in all probability it cannot be as constructive as for a more normal client.

The case worker must always keep in mind that as yet no one has measured the effect that a continuing emotional disturbance may have on the intelligence; it might therefore be that the so-called "dull" girl is not functioning at her true intellectual level because of emotional blocking. Case workers are becoming more and more aware of this so-called "psuedo feeble-mindedness", where the child or adult takes refuge from a too disturbing environment by retreat into apparent stupidity. One of the cases in this group exemplifies such a situation.

Clara was a twin, one of four children born to a French father and a mother of Swedish racial origin. The father was a "small business" man who evidently never provided adequately for his family, and finally deserted them, leaving them in straightened circumstances. Clara's life must have been deprived almost from birth, and she could never have enjoyed full emotional satisfaction in her babyhood, as she was one of three babies born to her mother in the space of two years. At the age of four, Clara's father deserted, and her
mother had to work to support the family. When Clara was seven her mother's health broke under the double strain of financial and maternal responsibilities and Clara was placed in a convent. Shortly thereafter, her mother died. Thus Clara had two severe emotional shocks superimposed on a childhood that had already been somewhat deprived emotionally. One can imagine the fantasies of guilt and remorse that were called up by these two desertions. The convent placed Clara, while still in her early 'teens, at domestic service. Here she was again a "deprived child", earning the magnificent sum of five dollars per month. As soon as she became eighteen, Clara and her twin sister hitchhiked to Vancouver. A few months after arrival, Clara got into difficulty with the police for "causing a disturbance". She was examined at the Child Guidance Clinic where she was rated as "borderline but not feeble-minded". Following this she was jailed for 28 days and on being released, got into exactly the same kind of disturbance. This time she was committed to Essondale, where she was diagnosed as a "psychopathic inferior". Clara remained there three years and was then discharged on probation to her twin sister, who already had become an unmarried mother. As might be expected, Clara herself immediately became illegitimately pregnant, doubtless due to her release from the confinement of Essondale and an unconscious sense of identification with her twin. Clara's relationship with the father of her child was most casual, intercourse occurring shortly after she met him. Clara never used any means of avoiding conception, and from the beginning
wanted to keep her child. Her second pregnancy occurred two years later from an even more casual relationship than the first. Again no contraceptives were used and again Clara never had any other thought than to keep her child. This she did and she and her sister remained together with their brood of illegitimate children. There was apparently no complaint of any kind regarding the care Clara gave to her children until they were $5\frac{3}{4}$ and $3\frac{1}{2}$ years of age respectively. Then they were picked up by the police on the complaint that they had been left alone while the mother was "out drinking". The children were then apprehended by the Agency and taken into care. The social worker was able to establish a working relationship with Clara who co-operated well and who did everything she could to get her children back. The Agency worker was sympathetic and believed that she should have the children returned but thought they should consult with the Child Guidance Clinic first. The mother was prepared for this proposed consultation by the worker, and she was willing to be re-examined. She was obviously anxious to make a good impression, and this time the result of the test placed her in the "very superior" group of general intelligence! In other words, this seems to be a girl so emotionally blocked that on occasion she could simulate an extremely low intelligence. However when given emotional support by the worker and a great enough incentive, she was able to reorganize herself sufficiently to give an entirely different picture of her mental abilities. While it is true that Clara's case illustrates this problem in perhaps its most
exaggerated form, it is reasonable to assume that it exists in varying degrees in other instances, and that the intelligence of many so-called "dull" unmarried mothers is not functioning to its fullest capacity because of the mother's emotional tensions.

Granted all of the preceding, the social worker is still faced with great difficulties in working with the unmarried mother of limited intelligence. This is the very real difficulty of making an adequate plan for the final care of the mother and her child. Of the 24 cases in the present group,1 16 girls were classified in the "dull normal" or "dull" rating eight and were ranked as "morons". Only one was an imbecile. Of the group of 16 mothers who were rated as "dull normal" or "dull", nine girls kept their babies; five had no plan and the children were made wards; two placed the baby privately; of the group of eight mothers who ranked in the "moron" group of intelligence, three girls kept the child; three had no plan and the children were made wards; one girl aborted and one had a therapeutic abortion. Thus in the total group of unmarried mothers of limited intelligence, twelve girls kept their babies; eight had no plan and the children were made wards. In well over half these cases, the social worker was unable to work out an adequate plan for the child with the mother. It is difficult at best for an unmarried mother to bring up her child in society, but

1 There were two cases in which there was no estimate given of the mother's intelligence either by the clinic or worker.
for the mother of limited intelligence, it is an Herculean task. In order that the child should have even a minimal opportunity of enjoying the loving care so essential to both its physical and emotional development, it is imperative that the mother herself has the security of some one she trusts for guidance and support. Normally it would be hoped that this would be forthcoming from the girl's own family. However, this rarely materializes, primarily because the mother's own personality difficulties are accentuated in her relationships with her family. Community resources are limited, and thus the onus of the social planning usually remains with the social worker. The agency normally attempts to remain in touch with the mother; but, burdened as it is with large case loads and changing staff, it is usually forced to terminate contact with the mother once the necessity for immediate plans for the child is past. In this case the agency was able to maintain contact with half of the girls who kept their babies until such time as it appeared that the child was being adequately maintained. With the remainder the agency closed their cases when the mother got a job and took her baby with her. The danger inherent in this latter type of situation is well typified by the following case study.

Dora was of Scotch racial origin. Her father was a labourer and her mother a domestic. They had emigrated to Canada and settled in a small Prairie town where the father became employed as a track-man for the Canadian National Railways. Dora was the youngest of seven children. She did
not go very far in school, and when she left, earned her living as a domestic or waitress. Nothing is mentioned in the record of her family relationship but she appears to have been more attached to her father than to her mother. It was shortly after his death that she became pregnant. Her contact with the father of her child appears to have been very casual. She met him while he was stationed at an air-base, but she professed not to know his last name, or from where he came. In order to avoid having her mother find out she was pregnant, Dora left home. She came out by herself to Vancouver where she had a married sister, who, however, was separated from her husband. Dora was referred by the outpatients clinic at the hospital to the Child Welfare Division when she was about 8 1/2 months pregnant. Because she was so far advanced in her pregnancy, and because she did not wish U.P.A. action, the worker there took a minimum amount of information before referring her to the Children's Aid.

The worker at the C.A.S. found Dora very timid and on the verge of tears. She was ambivalent about the future of the baby, but thought she would have to give it up. Arrangements were made to have Dora admitted to the Maternity Home. There it was soon learned that Dora was epileptic. When her child was born it appeared to be subnormal. By this time Dora was asking adoption placement for her child and the worker had to explain why this was not possible. Dora could not accept this and tried to arrange a private placement. The worker learned of this and had again to point out why this would not
work. The worker was caught here in a most unfortunate situation. Dora had not established residence in British Columbia for purposes of social assistance. This would not have mattered if her child had been adoptable. Moreover, the paternity of the child was not established and it appeared to be subnormal. This, together with Dora's epilepsy and instability all meant that the child could not be deemed adoptable. It would thus have to be repatriated if there was any question of it becoming a public charge by being taken into care by the agency. All these facts made it very difficult for the worker to be encouraging about plans for the child. Thus because the worker was constantly forced by existing policies into the role of denying the mother's wishes and blocking her plans, she was unable to form a constructive relationship with the mother or to give her the emotional support and encouragement she appeared to need. Dora finally found work as a domestic and took the baby with her. The case was then closed in the agency at this point, but had to be reopened a few months later when the baby temporarily had to be taken into care. Later the girl had another child, which only came to the agency's attention following its death (of neglect) in the hospital. The agency attempted to contact the mother at this time, both for her sake and that of her first child, but were unable to trace her and finally had to close their case.

Dora's situation is not uncommon. Many unmarried mothers come from outside the province seeking the anonymity of a large city for their confinement. If the background is good,
and the child healthy, it is easily placed for adoption. However if the mother's intelligence is limited, or if the child is handicapped by a physical deformity, it usually means that the child has to be made a ward. At this point the question of maintenance arises, and with it, the old "bogey" of residence laws. At present everyone is agreed in principle that the proper criteria should be "what is best for the child?", not "who is going to pay for the child's care?" Unfortunately, however, thinking is ahead of social action on this point, and, the question of residence still plays a part in determining the final plan for the child.

Elinor's situation, though similar in some respects to Dora's, had a happier ending. Elinor was of German racial origin. Her parents were born in the "old country". Although they were naturalized Canadians, their attitude and mode of life was distinctly "old world". Elinor's father was a farmer and part-time fisherman who lived in a remote area up the northern coast of British Columbia. He and his wife did not get along, so the father lived by himself while the children lived with the mother. The latter was of the Lutheran faith, a clean, thrifty, industrious worker, but harsh and unsympathetic with her children. All the children had to be self-supporting at an early age, and at the age of 14, Elinor was "bonded out" to some farmers in the Fraser Valley, just as in the days of the old apprentice system. Elinor was ill-equipped for such a move. Her mother had never permitted discussion of sexual matters, believing that her children could pick up
the "facts of life" about the farm. When she became pregnant, shortly after she left home, her mother refused to permit her to come home with her child. She never did tell Elinor's father about her condition.

When Elinor was first referred in from the country to the agency, she had been seen by the Child Welfare Division worker (as was then the routine), in an attempt to establish paternity. On coming to the agency, Elinor was first seen by a temporary worker, and then two days later by another worker. All three workers attempted to get information regarding the putative father in the first interview and Elinor completely blocked their efforts and consistently refused to discuss anything that had any meaning for her. She was admitted to the Maternity Home and remained there, because of her youth and inability to return home with her child, until the baby was about five month old. Elinor and her baby were then discharged to a work home outside the area supervised by the Children's Aid, where the owners were professional people, both employed outside the home, and where Elinor knew no one in the community. The case was then closed in the agency. It was re-opened eight months later when Elinor was discharged by her employers as being inefficient and incapable. Elinor then had no money, no plans and nowhere to go. This time another worker had contact with her, and the emphasis (and naturally so) was placed on the "proper" care of her child. The baby was taken into non-ward care and money given the mother who was also helped to get another job, but again Elinor's own emotional needs were over-
looked. She again became pregnant. Another worker now came in contact with Elinor and for the first time managed to give the girl the acceptance and warmth that she craved.

This time too, Elinor's attitude at the outset was very unrealistic. She thought she would like to marry the putative father, but that he was very "shy", and had not really had an opportunity to mention marriage to her. The worker met her sympathetically, taking care of her immediate needs by arranging for her placement in the Salvation Army Home, seeing that her teeth were taken care of, and so forth. She supported Elinor in her decision to give up her child, carefully interpreting the necessity of making the child a ward, instead of placing it for adoption as Elinor originally requested. When the plans for the baby were completed, the worker discussed with Elinor her possible placement in a work home that she knew. She took Elinor first to visit the home and meet her would-be employer; discussed with her her feelings about the place and in general moved as carefully as if she had been placing a child, which in point of fact she was. As a result of this warm, protective, motherly care, which probably met Elinor's dependency needs for the first time in her life, Elinor "opened up" to the worker and discussed her feelings with her, even telling her about the father of her first child (a fact she said she never would tell her own mother). Elinor formed a good working relationship with her employer who was herself an affectionate, motherly person. Later Elinor went with her employers when they went away on a trip, but she continued to
write to the worker regularly and sent money for the care of her first child. From an unrealistic, withdrawn girl, Elinor changed to a fairly responsible person able to take some initiative in planning for herself and her child.

Elinor's case is interesting from many aspects. It shows the deprived emotional and financial background so characteristic of the unmarried mother known to the agency: it also points up the possible factors of early physical matura­tion and loneliness that precipitated her into an illegitimate pregnancy. Finally, it points the contrasts, to a remarkable degree, between extremely unfortunate case handling and an exceptionally skilled and sensitive approach.

Not only does it take time and skill to plan for the after-care of the mother who keeps her child, but it takes endless patience and tact to make the best possible plan for the child for whom the mother asks the agency to plan. The mother, if she does not wish to keep her child herself, wishes to have it "adopted out". She seems to know that adoption spells the greatest security for her child. Consequently it comes as a blow when she is told, as she usually is, that her child is not adoptable and that to give the child proper guardianship, it will have to be made a ward of the agency. This means careful work with the unmarried mother to ensure that she understands what is at stake and that the placement strengthens rather than loosens the tie between the mother and the social worker. In each of the instances so far described, where the mother gave up her baby, it was made a ward. Such
children are placed in foster homes which may turn into adoption homes if, at a later date, the child proves to be adoptable on its own merits. Time has proven that many of these children develop successfully if they are placed in foster homes especially chosen to meet their needs. This again calls for special skills on the part of the agency workers to find appropriate homes for these children so that they may be assured the best possible chance to reach a happy, healthy maturity.

**Time of Referral and Worker-Client Relationship.**

Despite all the aforementioned difficulties, the worker must meantime "carry on!" to the best of her ability. She cannot pick and choose her clients, but takes each girl as she comes. The task is made infinitely easier if the worker is able to make contact with the mother early in her pregnancy. The worker then is free to work slowly and carefully towards building the feeling of mutual trust and confidence so essential to therapy. It is therefore interesting to look at the 24 cases which comprise the group of "special problems" in the light of the time of referral and the type of relationship established between the worker and client. Exactly half of these girls were referred to the Agency following the birth of their children. Of the remainder, all but two girls came to the Agency in the last few weeks of pregnancy, and one of these was a ward. Of the 12 girls not known to the Agency until after the birth of the child, 6 girls kept the child; 2 girls
had no plan and the child was made a ward; 2 girls placed the child privately and 2 girls aborted. Of the 12 girls who were known to the Agency prior to the birth of the child, 6 girls kept their babies. The other 6 had no plan, so that the child was made a ward.

It is obvious that the girl who had not been referred to a social agency before the birth of her child suffers a physical as well as an emotional handicap. Often she does not have the proper prenatal check-ups. It is noted therefore, as might be expected, that the girl who aborted had not been known previously to the Agency. Similarly the girl who had no contact with a worker until after her child was born will have been under the greatest stress and strain to evolve a plan for her child. She is the girl who is liable to make a "private" placement. This means that the baby is placed haphazardly, regardless of its background or that of the adopting parents. Then too, the adopting parents often lose touch with the natural mother, making it difficult and sometimes impossible to obtain the consent and information necessary for the completion of the adoption. Often the adopting parents run the risk of taking a baby who may not develop normally either physically or mentally.

Freda is a case in point. Freda is one of the unmarried mothers in this group who had had no contact with a social agency until the adopting parents with whom she had privately placed her baby, submitted their legal notice of intention to adopt. The social worker then had to locate
Freda and obtain from her the background information concerning herself and her child which is an integral part of the court report submitted prior to the completion of any adoption. In this case the worker found Freda to be "friendly but rather stubborn, especially about giving information regarding herself and her family". However, this worker learned that Freda was a breed, being of part Spanish and part Indian racial origin. Freda had had little education, leaving school at Grade 6 when she was 17 years of age. Following this she came to Vancouver where she worked as a domestic or chambermaid. Freda had always managed to be self-supporting. During the summer she would pick berries or work in a cannery and, in the winter, come back to Vancouver to work as a domestic. She had had no contact with family since her mother died and claimed to have no knowledge of her father's whereabouts. She had managed to save enough money to pay her doctor and hospital bills, but not enough to support her child, which she placed privately when it was 3 weeks old. The paternity of the child was not established. From the adoption study the worker could not recommend completion of the adoption at that time. As a result there was the disappointment to the adopting parents; the possible insecurity for the child resulting from an unsuitable placement and finally the reactivation for the mother of all the painful circumstances surrounding the birth of her child. Needless to say, the worker did not establish a constructive relationship with Freda. All this could have been avoided had the girl been referred to the social agency early on in her pregnancy.
From the recording it did not appear as if the worker was able to form a meaningful relationship with any of the remaining girls in this group. This may have been due to a variety of reasons. The first and most obvious one was the lateness of referral to the social worker. Then too the emphasis of the worker in each instance was centered primarily on the planning for the child and did not in addition focus on the rehabilitation of the mother. Where the mother kept her child, the tendency was to close the case as soon as she got a job, probably because the worker realized that she had been unable to form a constructive relationship with the mother and therefore did not see any value in prolonging the contact.

Grace's case was the exception rather than the rule. In this type of case the Agency kept contact with the unmarried mother for a period of 2½ years. Grace first became known to the Agency when she came seeking temporary placement for her 2 year old child. Grace was of Icelandic racial origin. She was fifth of nine children brought up on their parents' Prairie dairy farm. Grace's mother died when her oldest child was only 15 years of age and when Grace was 10 years of age. Her life was never easy as she had to work hard and become more self-sufficient than her years warranted. Grace remained at home until her late 'teens, when her father moved to a farm in the Fraser Valley in British Columbia. Grace moved with him and kept house for him. Soon, however, her father remarried—a widow with seven children. Grace's new stepmother was unfriendly so, at one fell swoop, Grace lost her position as
chatelaine of her father's home while she had to compete for his attention with the new wife and her children. This seemed to have made Grace most unhappy and lonely and to have been the situation that precipitated her into an illegitimate pregnancy. Her relationship with the putative father was casual, and there never was any question of marriage. Grace's father and stepmother kept her baby and she came into Vancouver to work. Shortly after that she met the man who became the father of her second child. Marriage was discussed between them, but Grace never gave it second thought. She kept her baby in a private boarding home and maintained herself and her child by working as a waitress. Finally her health broke down and it was at this point that she came to the Children's Aid asking help in caring for her little girl. The worker described Grace as a "drab, unhappy looking girl". She mentioned her "weary, discouraged look", and noted that "she did not look bright". Grace's little girl was taken into non-ward care but Grace herself did not get the emotional support she required. The worker reported, "Grace is a difficult person to talk to as she is all prepared to be antagonistic". Unfortunately this worker was getting all of Grace's latent hostility projected upon her. The more the worker became concerned for the child, the more antagonistic Grace became. It was almost as if she were vying for attention with her own child. Then too, with the various changes in staff, different workers had to deal with Grace and thus a good working relationship never really was formed with her. Gradually Grace stopped visiting her little girl. She
did not keep the agency informed of her plans and it began to look as if the child would have to be made a ward. Finally the child was apprehended. Grace at this time was ill in hospital and it fell to the lot of a temporary worker to discuss this with her. The worker went in with a fresh view-point though admittedly without the pressure of concern for plans for the child. She saw Grace as an individual and not merely as the mother of a child in need of protection. Then for the first time Grace began to talk about herself and her family and her fears regarding her sickness. (Most of the background information that is on file was obtained at this time). The worker formed a warm, supportive relationship with Grace and carefully arranged that social assistance be paid to her following her discharge from the hospital. Unfortunately this worker was only on temporary staff and left the agency at this time. Thus following the finalization of the adoption plans for Grace's little girl, the case was closed in the agency. Once again Grace was "on her own". Again she was bereft and again she was lonely, this time for her child and the worker in whom she had placed her confidence. Thus, though the Agency kept contact with the unmarried mother for a period of 2½ years following the initial contact, the emphasis was all on planning for the child and little if any constructive work was accomplished with the mother.

It will be recalled that the remainder of this group of unmarried mothers of limited intelligence were referred to the Agency a month or so prior to the birth of the child. Half
of these girls kept their children and the others had no plan and so the children were made wards. It is interesting at this point to examine these cases to see if a better working relationship was established with these girls than with the ones discussed previously. Once again the worker is faced with innumerable difficulties in the personalities of the unmarried mothers and in the main it cannot be said that any truly constructive relationship was established. However in three instances, a very positive relationship was engendered, though not with the worker who made the initial contact with the unmarried mother. It will be recalled that such a working basis was established with Elinor who was a particularly reserved girl and who needed great warmth and understanding before her confidence was won. Beulah too eventually formed a very real affection for the social worker, but she seemed to have to vent her hostility on the first worker with whom she came in contact. She is described by that worker as sullen and resentful of any form of advice. However in her later contacts with the Agency, Beulah writes to her worker saying that she hopes they will always be friends and write back and forth as she always looks on the worker as her own mother and hopes it will always be like that. Both the workers who finally achieved a satisfactory working relationship with Elinor and Beulah, were mature warm-hearted women, with considerable experience and training behind them. However, the initial contact with the Agency played its part in paving the way for these relationships ultimately to be formed.
The third and last example is that of a girl with whom the social workers toiled for a long time before they finally managed to achieve a constructive relationship, Hannah, as we shall call her, gave early indication of personality disturbance. Her family history is one long history of economic insecurity and ill health. Hannah's father was ill and crotchety. Her mother struggled along for a number of years on "relief" caring for her husband and family as best she could. Finally the burden became too great for her to bear, and she left her husband and went to work supporting herself as a housekeeper. Hannah was the oldest and "dullest" of four children. She was always compared unfavorably with her younger sister, who took full advantage of the fact, taunting her as being "crazy". Hannah seemed to be the outlet for all her mother's frustration with life. When Hannah was about seven years old, she commenced stealing. On examination at the clinic, the psychiatrist said she was developing an inferiority complex under her home conditions and recommended a change of environment in a Children's Aid foster home. This recommendation was not carried out and Hannah continued to live with her mother. When Hannah was about 17 years of age, her mother had a nervous breakdown. The resultant tension and worry appears to have been the precipitating factor that led shortly after to the first of Hannah's pregnancies. Her mother had no sympathy for Hannah's predicament and berated her as "sloppy", "careless", and "brazen", and demanded that she be sterilized. As there was some question Hannah might have been promiscuous, her child
was made a ward, and she herself returned soon after the birth to the home of her mother. Hannah soon got into difficulties with her mother who then asked for her commitment to the Provincial Mental Hospital. Hannah, however, was not committable. She was not psychotic and had at one time been given an I.Q. rating of 92 and at another the rating of "dull" normal. Shortly after this, Hannah left home and again became illegitimately pregnant and returned to the Agency for assistance. On admission to the United Church Home, which was notable at that time for the strict, punitive, and moralistic attitude of its matron, Hannah was most unhappy and was described as one of the most unpopular girls in the home. The worker was unable to establish any bond with Hannah and commented on her emotional "flatness". Hannah claimed she had had her second child because the Agency took away her first, and announced that she was going to keep this baby. Becoming illegitimately pregnant again the next year, she kept that child also, the Agency remaining in a supervisory capacity. Shortly after the birth of yet a fourth child, Hannah was arrested by the police as she had left her children alone and uncared for. Later she was allowed out on probation to the Children's Aid Society. This shock seemed to jar Hannah to reality. Her relationship with the worker strengthened and her behaviour progressively improved under the close supervision of the Agency. Finally Hannah entered into a stable common-law relationship with a man who undertook the family responsibility for Hannah and her children. On last contact with the Agency the family was managing well.
The factors influencing Hannah's personality in the developmental years of her childhood are all self-evident here as are the progressive stages leading to the climax of illegitimacy at physical maturity. Also indicated are the gaps in the preventive work with the child when it is in its most formative years. It is interesting too to note here yet another instance where the emotional tension of the mother apparently blunted her intellectual functioning. Finally, it is illuminating to observe that when the incentive was sufficiently great, the client could form and make good use of a professional relationship with the social worker.

These "special problem" cases clearly demonstrate a fact that is well known to every social worker, namely, that the worker must take the unmarried mother as she presents herself to the agency. There is no question of services being refused because the unmarried mother might be too emotionally disturbed to benefit from casework services, or too limited intellectually to form a truly constructive working relationship. Handicapped as the worker is by the mother's "peculiar personality" and limited intelligence, and by the lack of resources both within the family and the community, she valiantly struggles to achieve the best social solution to the problem. Her only chance to overcome these handicaps is to have an early and continued contact with the unmarried mother. Even then, with the heavy caseloads and frequent changes in workers, it is most often impossible for the worker to establish a working relationship with the mother. There are as yet no facilities
existing in the community, with the exception of custodial care
of the grossly defective, to train and eventually rehabilitate
the unmarried mother of limited intelligence. There is little
constructive work being accomplished with these mothers in view
of all these difficulties, and it would seem until such time as
the community awakens to its responsibility in this matter,
that the worker's role is necessarily limited to handling the
emergent situation.
Chapter 9.
Case Differences:
Cases Referred After Childbirth.

"Casework treatment that utilizes both environmental and personal treatment, often in combination, has in it the potentials for effective reorientation of the client. Such treatment--based on psychological understanding of the client's needs and difficulties, and on our awareness that we are capable of influencing (her) by our attitudes, our activities and our arrangements (partly in an inhibiting and partly in a promoting way)---offers (her) the opportunities of achieving a basic readjustment" (Grete L. Bibring, M.D.: "Psychiatry and Social Work", Journal of Social Casework, June 1947, p. 210);

It was to be expected that the case worker would experience difficulty in forming a constructive relationship with the unmarried mother of below average intelligence. This mother's capacity for gaining insight into her emotional difficulties is limited, as is her ability to plan or re-organize her life in a more socially acceptable and satisfying manner. It is therefore understandable that such girls should tend to be recidivists. However, the situation is somewhat different with the unmarried mother of higher intelligence. The case worker, though still faced with all the difficulties inherent in the peculiar personality of the unmarried mother, here at least has a chance to apply her knowledge of human behaviour to the conscious professional interplay of her personality in relation to that of her client, and to "work with her" and her problems.¹

As one authority has pointed out "the effect of (such) a relationship to a person in whom they (the clients) have confidence, is to give them the support that comes from sharing a burden, to release energies formerly tied up in fear and hostility, and to free them to see more than they were able to bear to see before of the meaning of their situation". 1 Hopefully, after experiencing such a relationship, the client becomes a better integrated person, and is enabled to make a more adequate social adjustment.

It will be recalled at this point that of the 66 cases comprising this study, 40 involved recidivist unmarried mothers who were of average intelligence or above average in this regard. In these particular instances, despite casework treatment from professional social workers, the unmarried mother did not achieve a "basic readjustment" and continued on in her maladjusted and unconventional pattern of living. Postulating here again that timing is one of the critical factors influencing the formation of the constructive relationship that is the basis of casework treatment, attention in these cases has been focussed on the time when the mother was referred to the Agency. The 40 cases therefore have been divided into two groups depending upon whether the mother was referred to the Agency before or after the birth of the child. These cases are then examined to see what casework relationship was established, what subsequent plans were made for the

1 ibid, p. 27.
mother and child, and what circumstances surrounded the birth of the next child.

It is interesting to note that half of these 40 cases were referred to the Agency after the birth of the child; while well over half of the remainder were not referred until the last month or so of pregnancy. This at once evidences the great lag in the matter of referrals and the consequent handicap to casework treatment. It is not surprising therefore to find that out of the total 40 cases, 20 girls kept their babies despite all the difficulties that face a mother with an illegitimate child in our present social structure. In three instances the girl had no plan and the baby was not adoptable, so that the child was made a ward; six girls placed the child privately; nine placed the child for adoption with the co-operation of the Agency and in two cases the child was dead or aborted. This again indicates the difficulty the social worker encounters in working with the mother to form an adequate plan for the child.

The disposition of the second child shows quite a different emphasis. Only nine girls kept the second baby, five of whom had already kept the first child; five girls had no plan and the child, not being deemed adoptable, was made a ward; four girls requested that the child be taken in non-ward care (this turned into ward care in three instances); fifteen girls placed the child privately and seven placed the child for adoption with the co-operation of the agency. It is understandable that fewer girls would attempt to keep the
second child as the financial cost of maintaining two children would be evident to all but the most unrealistic girl. However the sharp increase in the number of private placements would seem to indicate the difficulty of getting these girls to accept and trust the service of the Agency.

Jane was one of the recidivist unmarried mothers of average or above average intelligence who was not referred to the social agency until after the child was already born and who decided to keep her baby. She first became known to the Agency in 1939 when her child was born in the General Hospital. Jane herself was born in one of the Prairie Provinces, the illegitimate child of her Jewish mother and Irish Catholic father. Her mother later married but this marriage turned out unhappily and she drifted into prostitution. Jane was apprehended when she was six years old and made a ward of an agency in another province. Shortly after Jane was taken into care she developed pneumonia and then scarlet fever. When she recovered from this she was placed in a foster home and remained there for ten years. It is not known why Jane left this home but after that she just went from one foster home to another until she came of age. She had somehow "kept track" of her mother's whereabouts through the years, and as soon as she was of age, Jane joined her mother in Vancouver. Shortly after arriving there she became illegitimately pregnant as the result of a very casual relationship with the putative father. She was confined in hospital and at that point referred to the Agency. Following this, Jane was admitted to the maternity
home where she settled down contentedly affirming that she had "nothing to worry about at present". As Jane was asking adoption placement, the worker immediately attempted to get the necessary background information from her and as was customary at that time, a worker from the Child Welfare Division called to interview her for information about the putative father. At this point the worker records that while Jane was interested in discussing plans with her, she was not anxious to give information about her relatives. Paternity was not established, and the worker, in keeping with the accepted procedures at that time, had to tell Jane that her child could not be placed for adoption. The old moralistic thinking then prevalent is reflected in the workers comment that if Jane kept the child, it would be a "stabilizing influence on her". Jane kept consistently asking adoption and the worker had equally consistently to refuse. Jane was urged to keep her baby, and the worker comments: "It was felt very definitely that mother should not have the privilege of foster home placement at the present time due to her past behaviour and lack of responsibility". Jane's mother was also very judgmental; when Jane rebelled at this the visitor reminded her that, even if the maternal grandmother seemed difficult, "she was her mother", and she "should show some respect for her" because of this.

Jane placed her baby in a private boarding home and got herself a job as a domestic at $12.00 per month. Six months later the Agency had to take the baby into non-ward care. Gradually Jane drifted out of touch with her child and the
Agency and a year-and-a-half after its birth all contact was lost with Jane and the child was made a ward. A few months after this, Jane again became known to the Agency when she was referred for assistance with her second illegitimate child. This time Jane was using an alias. She gave the worker a story of her life which was a complete fantasy, claiming in part that she was an "adopted child". Jane later placed this baby privately for adoption.

Here is seen an unmarried mother who herself was an illegitimate child. She was exposed to some sordid scenes in her early childhood and suffered actual physical neglect. In addition to this she was suddenly separated from her mother at age 6 and then ten years later suffered a similar rude separation at age 16 from the foster home in which she had been staying for the past ten years. Jane had a strongly ambivalent tie to her mother, with the weight on the side of hostility and shortly after rejoining her, she followed her mother's pattern by becoming illegitimately pregnant. The care Jane got in the maternity home seemed to meet her dependency needs and she felt contented and secure, but without much sense of reality since she did not feel the need to plan for her future.

Jane's mother was very judgmental, projecting her very mixed feelings regarding her own past conduct on to her daughter. The social worker by reflecting the moralistic pattern of thinking customary at that time, effectively alienated Jane by reminding her of her "duty" to her mother. Thus Jane could not accept and trust the worker. Then too Jane was
forced into a more adequate maternal role than she was capable of maintaining and her old hostilities, insecurities and dependency needs were never resolved. It would seem in this particular instance that Jane's original pregnancy aggravated the difficulties that resulted in her becoming illegitimately pregnant a second and third time.

Kay was another of the mothers who did not become known to the Agency until after the birth of her child. She, like Jane, kept her first baby, but the case handling here differs markedly and exemplifies well the new approach in professional work. It covers a space of two years. Kay became illegitimately pregnant at 16 years of age. She was the only daughter of four children born to a working man and his wife who lived in a remote little town on Vancouver Island. Kay's father and mother could not get along together so they separated. The three boys lived with the father while Kay lived and worked with her mother as a domestic. When Kay first came to the attention of the Agency, she was in the Salvation Army Maternity Home with her child already three weeks old. The worker met her and observed that she was young and unsophisticated. Her attachment to the putative father, who was a sailor, allegedly had been most casual, Kay did not know his name, or where he lived, and claimed that he had raped her at a party. The worker had no chance to break through the girl's reserve, as Kay was determined to leave the Home and return to her mother with her baby. However, the worker did all that was possible, getting her tickets, taking her to the boat, and re-
ferring her to the Child Welfare Division for continued supervision at her home. Two years later, Kay came voluntarily to the Agency asking financial assistance for herself and child. As that was not the function of the Agency she was referred to the City Social Service Department for this service. They promptly referred her back again to the Children's Aid as they had discovered she was again pregnant. Kay had been ashamed to tell the Agency worker of her second pregnancy and was in dread lest her mother learn of it. Evidently Kay's mother had grown tired of earning her living as a domestic and had left the small town where she previously lived and gone to Vancouver. There she was soon living with a man in a common-law relationship. Kay had come to Vancouver with her mother and while she maintained contact with her, she could not tolerate her mother's relationship with a man other than her father. Kay therefore lived separately and maintained herself and her child as best she could. Kay was vague about her second pregnancy, but evidently her relationship with the putative father had once more been most casual. Kay did not know his name, "believed" intercourse had taken place, and "believed" contraceptives had been used. She felt she would like to keep her child but knew she couldn't manage two children and so was asking adoption placement.

Fortunately, this time, one Agency worker was able to work with Kay from the very first. This worker was able to overcome Kay's initial aloofness and hostility, and help her to plan the care for her first child. She assisted her to make
the necessary arrangements for the birth of the second child and gave her a great deal of emotional support at that time. Following the birth of the child, she was able to interpret to Kay, the need for consultation with the Child Guidance Clinic in order to determine whether or not the child would be considered adoptable. Finally, when the child was not deemed adoptable in view of the lack of paternity and the mother's apparent instability, the worker carefully explained court procedure and interpreted what wardship would mean for the child. Out of all this continuous supportive contact, a good client-worker relationship was established and Kay felt secure enough to start talking about her feelings about having given up her child and her resentment towards her mother for the way she had treated her father. Here the worker was able to interpret some of the reality situation with regard to Kay's father, who had had a severe mental breakdown, and to show Kay that her mother had not deserted him but had really tried her best to help him. Interpretation was also given to Kay's mother of some of her daughter's feelings in this regard and as a result the tie between Kay and her mother strengthened. Kay eventually moved out of the worker's district, but the worker kept contact with her, thinking that she needed continuing casework services. At the close of the case, Kay was making a better adjustment to life and had a more realistic appreciation of the true situation between her parents.

From the initial contact with this girl and her subsequent pregnancy, she certainly appeared to be deep in fantasy
life and remote from reality. The progress for forming a meaning-
ful relationship with the caseworker seemed poor. Yet this
was accomplished over a period of continued supportive help
during which Kay's immediate anxieties were dealt with. When
she trusted the worker sufficiently, Kay was able to express
the feeling of hostility she had towards her mother for the
mother's apparent desertion of Kay's father. The worker
accepted the fact that people do have these feelings, but point-
ed out the reality situation which Kay up to then had ignored.
Following this catharsis and interpretation, Kay appeared to
mature and become able to make a much more adequate adjustment
to life. Thus while Kay's original pregnancy did little but
complicate her already mixed-up emotions, the casework treatment
she received at the birth of her second child enabled her to
gain some insight and resolve some of her difficulties.

Lucy provides an example of a situation where the
pathology is too great for therapy. The worker recognized this
and knew that all she could do was supportive casework.
Accordingly, she gave to the mother all the warmth and emotional
support that she could, and saved what was possible from a
bad situation. Lucy was originally referred from the govern-
ment clinic as she was illegitimately pregnant and considering
an abortion. She formed an easy surface relationship with the
worker and showed considerable insight into the cause of her
difficulties but was unable to do anything about them. Lucy's
father had been killed when he was 30 years of age. This left
Lucy's mother with two small children to care for. The boy
was sent to live with his father's people but Lucy stayed with her mother. Lucy's mother was irresponsible and immature, and having been awarded sufficient compensation for the death of her husband to take care of her immediate needs, she moved from place to place as the spirit willed. Lucy at one time stated bitterly that "they had moved around so much it wasn't funny". Lucy's home and school life in consequence were very broken. Lucy's mother lived in common-law relationship for a period of time and at other times seemed to have been promiscuous in her relationships. Lucy witnessed sex practices constantly as she shared a sleeping room with her mother. Lucy herself had had her first sex experience in her early 'teens. Her relations with men had no emotional meaning to her and she told the worker, "she did prostitute but did not take money . . . drink and sex gave her an escape from her problems, but the next day she was depressed". In this particular instance, the unmarried mother was too sick a person to helped much by casework. Fortunately however, the worker was able to get in touch with Lucy's grandmother, who was the one strength in the whole sorry situation. It was arranged that she would care for Lucy's child. However it was impossible to work out any constructive plans for Lucy herself. She had been too badly damaged by her experiences and too weakened physically and spiritually to re-adjust herself. She drifted back into her old life of prostituting. Within four months Lucy was pregnant again but this time she ended her pregnancy by abortion. After this the Agency lost contact with Lucy.
Margaret's experience is worth noting at this point. Margaret had intermittent contact with the Agency over a period of 18 years. She first became known when she came into the office asking help in planning for her 10 months old illegitimate child. Margaret was then 19 years of age. She was born in England but came out to Canada as a small child. There is not much on file about her family relationships but she stated she could not possibly take her baby home because of her stepfather's attitude. Margaret had completed grade 10 at 16 years of age and had then taken a course which enabled her to work in a doctor's office. She told a story of having entered a private maternity "home" where the woman who ran it forced her to make a private settlement with the putative father for $75.00. This money was then appropriated by the owner of the "home" for the baby's board.\(^1\) Shortly thereafter the putative father married and since then Margaret had been maintaining the child. Margaret asked the help of the Agency in placing her child in a foster home. However these were depression times, and Margaret was the legal responsibility of an outside municipality who would not underwrite maintenance for the care of her child because of the general shortage of funds. Consequently the Agency was not able to do much planning for Margaret or her child. Margaret placed the baby privately and the case was closed. Nothing further was known of Margaret until 8 years

---

\(^1\) After being investigated, the "home" was closed and it was as a result of this that legislation was passed compelling all such places to be licensed.
later when it was reported that she had deserted her illegitimate child in hospital. Margaret took her child from hospital and then deserted it again. The baby was then made a ward of the Catholic Children's Aid as by this time, Margaret had changed her mind about her religion and was professing to be a Roman Catholic. Nothing further was known of Margaret by either Agency for a period of six years, when a neglect complaint was received regarding Margaret's two children. Margaret during this period had been living in a common-law relationship which had produced two children. Following the putative father's death, Margaret placed the children in a private foster home and then disappeared. The children were apprehended, pending contact with the mother, but permitted to remain in the home where the mother had placed them. A year and a half later Margaret contacted the agency regarding her children. She had married in the meantime and had another child, and stated she was now able to care for the children she had previously deserted. The home was referred to the Child Welfare Division for investigation and on their recommendation, the children were returned on probation to their mother. A year later, the wardship of the children was rescinded and the case closed.

Margaret's case is interesting from several angles. In addition to the usual complexities inherent in dealing with any situation involving an unmarried mother, the workers were beset by a multiplicity of technicalities. First the municipality in which Margaret had established legal residence,
105.

and which was therefore responsible for the cost of any financial assistance she might require, would not underwrite the cost of taking her child into non-ward care. Thus the Agency worker was blocked by technicalities and unable to help the mother when she asked for shelter for her child. Margaret's change of religion, secondly, necessitated a referral to the Catholic Children's Agency, though she later professed to be no longer of that faith and came back again to the original Agency. Finally, by changing her abode, she came under the supervision of the Child Welfare Division. All these factors made it extremely difficult, for the workers concerned, to help the unmarried mother resolve her difficulties and readjust her mode of life. Indeed it would appear that it was the mother's marriage that was the really stabilizing factor. While she may have matured through this marital relationship, the probability is that had it dissolved, the mother would soon have reverted to her old pattern of behavior. The workers involved made the best they could of a complex situation and did an excellent piece of co-operative work, especially in the supervision of the later children born to the mother.

Nora was one of the two girls who did not attempt to keep her child. She had instead arranged a private placement through her doctor. However this plan miscarried because when the child was born it was deformed by a large facial birthmark and a club foot. It was at this point that the mother became known to the Agency, as Nora, who had entered the hospital as a private patient, had been discharged before her child was ready
to leave the hospital. She had then gone "up the coast" where work was plentiful and wages high, thinking that the doctor would make all the necessary plans for the child. By this time the child was a month old and the hospital was pressing for its discharge. Accordingly the child had to be apprehended and taken into care by the Agency.

When Nora was located by the Child Welfare Division, it was discovered that she was despondent and unhappy and feeling very guilty about her child. She did not want to keep the baby, but wanted to assure herself that it got good care. It was learned that Nora's mother was Czechoslovakian and her father of Irish racial origin. They were farmers living in the Okanagan Valley in the interior of the province. Nora was the oldest of seven children. She had left school at 14 years of age to help at home. She later told the worker that she had never been happy at home, though she could not give any specific reasons for this. She left home at 16 years of age and went into one of the nearby towns in the interior where she worked as a clerk in a store. However she could not get along with the other girls, though again she did not know why, and was lonely and unhappy. Soon she left for Vancouver where she obtained work as a waitress. There she drifted into a relationship with a sailor she "picked up" in one of the lower class cafes. Nora claimed that he wanted to marry her but she did not want to "settle down", even though she felt she would never be happy until she had a home of her own. Nora's mother knew of her pregnancy and had offered to take the baby but Nora did
not want her to have it. The district worker formed a good working relationship with Nora, but Nora could not settle. She came back to Vancouver and at this point Nora had her first personal contact with the Agency who had been caring for her child all this time. Nora projected all her feelings of guilt regarding her child on to the Agency and was very hostile to the Agency worker. Unfortunately her child was not developing well. It could not be considered adoptable and it was also a difficult child to place in a permanent foster home as it periodically developed unaccountably high fever. Naturally the Agency saw placement with the relatives as the best plan for the child, especially as Nora's mother had expressed her willingness to care for it. This planning of course only made Nora all the more hostile to the Agency worker. Finally, when the child was 1 1/2 years of age and after it had had several attacks of high fever, it was examined at the Child Guidance Clinic where it was diagnosed as an imbecile and admitted to custodial care at Essondale Mental Hospital. Three months later the hospital reported that Nora had given birth to another illegitimate child. This time a new worker visited Nora. She found that Nora had degenerated. She had become hard looking, applied make-up lavishly, and was to all intents and purposes, now a woman of the streets. Nora was very hostile to the Agency worker. She repudiated all help from the Agency claiming that she was now of the Roman Catholic faith and wished to have nothing more to do with the Agency. She was accordingly referred to the Ather Agency who now have her child in care.
This case exemplifies a particularly unhappy situation for both the unmarried mother and the worker. Because the doctor did not refer the mother to a social agency, she went ahead with plans for the private placement of her baby. This resulted in the mother incurring a large hospital bill and then finally being faced with the bald fact that her baby had had to be apprehended. Because the mother had moved around so much the agency had great difficulty in determining her legal residence and the worker spent much time and effort to establish this. Then too the child presented a worrisome problem to the worker who was anxious to see that it got the best possible care. Nora had great difficulty with her interpersonal relationships and although she did confide in the district worker in the up-coast district, the relationship established was too tenuous to withstand the transfer to a worker in another agency. This was especially so when the agency concerned was caring for her sick child and was representative to her of all the shame and guilt she wished to forget. The opportunity of doing constructive work with Nora was lost because of the lack of early referral to the agency.

Paula was one of the mothers who placed her child privately. She was referred to the Agency when her baby was about 2 months old. Paula was described by the worker as a husky, placid peasant girl of Russian racial origin. She was very reticent, did not wish any help and stated that she had all plans made. The worker visited again only to find that Paula had disappeared and left no forwarding address.
Consequently the Agency had no recourse but to close its case. It was reopened 1½ years later when the putative father approached the agency regarding plans for Paula's second illegitimate child. Evidently Paula had left the child with him after its birth and he had placed and replaced it in innumerable private boarding homes before seeking the assistance of the Agency. The child was made a ward and three years later was still showing signs of residual insecurity. It was very shy and slow at talking but it was hoped that eventually it would be able to be adopted by its foster parents. Meantime, the Agency has been unable to trace the natural mother for her consent to the adoption. The mother's first child which she placed privately, later came to the attention of the Agency when the adopting parents wished to complete the adoption. It was then found that the child had been placed in a most unsuitable home and the agency had to supervise the child in the home from a protection angle. The dangers in such a situation are self-evident. If the child had to be removed from the home it will be difficult for it to adjust in another. If it remains, it will never be in too secure a situation. Meantime all trace is gone of the natural mother.

Ranhild placed her child for adoption in a home approved by the agency. She was referred by an agency in another province for plans for her 5 week old child. Ranhild was of Danish-Scottish racial origin. Her parents were hard working respectable people who owned a home in a good residential district. The standards in the home were high and Ranhild
had a strict up-bringing. Ranhild graduated from high school and then took a business course. When her mother died after a lingering illness of cancer, Ranhild joined the airforce. She was placed as a nurses' aid and then posted to Eastern Canada. The sudden change from the restricted environment of home appeared to be the factor that precipitated Ranhild into an illegitimate pregnancy. The putative father was a casual acquaintance whom she met when on a week-end leave and whom she never saw again. As Ranhild expressed the desire to have her child adopted and return home to Vancouver, arrangements were made for this by the airforce and the Eastern social agency with the co-operation of the local agency. The agency worker described Ranhild as a buxom, round-faced girl with a ready smile and a friendly likeable manner. It was felt that she would make a "good" adjustment after she returned to her home. Accordingly plans were completed within 6 weeks for the adoption of the baby and Ranhild returned to her home and the case was closed. A year and a half later, the agency received legal notice from Ranhild's aunt of her intention to adopt Ranhild's second illegitimate child. When the worker called to obtain the necessary adoption information, it was discovered that no one had known Ranhild was pregnant. She had worked as a taxi driver right up to the last, returning home one night at midnight, and giving birth to her child at home. This time, when the worker visited she was only able to make a very superficial contact with Ranhild, who was very much on the defensive. She would give no information regarding the putative father and she
wished no assistance for herself. Accordingly, the worker obtained as much background information for the adoption as she could and contact with Ranhild was then terminated.

Here the Agency worker was handicapped by the lateness of referral and also by the fact that too many social workers had been in contact with the mother prior to referral. The mother never grew to trust or confide in any one worker, as her contact, instead of being all channelled through one person, was diffused over several. Then too, Ranhild appeared to be a much more adequate person than she really was, so contact with her was terminated with the placing of the baby for adoption instead of being maintained to help Ranhild with her readjustment to civilian life.

These cases clearly show the extremely complicated situations that faced the social worker who was attempting to help these unmarried mothers. It is evident that in such instances, the referral of the mother after the child is already born merely increased the difficulties that already confronted the social worker. In the majority of these instances the social worker was unable to establish a relationship of mutual confidence and co-operation; little or no plans were able to be made for the mother's rehabilitation and in general it could be stated that the circumstances surrounding the first pregnancy all served to increase the unmarried mother's difficulties.
Chapter 10.

Case Differences.

Cases Referred Before Childbirth.

"Social work for unmarried mothers, demands all that general social work calls for, plus special skills in analyzing the needs of children born out of wedlock and in dealing with the mother whose attitude may be complicated by guilt." (Mary S. Labaree: "Unmarried Parenthood Under the Social Security Act, p. 9.

In the previous chapter, it was observed that the case worker was unsuccessful in forming a relationship with the unmarried mother who was referred to her following the birth of her child. This is as might have been expected in view of the general personality pattern of the unmarried mother, and substantiates the belief that the time of referral has a direct bearing on the formation of a constructive relationship between the worker and client. The formation of such a relationship has a twofold purpose. First the case worker endeavours to help the unmarried mother reach a wise decision for herself and her child. Secondly she attempts to make the experience as constructive as possible so that it may result in some emotional growth for the mother. The optimum condition for achieving this goal is reached when the unmarried mother is intelligent, and when she is referred to the case worker at an early stage in her pregnancy.

It is now proposed to examine the case histories of those mothers of average or above average intelligence who were
referred to the Agency prior to the birth of the child. It will be recalled that there were 21 such mother. Well over half of these, however, were not referred until the last month or so of pregnancy. Ten of these mothers kept their children; 3 made private placements, and 6 placed for adoption with the co-operation of the agency. Of the remaining mothers, 1 had no plan and the child was made a ward, while the other mother lost her child by abortion.

Sarah was 24 years of age when she came to the Agency. She was the middle child of a family of four. Her mother and father were of Scottish racial origin and were decent, hard working people. Sarah's mother was very active in her church and was a member on the board of the church's maternity home. Sarah was not fond of her mother, who was quite strict, but was very attached to her father. He was away from home a great deal as his job entailed much travelling, and was indulgent with Sarah when he was at home. Sarah, although she tested in the superior group of general intelligence, had only had 2 years at high school and had worked as a domestic and a ward maid in a children's hospital prior to joining the air force. Sarah described herself as always having been "crazy" about babies and wanting one of her own. Before Sarah was transferred to an eastern base, she had relations with an older married man who had daughters as old as herself. Here it seemed as if Sarah were deliberately flaunting her mother, both with respect to her "rescue" work among "unfortuniate" girls, and by having a relationship with a man reminiscent of her own.
Sarah was referred to the Agency when she was 7\(\frac{1}{2}\) months pregnant. At the time of referral she was ambivalent about her wishes for the child but quite anxious to get financial support from the putative father. She was accordingly referred to the Child Welfare Division as that was the office that took such action. On returning to the agency, she was assigned to a temporary worker. This worker had to overcome the handicap of the earlier procedures and Sarah was just beginning to have confidence in her, when the worker's time at the Agency expired. Unfortunately this coincided with Sarah's entering the hospital for the birth of her child, and was at just the worst psychological time for a change of workers to take place. Sarah was given great acceptance and warmth, but never much opportunity to talk about her family. She made a tentative attempt, once saying that she wished her mother could have taken her landlady's attitude about her pregnancy. To this the worker replied that it was unfortunate but that her mother could not help feeling the way she did. Sarah hastily said she realized that and did not blame her mother. At this point the record states "Visitor encouraged the attitude". In other words, the worker reinforced Sarah's feeling that it was "bad" to feel as she did about her mother. Sarah was of superior intelligence and presumably could have been given some insight into her difficulties, but the worker's attitude caused her to repress all her feeling that needed to be drained off before she could start to function in a more adequate manner. Points such as
this heighten the realization of the skill and sense of timing needed to deal with these girls.

After the birth of her child, Sarah decided to keep it, and moved out of the city, taking a housekeeping job to maintain herself and her child. When she returned to the city a year or so later, she again began to see the man who had been the father of her first child. After a time she once more became pregnant. She herself did not come to the agency for help, but was referred following the birth of her child in hospital. This time another worker saw Sarah, who again wished to keep her child. However, Sarah was realistic enough to know it was impossible for her to maintain the two children so she asked for adoption placement. The putative father gave background information for adoption purposes and the baby was placed for adoption. Following this the case was closed and the agency had no further contact with the mother. It would seem here that while Sarah received assistance in planning for her child, she herself never experienced a sufficiently close relationship with a worker to gain any insight into her own difficulties or to make a more satisfactory adjustment to life.

Tillie was referred to Agency when 5 months pregnant, at the age of sixteen. The youngest of a family of four, she was brought up by her father, a weak, inadequate person who had struggled unsuccessfully for years to maintain his family. Tillie's mother had died when she was 14, after having been a helpless invalid for 10 years prior to her death. The home was in one of the most squalid parts of the city. Tillie had left
school in grade 9. An old school report rated her as having an intelligence quotient of 110 but commented that she was pale and tired as a result of late hours and poor hygiene. After her mother's death, Tillie left school and stayed home to keep house for her father. She "went around" with a boy a year or so older than herself and it was through him that she became pregnant. The youth wished to marry her but the Judge refused his consent on the grounds that they were too young to marry. Tillie soon after this quarrelled with the putative father. She became quite uncontrollable, staying out very late at night, but her father projected all the blame for this on the "Justice" who would not let her marry. Finally Tillie was picked up by the police and lodged in the Detention Home. The Agency arranged for her release and saw that she was placed in the Maternity Home. Tillie, needless to say, did not like the rules and regulations of the home, and seemed to have absorbed her father's attitude to authority. The social worker found that she could get nowhere with Tillie and the record states: "Mother is superficially friendly and accepting of visitor's interest, but one gets the feeling she is bored with any social worker". Tillie kept her baby and her father encouraged her in this plan and helped her to care for the child. The social worker "stood by", attempting to do what she could, as there was not sufficient tangible court evidence to apprehend the child, though it was obvious to the worker that neither Tillie nor her father would be able to properly care for a child. Later the child was placed in a private boarding home where it died of
pneumonia. Tillie became pregnant a second time but did not seek the assistance of the agency and placed her baby privately.

This was one instance where the referral, though made before the birth of the baby, was too late for the social worker to accomplish anything constructive with the unmarried mother. Tillie's situation should have been picked up during her childhood years when it was reported that she was "pale and tired and suffering from late hours and poor hygiene". Unsatisfactory as it seems, the social worker here could do nothing but "stand by" in a nearly impossible situation.

Ursula represents another type of girl to whom the worker could only give limited service. Ursula was 31 years of age when she came to the attention of the Agency. At that time she came seeking help in planning temporary care for her 2\(\frac{1}{2}\) month old son. She was again illegitimately pregnant but did not divulge that fact to the worker at that time. Ursula was of English-Scotch descent. She was the oldest of four children. She described her family as all being "strong individualists, independent and self-sufficient". Her father was a graduate engineer and her mother had been a school teacher. Ursula herself was a smart, sophisticated, well-mannered person. She had a direct frank approach, an excellent education, and was supporting herself in her own business. Ursula had left her home in the East shortly after the birth of her first child and had been independent of her family since that time. She stated she had "no admiration" for the father of her coming child, and that she wanted it placed for adoption. She had all her plans
cut and dried and in business-like fashion, Ursula used the Agency for the service it could give her but repelled any attempt on the worker's part to form a closer relationship. There was little left for the Agency to do for Ursula and the case was closed on the completion of the adoption.

By contrast, Velma presents a situation that is only too familiar to the social worker. Velma was 19 years of age when she came to the Agency seeking help for the child which she was expecting in 6 weeks time. Her parents were peasants who came from the Ukraine to settle in the prairie land of Canada and Velma was one of eight children. The parents were illiterate and did not assimilate the culture of the new country, being content to farm the land and raise their family. Velma went as far as grade 9 in the prairie school; then, when she was about 17 years of age, "struck out" for Vancouver, where she obtained employment as a waitress. Soon she became involved with a sailor whom she thought was going to marry her. However, this did not work out, and although the putative father admitted paternity, he would not marry Velma. When Velma came to the Agency, the worker described her as a plump, nicely mannered Ukrainian girl who appeared frank and outspoken and anxious for advice and help. Velma decided to keep her baby and the emphasis of the social worker fell upon establishing paternity and obtaining maintenance for the child. Velma did not adjust well after the birth of her child, however, and within a few months appeared at the Agency, again pregnant. This time Velma had a different worker who described Velma as
feeling depressed and alone. She stated that her family were disinterested in her. Velma, despite the fact that she was already $100 in debt for the care of her first child, determined also to keep her second child. Unfortunately, due to crowded conditions at the maternity home, the worker could not arrange for Velma to go there following the birth of the child. Velma accordingly made arrangements to stay with another unmarried mother, of questionable repute. Velma obtained social allowance and attempted to struggle along, caring for herself and her two children. She soon drifted out of the city and out of the knowledge of the Agency. The next that is known of Velma is that she deserted her children in another city and they had to be apprehended and taken into care. At the last known contact, Velma had married a negro and had become and inmate of a "disorderly house".

This case clearly demonstrated the need for continued counselling service to the unmarried mother who decided to keep her baby. It is imperative that some plan be worked out, such as a private boarding home where the mother could stay with her child and not be left to the prey of economic insecurity, bad housing and poor companionship.

If there is to be any work done to prevent such damage to personality as has been observed in the cases under discussion, much study should be given to the formative years of a child's life. This is the time when personality is malleable, and when warning signals of its disturbance can be picked up, and hopefully rectified before too great damage is
done. Wilma's case is presented with this in mind. It appears to offer some prognostic value to the children's worker and to point out "damage signals", which may or may not lead to an illegitimate pregnancy.

Wilma was the illegitimate child of a self-confessed prostitute. She was made a ward at 15 months of age and placed in a foster home. This is one of the rare cases where the child was able to remain in the one foster home continuously. The foster mother was an older woman with a grown-up son and daughter, and, from all appearances, she spoiled and overprotected Wilma. At age 6 years, when taken to the Guidance Clinic, Wilma was reported to be "vain, domineering and self-willed". It was added she was "in a good foster home, except that the foster mother was inclined to spoil her". When Wilma went to school, she got into difficulties with the teacher and played truant, running away to a place where the son of the foster mother was working. The foster mother sided with Wilma against the school, blaming the school authorities for not understanding the child; and there is some indication that the son, a man in his late thirties or early forties, was greatly attached to Wilma and that he also indulged and spoiled her.

In the early 'teens, Wilma was a "behaviour problem" at school and there was some suggestion that she had been molested by an older man, though the foster mother refused to believe this. However, Wilma became pregnant, and gave birth to her first child shortly after her sixteenth birthday. While Wilma was in hospital, the foster mother died, and Wilma was
very upset, reproaching herself as the cause of the death. The foster mother's son and daughter accepted Wilma back in the home, but, a month later, the son married and brought his wife, a widow with a child of her own, into the home. This arrangement, as might have been expected, did not work out successfully. Wilma was antagonistic to the son's new wife and child, and the son took Wilma's part, blaming his wife and sister for being unsympathetic to her.

This is an interesting case from several angles. One wonders how much insecurity Wilma had absorbed during the fifteen or sixteen months she was with her own mother. The foster mother provided a "good" home. Physically Wilma was well cared for but the succession of workers who visited were unable to pick up the undertones of emotions in the home. It would seem that Wilma's attitude to her teachers at school, indicated that she had no solid relationship with the foster mother, but she had a petulant, demanding, over indulged attitude to her. To this was added the over-attachment to the foster mother's son, who may, consciously or unconsciously, have over-stimulated her sexually. Indications of poorly worked out familial relationships were evident early in her history but came to a climax with the onset of adolescence. To date, Wilma has had three illegitimate children. The record is long and complete, filled with details regarding health, school adjustment, and other factors. Many workers have been in and out of the picture but none has succeeded in forming a relationship with the girl. It is doubtful now if one could ever be established, and it
would seem almost inevitable that Wilma would continue in her mother's path. The record is full of warning signals during the girl's development and shows attitudes which may be overlooked in the young child, but which precipitate her into difficulties when she matures physically.

No attempt has been made in this study to do more than indicate the final plan made for the child, but it is significant to note the number of private arrangements that were made. This undoubtedly would occur as a direct result of the fact that many of the children were judged to be "not adoptable" because of the fact that the mother was a "repeater", and no paternity was established. It would seem that "adoption" carries with it a feeling of security for the unmarried mother, and that any other plan fills her with uncertainty and drives her into placing her baby "privately" for adoption. Such was the case with Winnifred. Winnifred was a "repeater" and because paternity could not be established, the worker had to interpret to the mother the need for examination at the Child Guidance Clinic in order to assist in making plans for the placement of her child. The worker immediately got resistance to this plan. Winnifred had at first seriously considered abortion. She had later discarded this idea and decided to go ahead and have her baby and place it for adoption. Now, to Winnifred, all she had gone through appeared to be for nothing. The worker would not place her baby for adoption! The worker too was completely "stymied". Here was a baby whose mother showed instability and for whom paternity was not
established. Thus because the worker was getting "nowhere" with Winnifred she became more and more concerned to get a "social" history as background information in helping to place the baby. Winnifred countered by placing her child privately and saying to the worker "The adopting mother was satisfied with the baby and wouldn't give it up, no matter how many babies Winnifred had had!"

In this particular instance the lack of understanding between Winnifred and the worker made interpretation regarding Agency policy impossible, and the worker's concern over the eventual fate of the child made her over-anxious to obtain all the information possible, thus antagonizing the client. There are many examples of such situations throughout the records, showing how the worker's emphasis on the establishment of paternity before she had established a relationship with the mother, alienated the mother and led her to a private placement, almost as if it were to "spite" the worker.

Examples of More Recent Cases.

In going through the files to cull out the recidivists, a few unmarried mothers were noted who had first been known to the Agency in 1946, and had since that time become repeaters. It was thought that it would be interesting to look at one or two of these cases, which were chosen at random, in order to see if it might be possible to point up contrasts between the older cases and these most recent ones. Of the six mothers, five were judged to be of average intelligence
(by clinic testing) and one was definitely subnormal. One was a ward and had been known to the Agency for some time but the others were referred in the last month or so of pregnancy.

Mable had a child in January 1946, and another in February of 1948. She came from a broken home and had had a most unhappy childhood. Mabel's step-mother married her father when Mabel was only 2 years old, and Mabel claimed that she had only learned this very recently. This may have been the very factor that precipitated the illegitimate pregnancy. When first known to the Agency, Mabel was helped to get a light house-work job through the Employment Service. As the time of confinement drew near, she was admitted to the United Church Home. This, according to Agency procedure, meant a change of workers. At that time the matron of the home was a most demanding person, who herself required very delicate handling. It was considered from the Agency standpoint that work could be better channeled through one worker who alone was responsible for the unmarried mothers in the home. Indeed, in this particular instance, changing workers at this most critical time did not apparently upset Mabel, who formed actually a better relationship with the new worker. In other cases a change of workers at such a time has proved disastrous, as a subsequent example illustrates. In the home, Mabel had no plans for the future—nor did she want to make any. She was content to have her needs taken care of, and was sure that the putative father would marry her. When he was traced and it was discovered he was a married man, Mabel reacted by repudiating
the baby violently and wanted to have it placed for adoption. However, when the child was born, her fantasy of having a home and husband was so great that Mabel said she did not believe the army records which said the putative father was married. She was sure he would return to marry her. The worker tried to make her realistic, but to no avail. Mabel was determined to keep the child, and so was assisted to find a private boarding home to care for her and her child. Once again she was perfectly satisfied with the solution, claiming she was only "waiting" for the putative father to come.

Here was a girl whose dependency wishes were so great that she almost seemed to have identified herself with her child, and to have been looking for a loving "father" person to take care of her. Mabel related on a very surface level to the third worker, but was still in a "dream" world when the case was closed on her return to the home of a married sister. The next time Mabel came to the attention of the Agency on referral from the hospital, where she had already given birth to her second child. A new worker interviewed her and found Mabel seclusive and shy, and wrapped in daydreams. All she wished was to meet some man who would take care of her and her children. She had told the putative father of her pregnancy, hoping he would marry her, but once more she had been "let down". Mabel knew she could not care for two children, and wanted this one made a ward, so that "if she got married she could get it back". Obviously this was a very deprived and very sick girl, who had retreated far from reality into a fantasy life, where
she was loved and cherished. It is doubtful if anything short of psychiatric care could have helped Mabel.

Dorothea gave birth to her first child when she was 20 years old. She herself came to the Agency for assistance when she was about seven months pregnant. In speaking to the intake worker, Dorothea was most upset. Her eyes filled with tears and she said she felt ashamed of being seen in her condition. Later Dorothea was seen by her district worker, who was a very warm, motherly person. To her Dorothea spoke of her home, which was in a remote area in the northern part of the province. She told of her lonely life there, where she had lived with her mother and stepfather. Dorothea's mother had come to Canada from Bohemia and married a farmer; when he died two years later she had two children. She then kept house for a man over thirty years older than herself and he married her. Dorothea was the child of this marriage, which was apparently a happy one. When Dorothea's father died he left her mother financially well taken care of. She, soon, however, entered into a common-law relationship with a man who squandered most of this money. She later married a man who drank heavily and with whom she was most unhappy. Finally she broke down mentally and had to be admitted to Essondale Mental Hospital, the diagnosis there being given as paranoidal schizophrenia.

Dorothea had a good relationship with her mother, had stayed with her faithfully, and was upset when she had to be committed. Dorothea had lived a lonely life, with a mother who was "queer" and had little or no companionship, as the nearest neighbor was
three miles away. She had known the putative father for about six years. He had wanted to marry her about three years previously, but she was too young. He then went into the army, but Dorothea met him again by chance and began to go out with him. When she became pregnant, Dorothea was absolutely certain "he would not let her down". As was then customary, Dorothea was seen by a worker at the Child Welfare Division, as she wished him approached regarding paternity. When contacted, it was discovered the putative father was married with children of his own. However, he admitted paternity, and agreed to pay a certain amount each month. He did not keep his bargain, and Dorothea projected all her resentment on to the Child Welfare Division.

Here is a girl who lost her father when a child, and who had led a very lonely life in a remote area, in the company for the most part of her mother, who was mentally unwell a great deal of the time. It would therefore seem as if Dorothea were likely to be emotionally a very sick girl.¹ She was able, however, to form a good relationship with a Children's Aid worker who talked with her about the approaching child birth, took her out shopping in her noon-hours, and was generally a warm, comforting, motherly person. Then Dorothea was moved to a

¹ "In general, it may be said that a child with a schizoid parent, may be liable to become a behaviour problem in cases of close mother-son or mother-daughter relationship ... when the mother becomes mentally sick or when she is removed to hospital." Lauretta Bender: "Behaviour Problems in the Children of Psychotic and Criminal Parents", Genetic Psychology Monograph, May 1937, Vol. 19, No. 2, p. 234.
work home outside of the worker's district and the case was transferred to another worker. Dorothea would come into the Agency to see her new worker and would ask for the old one, wanting to show her her child. Gradually things became more difficult; maintenance from the putative father was not forthcoming, Dorothea lost her mother substitute, and the record shows her as saying bitterly "no one wanted to help her—she was blamed for everything and had to face her responsibility alone". Towards the end of 1947, the hospital told the Agency that Dorothea was again illegitimately pregnant and asking for a therapeutic abortion, and refusing referral to the Children's Aid. When finally Dorothea had to come to them for help, she was seen by still another worker. At a later date Dorothea was examined by a psychiatrist who found she had a "mixed anxiety state coupled with depression". She is now in receipt of Social Allowance, using an alias to cover the fact that she is unmarried. She is full of feelings of guilt and inferiority, and showing marked indications of persecutory trends.

There is no doubt that this girl was suffering from deep-seated difficulties. There is also no doubt that losing her contact with the worker who was a mother substitute to her added to Dorothea's difficulties. It would seem imperative that a very careful evaluation of the personality pattern of the unmarried mother and of the relationship existing between her and her worker should be made whenever there is any question of a transfer to another worker, and that policy here should be flexible and adjusted to the needs of the client as far as
humanly possible.

These cases again exemplify the typically complex problems that face the social worker who deals with unmarried mothers. It is notable that in those instances where the mother was referred before the birth of the child, many of the referrals were very close to the time when the child would be born. The referral was therefore too late to assist the social worker materially in achieving her goal with the unmarried mother. In these cases, as in those referred after the birth of the child, it is evident that the social worker was unable to establish a good working relationship; few plans were able to be made for the mother's rehabilitation, and in general it would appear again that the circumstances surrounding the first pregnancy served to increase, rather than diminish, the mother's difficulties.
Part IV.

Chapter 11. Evaluation and Conclusion.
Chapter 11.

Evaluation and Conclusion.

"Evaluation looks forward in prognosis—or reflectively back on the success or failure of treatment". (Bertha Capen Reynolds: Learning and Teaching In The Practice of Social Work, p. 95.)

If there is one thing that is a common denominator in all these cases of recidivists, it is the fact that each and every one of the girls have severe personality difficulties. These difficulties appear to have arisen from unsatisfactory parent-child relationships in the early years of life. Superimposed on these as contributing factors are economic insecurity, ill health, and poor environment. Sometimes the factor that precipitates the girl into an illegitimate pregnancy may be her emergence into physical maturity, a casual attraction, the loss of a parent, or sudden release from a harsh restrictive environment. Whatever the combination of factors, they all "add up" to a girl with a disturbed personality pattern. If the personality of the unmarried mother is disturbed to the point where she is definitely psychotic, the community then recognizes the problem and psychiatric help is obtained for her. However, usually the mother's behaviour, while socially unsound, is not such as would make the lay person see the necessity of psychiatric help.

These are complicated circumstances. The public, while it has come a long way in modifying its censorious attitude to illegitimacy, has not yet achieved full understand-
ing of its implications. Consequently the resources in the community, both financial and otherwise, for the treatment and rehabilitation of the unmarried mother are definitely limited. At present the social agency is bearing the full weight of the problem. It cannot choose only those girls whom it thinks can be helped by casework treatment, but must take the girls as they come, and work with them and the community resources as they are.

In the cases discussed in the latter part of this study, it was to be expected that the unmarried mother of lower than average intelligence would not be materially assisted by casework treatment and so would eventually become a recidivist. However, it seemed reasonable to think that with a mother of higher intelligence, a different story would be told. This has not proven to be the case, and in practice it would appear that the degree of intelligence is not the major point facing the social worker who deals with the unmarried mother. The actual difficulty is much more intangible, and because of the synopsized form of the recordings used, it has been difficult to assess. It seems, however, to lie basically in the weakness of the actual contact of the unmarried mother with the social worker. This weakness in turn appears to be due to a number of factors.

One of the most obvious factors which weakens the worker's contact with the unmarried mother is the lateness of her referral to the social agency. This can only be corrected by careful interpretation to the general public of the needs of
the unmarried mother and the services the social agency renders on her behalf. The girls themselves need better information. To date social agencies have been noticeably chary of publicity because of the confidentiality of their work. However much can be learned from the way the public is being educated in other fields, and semi-professional articles released to the press and the better popular magazines would seem to offer an excellent channel for interpretation regarding the background and needs of the unmarried mother. Educational radio drama and films under the auspices of a mental health program would reach all sections of the country, and would portray the situation vividly.

Another factor which weakens the contact with these girls is the "peculiar personality" of the unmarried mother herself. Each case that has been discussed has pointed up the great difficulty the worker has in getting the unmarried mother to accept and trust her. The whole attitude of a girl in trouble is hostile and wary, and it takes consummate skill on the part of the social worker to break down this distrust. It is gradually being realized that it is wise for the worker to "make haste slowly"; in particular, that premature questioning regarding intimate facts in the mother's life only increase her hostility and distrust. At the time the cases discussed in this study were active, it was the prevailing policy that the unmarried mother had to be interviewed by a worker from the Child Welfare Division "to establish the facts of paternity". Thus, the Agency worker would no sooner make her contact with
the girl than it would be necessary to refer the mother to another social worker in another agency. The mother would then have to detail the most intimate facts in her personal relationships to a person who was an utter stranger to her. It began to be realized that this policy was extremely poor, and it has since been abandoned, so that the social worker now has one less handicap to overcome in making her contact with the unmarried mother.

The emphasis on the need for the establishment of paternity of the child was a real point of pressure with the social worker because she knew that, if it were not established, the chances for placing the child permanently were considerably diminished, especially if (as in the present examples) the mother was a "repeater". It is now being recognized that the mother will give this information without pressure to obtain it if her present needs are met and she feels comfortable and secure with the worker. Accordingly the emphasis has swung away from the immediate need to establish paternity. This has had the result also of making the social worker feel much more relaxed in her initial contact with the unmarried mother.

Another factor which weakened the worker's contact with the unmarried mother was the lack of available psychiatric consultation and guidance. It has been truly said that "the art of social work is learned by experience illumined by theory". In the cases under discussion, the facilities of the Child

1 Bertha Capen Reynolds: *Learning and Teaching in the Practice of Social Work*, p. 95.
Guidance Clinic were requested primarily as a means of assessing the intelligence of the unmarried mother, and, on that basis, to then ask whether or not the child could be considered adoptable. In no case was an assessment made of the girl's personality needs with a view to her possible treatment and rehabilitation. This is understandable, in view of the pressure of work and the dearth of psychiatrists during the war years, and will be rectified as more psychiatric help becomes available for consultation.

**Community Resources.**

This leads to the final link in the chain of factors which make up the relationship between the worker and the unmarried mother. This is the very great defect in community organization at the employment level. It was impossible for the worker to channel the mother's interests into work which was more remunerative and more rewarding in its satisfactions, as these opportunities were simply not available. In consequence, the mother reverted to her usual employment as a waitress or domestic—neither well paid nor satisfying in character. Usually too, there was not sufficient follow-up work done with the mother after the birth of the child. This of course was due to the large case loads and the shortages and changes in professional staff. It is now being recognized that the unmarried mother is very vulnerable in the interval following the birth of her child, and that she needs active support and guidance from the social worker more than ever at this time.
As more professional staff becomes available, it should prove possible to give this type of continuing service.

From the foregoing, it is evident that the social agency is carrying responsibility for the treatment and eventual rehabilitation of the unmarried mother. It is attempting to rectify the immediate situation of the unmarried mother and her child. To cope with the situation adequately, however, it is necessary to come to grips with the problem of these girls' inter-personal relationships before they thrust themselves upon our attention by their climax in illegitimacy. This means, of course, a broadening and strengthening of all existing family and child welfare service. It is only as the public realizes the lasting effects of poverty, bad housing, and disorganized home life on the personality of the child, that it will be possible to get at the roots of the personality disorders that later flower into unmarried motherhood. All children should be well fed, well clothed, and well housed. Any measure that increases the social security of the family automatically helps to decrease the tensions that lead to difficulties in later life. The public therefore must be educated to realize that it is essential that the social allowances paid to families that are in need are sufficient to provide a decent and healthful level of existence. At present a great deal of emphasis is falling on obtaining social security for the aged. This is necessary, admittedly, but other needs are not getting their due share of attention. There must be a recognition of the economic stress,
and the emotional strains that go with it, in the young family that is struggling along on the subsistence level of the social allowance or the mother's pension.

The recognition of the emotional and physical needs of the child must be so widespread that education for family living will permeate all groups, both lay and professional, until it is an accepted fact in the community. This means a general orientation in our educational system to a study of basic human needs and how they effect human relationships. Perhaps as good a way as any would be to start with the education of the expectant mother, which so far has stressed only the physical aspects of pregnancy and child care. This could go on to include recognition, in the well-baby centres and in the pre-school groups, of those children who are not developing at a normal rate, either mentally, emotionally, or physically. The mentally or physically retarded child could then be channeled into work in keeping with its abilities, and later could receive special training in fields for which it showed most aptitude. Job classification should be made for special cases, so that jobs could be given which would enable them to work up to the limit of their capabilities and which would prove both interesting and satisfying. The emotionally handicapped child should have the service of a guidance clinic to iron out his difficulties before they become too deep-seated.

Treatment and Personnel.

On the treatment side there is need for highly skilled,
sympathetic case workers. These workers should have a small case load and should have psychiatric consultation and supervision available to them. They should be able to give a more continuing service to enable the mother to make the transition to a more satisfying and more socially acceptable mode of living. Community resources should be explored with a view to finding family homes where the mothers could live following the birth of the child. Perhaps some of the older foster mothers could be used in this way. Such a home environment would protect the mother, and cushion her against the loneliness and insecurity she cannot help but experience during her period of rehabilitation. Finally, there should be vocational centres and funds available, regardless of residence laws, to train the mother in the job for which she shows the most aptitude.

In conclusion, some questions are posed which would seem to afford valuable discussion points within the agency. First, considerable difficulty was encountered in obtaining a list of recidivists. If future studies are to be made, the question arises as to whether it would be valuable to have each worker report these cases as she encounters them, so that a central index could be kept for future reference. It was also noted that sometimes it took the filing clerks several days to locate a file and the possibilities of a strict "recharge" system for the files arises. Face sheet material was usually incomplete and in many cases entirely lacking. Sometimes dictation was incomplete. These are all points that
reflect the large case loads and consequent pressure of work on the individual workers.

In view of the importance attached to the intake interview with the unmarried mother, this appears to be a point which merits study within the Agency. How are the initial intake interviews handled? Do they concentrate on factual information or on reassurance and quick contact with the district worker? Along this line too, might there not be careful scrutiny of any policy that routinely transferred the mother to another worker when she moved, either to another district within the city or into a maternity home? It would seem that whenever a transfer seems to be necessary, a careful analysis should be made of the relationship existing between the mother and the worker. In the past, due to difficulties in the personalities of the staff of one of the homes, Agency policy was laid down primarily for the convenience of the home. It is apparent that in many instances, a transfer between workers is exceedingly damaging to the mother at this particular time; now that a new matron is at the home, the Agency might work out a policy whereby individual workers could keep contact with their "own" mothers.

Then there is the question of temporary workers dealing with unmarried mothers on a casework basis. In the cases discussed, there have been examples of arguments for and against this. At the least, it would seem that the period of the mother's pregnancy should be carefully checked so that the worker's time at the Agency will not expire before plans for
the mother are finalized.

What of the use of work homes? Should they not be as carefully investigated, used and supervised as foster homes? Does the mother not need to be prepared before going into one as carefully as a child is prepared before being moved to a new environment?

Are the cases terminated too soon? It seems that usually contact is terminated when plans for the child are completed. In other words, the disposition of the child determines the length of our contact with its mother. Is this the proper emphasis? Is it not possible that the mother is in even greater need of casework service after she has disposed of her child?

When the child is deemed not adoptable, is the emphasis here weighted too much on the negative aspects? Can better ways of interpreting the relativity of adoption be worked out by the workers for their own, and their client's satisfaction? Do we need to revise our "standards" of adoptability?

Finally, how does all this tie in with the worker in the public agency? It would seem that these cases have demonstrated that the majority of such girls have deeply disturbed personalities and that it is exceedingly difficult for the social worker to establish a constructive relationship with them. It is also apparent that most of these mothers are actually in need of psychiatric consultation. Yet it is obvious that at present such consultation is the exception rather than the rule. The key to this stalemate seems to be
for the worker to be able to differentiate between cases, and to know which girls are too disturbed for the worker to be of more than supportive help. She can then concentrate her time on those girls who are not so seriously disturbed, and by patience and skill, establish a constructive relationship with time. The motto for all such workers, both in public or private agencies, would seem to be incorporated in the advice given in a report of a Seminar held by the St. Louis Children's Aid Society in 1941: "Go slow . . . meet immediate needs . . . win her confidence . . . of such minutiae is the casework relationship constructed."
APPENDIX.
Bibliography.

I. General References.

BOOKS


PAMPHLETS, ARTICLES, REPORTS, ETC.


II. Specific References.

BOOKS

Francis L. Adkins: Illegitimacy in Cook County, Council of Social Agencies, Chicago, 1935.


**PAMPHLETS, ARTICLES, REPORTS, ETC.**


Canadian Welfare Council Publication #46; Ottawa, published 1929, revised 1945, "Legislation of Canada and Her Provinces Affecting the Status and Protection of the Child of Unmarried Parents".


Children's Aid Society Annual Reports, Vancouver, B.C.

Children's Bureau Publication #77; 144; 310: U.S. Government, Washington, D.C.


Mildred Corner: "Importance of the Initial Interview with the Unmarried Mother", F. S. A. A. Pamphlet, 1947.


Shirley Harrison: "A Comparative Study of Behaviour Problems in Illegitimate and Legitimate Children", Studies of Smith College School of Social Work, Dec. 1944, p. 120.


Welfare Council of Metropolitan Los Angeles, Publication #3, 1946, "Unmarried Parenthood - A Study of 1839 Unmarried Parenthood Cases in 1944".
