

AN EXPLORATION OF THE INTERACTIONAL FIELD SET UP BY  
SOCIAL WORK INTERVENTION IN COMMUNITY PROCESS

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## ABSTRACT

This study is the initiating phase of a long-range attempt to examine social work intervention in community life. It raises the question "Is it possible to identify both the theoretical concepts which accurately describe community interactions set up by social work intervention, and the variables which are operative in those interactions?"

A good deal of attention has been given in recent years to social work attempts to enhance community life. Sociological and other material has been utilized to build social work theory and practice specifics related to community social change and development, but little precision has been achieved. There has been a preoccupation with theory-building itself, particularly in the area of conceptual models, and with social problems in community life, so that systematic observations of what happens when social workers intervene in communities are virtually non-existent.

This study has a theory base which seeks to take account of the work that has been done in this area while bearing upon the concrete operations undertaken by actors in community interactions. The major concepts identified as useful for this purpose are: interactional field, action system, intervention, change agent, task and maintenance processes, horizontal and vertical linkages, social process, social structure, social change, and stimuli for social processes.

The design of the study lends itself to a field study which can explore variables in observed interactions while making no specific attempt to explore the interactions between variables. An interview schedule is the data-collection instrument utilized.

The study reached completion of the pre-test stage, wherein two community action episodes involving social workers were studied. No effort

was made to analyze data with reference to the variables themselves; the analysis was confined to the implications of the data for the utility and potential utility of the study formulation, design, and instrument.

The conclusion drawn at this stage is that the study has potential for the discovery of the variables in interactional fields in community life, if it is modified and applied to an appropriate sample of action episodes. A series of recommendations for the revision of weak elements in the study are submitted for the use of persons interested in continuing the study. These recommendations embrace such issues as the sample size, data-collection revisions (language, explicitness, reliability), number of respondents in each action-episode, continuity of data collection from study formulation, specific instructions for data-collection procedures, and the nature of general hypotheses that might be attempted.

The study team are optimistic about the promise held out by this line of inquiry for the achievement of a better understanding of the genericity and specificity of social work operations which result from the interaction of method and field in community-oriented social work practice.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

#### PRELIMINARY STATEMENT

This is a study about social work intervention into community life. Hopefully it represents the first of a series of studies of increasing precision which will eventually describe the nature of the interaction which occurs as a result of social work intervention. Such a description would reveal whether or not there are patterns of interaction in social work intervention episodes. If patterns emerge, they should have considerable significance for the formulation and execution of social work practise in and with communities.

Initially, what is required is a theoretical base upon which to build a rough description of the elements in social work interaction and the extent of the interactions that are produced. Then an appropriate study design may be adopted to gain entry to the field so that some data may be extracted. Hypotheses about relationships between variables discovered in this way can perhaps be developed for further study, and eventually for field experimentation.

The importance of accurate descriptions of such interactional fields is that the information lends itself to the selection of relevant knowledge from other disciplines and the choice of appropriate roles and techniques for social workers seeking to induce social change at the community level. It also helps to provide a framework for judging the implications of social change; who is affected, and how, by attempts to produce social change in community life.

A crucial assumption upon which this study, and indeed all social work interaction is based is that rational social change is or may be bene-



ficial. If this study helps to move social work operations to a more rational base for inducing social change, then community life and individuals participating in it will be enhanced by the exploration of this particular aspect of social work practice.

#### Difficulties Encountered in Developing the Study

The major difficulty presenting itself in the fashioning of this study has been the paucity of theory specifics in the components of social work intervention, the nature of community and its processes, and social change. There are conceptual models of community action and of social work activities in developmental and in planning areas, and a wealth of descriptive material about varieties of community, but little unifying theory about the components of interactional fields set up by community members, or by community members in conjunction with social work intervention.

Very little research has been done on the specifics of community activity. Without the precedent of such studies only a roughly-fashioned exploration to achieve some purchase upon the slippery, elusive phenomenon that is community action may be attempted.

The choice of a design for the study to meet the requirements of an adventure into the obscurities of a little-examined area of social life is both important and perplexing. What is needed is a design that will permit freedom of movement, because there are so few "knowns", and yet will provide some built-in limitations so that a realistic focus may be acquired.

Since we know very little about the variables in community action, it seems appropriate to adopt a design which will enable us to explore this area to determine some of the variables that are operative. It does not seem practical to attempt to explore relationships between variables at this initial stage. This gives us some freedom of movement and a set of limitations upon the ambitions of the study.

### Major Decisions Taken to Develop the Study

The decisions that have been made to bring the study from notion to reality are in three main areas.

A series of ~~decisions~~ have been made about the choice of conceptual material included in the theory-base. A community action model based on systems theory will be used for descriptive purposes. The dynamics of interaction will be observed in terms of a structure-process type of movement. The conscious elements in the intervention activities of the worker will be looked at in terms of task and maintenance processes. The implications of the variables for social work operations will be expressed in the framework of social work methodology interacting with a "field of practice" - in this case a particular aggregate of community processes - to produce a certain kind of social work practice.

The complexities of such an undertaking are further magnified by the limitations of time, imposed by the academic year, and of resources from which to draw a sample of the kind of interactional field that is to be explored. The compromise necessitated by these factors is that the seven months of time and two episodes available will be utilized to develop the study to the pre-test of data-collection stage, with an analysis of the instruments used to gather data. Some recommendations for revision are likely to be forthcoming as the pre-test experience is analyzed, and there may be an opportunity to hypothesize certain relationships between variables.

The matters set forth in this brief introduction will be developed to an operational level in the ensuing chapters. Chapter Two summarizes the existing knowledge relevant to the study, and offers a theory base, extracted from this review of the literature, upon which the study may be built.

Chapter Three contains an explication of the research design, the main questions that concern the study, the assumptions and concepts requiring definition, and the data-collection plan.

Chapter Four includes the study findings, their analysis, and their implications for practice and for the methodology used to research them.

Chapter Five contains the conclusions and recommendations for modifying the study design.

## CHAPTER II

## THE THEORETICAL BASE AND REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter sets forth a review of the theoretical material available on the subject area of the study, and a formulation of the theory base used for it.

The community organization method in social work is undergoing continuing study by the profession because of a felt need to develop greater exactness in the application of theoretical knowledge to practical social work operations. "Since the 1920's the conceptualization of community organization in social work practice has been concerned primarily with purpose, the nature of the community, the community as a "client"...the role(s) of the worker, the relationship of administration and social action to community organization practice, the locus of practice and the knowledge base". (57, p. 177).

The last two decades have seen the introduction of new concepts and theoretical formulations from sociology and social psychology to the analysis and understanding of community organization practice. Such conceptualizations have opened it up to a fresh analysis with concepts which capture aspects that practitioners can readily recognize and that are amenable to empirical research. Concepts and theories borrowed from the social sciences such as organizational analysis, systems theory, role theory, the power structure, and planned change have given the community organization method a greater degree of sophistication and a broader knowledge base. Floyd Hunter, James Coleman, Ronald Lippitt and his associates, and Roland L. Warren (B, 4, 17, 31) have made major contributions in applying the theories of the social sciences to the Community Organization Method as have many other writers in this field. While such works have broadened the horizons of community organization and given a clearer understanding of the dynamics

of the community process, and the nature of the practitioner's intervention into this process, many issues remain unresolved. There remains a general feeling that efforts should be made to press on to identify the significant practice specifics and theories that may emerge in the study of the interaction between this social work method and a particular field of practice.

If a theoretical base for operations is to be achieved, the community organization method, like any other, has to be identified and studied in interaction with a particular field of practice. It must be examined and analyzed within a conceptual framework that permits the exploration of the relevance of applied specifics of theory to practice in a particular field.

Beginning studies of this kind of interaction can be significant if generic social work methodology is introduced, rather than community organization methodology specifically. It is an assumption of this study that generic social work methodology will vary the interaction. If this holds, then it can also be assumed that community organization methodology will vary the interaction in a similar manner. The precise differences in variance will not be observable at the level of an exploratory study to describe the major variables in a field.

The stage of development of community organization practice (Social work practice in the community organization method) does not permit the application of an exact methodology, precisely because of gaps in the theoretical knowledge base needed to formulate an explicit methodology. Yet a clear idea of what is meant by and included in repeatable social work activities is necessary to a study of such methodology as a variable in outcomes of social process. The same needs to be said of our understanding of the scope of community development as a field of practice.

In 1959 a three-year effort was launched by the Committee On Community Organization of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) to clarify community organization practice. This Committee's work culminated in the

publication in December 1962 of "Defining Community Organization Practice", which presented a working definition of community organization practice. (37) The immediate impetus for this attempt was the effort of the N.A.S.W. Commission on Social Work Practice to define the generic base of all social work practice in terms of "a constellation of value, purpose, sanction, knowledge, and method. No part alone is characteristic of social work practice nor is any part described...unique to social work practice. It is the particular content and configuration of this constellation which makes it social work practice and distinguishes it from the practice of other professions". (57, p. 185) Thus, in 1962, the N.A.S.W. document Defining Community Organization Practice attempted to translate the generic formulations of social work practice into the specifics of the community organization method.

Significant points in this document are noted as follows:

- "(1) The consistency of generic social work values with community practice.
- (2) The duality of purpose, with equal stress on strengthening the community's capacity for problem-solving and on achievement of selected social goals.
- (3) The widespread auspices, public and private, for the practice of community organization.
- (4) The description of the knowledge sources for practice, especially the community as a social system.
- (5) The description of the method practiced in community problem-solving. This includes the community as a "client system", the worker's role, and the problem-solving approach. It also includes the worker's activities in the identification of the "client system", community assessment, problem identification and diagnosis, mobilization of community energy and resources, development of plans of action, evaluation and maintenance of change processes, building lines of communication, leadership development, use of conflict, management of power and inter-disciplinary emphasis. The worker must be aware of community dynamics, individual behavior and social problems.
- (6) The description of techniques used by the practitioner in applying the method in specific settings, such as structuring, social action management, formal study, expert consultation, demonstration, and preparation of plans." (57, p. 186)

## The Concept of Fields of Practice in Social Work

"A field of practice" can.....be distinguished from a social work method. The distinction between....(the two)...must be made explicit to achieve conceptual clarity." (37 p. 1) Failure to distinguish between a field of practice and a social work method has contributed to many conceptual difficulties in Social work literature over the years.

In 1956 the Council on Social Work Education (C.S.W.E.) in its "Report of the Committee on Specializations in Social Work Education" indicated that there was a difference between the idea of a field of practice and a social work method. (58) The latter was referred to as a social work "process" such as social casework, social group work or community organization, or, as more generally used, as a social work "method."

In attempting to define Community Organization Practice, the National Association of Social Workers (37) took special cognizance of the distinction made between a field of practice and a social work method. Earlier work by Alfred Kahn had envisioned a "field of practice" as being the characteristics of a particular field such as public assistance, family welfare, child welfare, corrections, school social work, psychiatric agencies and community planning. Kahn also identified criteria by which to guide judgements as to whether there does exist a field of practice in which social work methodology is found and can function. (41, p. 9)

Prior to this, Harriett Bartlett (34) had suggested that the characteristics of a particular field of practice, such as the problem or condition of central concern; the system of organized services; the body of knowledge, values and method; the sociocultural attitudes in society; the characteristic responses and behavior of persons served, color the social work practice in any particular field. In short, "the specific characteristics of a social work method is the resultant intersection between the essential elements in social work methods and the characteristics of the particular field in which it is practised." (37, p. 3)

Alfred Kahn had stated that

"it is unrealistic to pretend that any particular social work practice is like all other social work practice. On the contrary, the distinction both by "field of practice" and by core methods has proved helpful. This is true despite the fact that it is possible to analyze the "field of practice" statements on a relatively high level of abstraction and to conclude that there is much similarity and overlapping. It was this discovery that established the foundation for the idea of generic social work. In fact, "generic" refers to rather abstract propositions. Remember, however, that the practitioner moves from these higher abstractions to operational principles on a lower level of abstraction and that these principles are focused on the specifics in a given agency, with a given clientele, and with given sanctions and goals. The particular ways in which these elements combine give us the different fields of practice. While there is generic theory, there is no generic practice. To ignore the fields would thus be to ignore the daily realities of practice and the task of preparing new practitioners." (41pp.7-8)

The work of Bartlett, Kahn, and the Council of Social Work

Education suggests, therefore, that the three social work methods, (social casework, social group work and community organization) have varied styles and take on distinctive characteristics which are dependent upon the field of practice to which they are applied.

With the above conceptualizations in mind Meyer Schwartz and the Committee for a Working Definition of Community Organization Practice hypothesized that,

"a particular social work method, eg: Community organization, takes on certain characteristics when it is applied in a particular field of practice. These distinctive characteristics may be illustrated as recurring patterns of emphasis on certain kinds of values, purposes, sanctions, knowledge and methods, with worker roles distinctive to the field of practice in which the social work practice of community organization is enacted." (37p.3)

Schwartz points out that fields of practice are not static. For example, community organization practitioners describe themselves as practising in the fields of "urban renewal and redevelopment", "mental health" and "community development". These fields of practice are not, however, suggested in the CSWE and NASW tentative listings of fields of practice.



Alfred Kahn acknowledges this when he states that

"most difficult is the quantitative question - the "cut-off point". At what point are the demands of a field sufficiently different to justify separateness? Obviously there is no one answer for all times about a given field since there are several dynamic variables; changing institutions and organizations in a changing social milieu; changing social work knowledge, attitudes, skills; changes in other professions". (41 p. 13)

Kahn states further that, "if the profession remains flexible and open to change, three processes will continuously occur.

(1) New "fields" will constantly bid for attention, and some of these will deserve recognition. They will arise in response to new social problems or in a specialized differentiating route from older fields, such as the psychiatric once arose from the medical.

(2) Old fields will contribute to the generic social work core, thus decreasing their distinctiveness.

(3) Existing fields will, in consequence discover that an earlier "uniqueness" no longer exists and that new combinations may be more functional for the profession." (41 p. 13)

#### The Working Definition of Community Organization Practice

"attempts to be an umbrella to cover the practice of community organization in various fields of practice, however, the suggestion is raised: that "if and when we examine more closely the various categories of auspice for the practice of community organization will we discover that the field of practice is actually a number of sub-fields of practice in a general field called "community planning" with quite distinctive characteristics.... eg. "community welfare planning on the city-wide level", "neighborhood work", "federated fund raising", governmental social planning", community development and the life? And will we find as we redefine the subfields of practice of "community planning" that there are quite different constellations of factors that give rise to certain kinds of specific practice...All this gives rise to certain kinds of values, knowledge, method and techniques utilized in this subfield, having a profound effect on the kind of community organization social work practice that is necessary to be effective in this subfield." (37 pp. 32-33)

The same might be said for other subfields such as community development and "urban renewal and redevelopment" and governmental social planning".

It is the opinion of Meyer Schwartz and his Committee that the real "pay-off" of the Working Definition of Community Organization Practice will come when it is related to studies of various fields of practice and the theoretical practice specifics related to them. Schwartz thus stresses the need for detailed studies of fields of practice and their characteristics as they influence, shape, fashion and mold the specific social work practice of community organization.

Social work is practiced in relation to organizations and social institutions or more broadly, in relation to social systems, and it is generally recognized that there are differences between and among these social systems. Now when the specific characteristics of an organization, institution or social system - or cluster thereof - so shape the "specific" as to make a significant difference in social work practice, this is known as a "field of practice". A "field of practice" then, is characterized by a pattern of emphasis, orientation, adaption and specific integration of elements in generic social work as demanded by the requirements of the social system or clusters of social systems.

Kahn identifies eight basic components of a field of practice which are as follows:

- "(1) There must be involved a definite social institution or institutions or a series of interrelated complex organizations.
- (2) There must be a clientele for whom specific social work services are appropriate.
- (3) Society defines and delegates to the social worker a point of entry to a set of tasks and problems related to the particular institution(s) or organizations.
- (4) There is actual or potential compatibility of the goals of the organizations and social institution(s) and of social work.
- (5) There is involved a contribution by social work to the character and goals of the social institution.
- (6) The practice of social work in a given field involves a constant assessment and development of the various core methods and their use.

- (7) The required adaptations, emphases and integrations are of a dimension, scope and complexity that demand continued attention in practice and education.
- (8) The required adaptations, emphases, and integrations are of a dimension, scope and complexity that cannot strategically and economically be incorporated within the scope of any other field of practice or fully absorbed at once within the generic core". (4lp.9)

A field of practice is, therefore, seen as being comprised of a constellation of factors, two of which are structure and process. By structure is meant the relationships between a number of interacting social systems or units and by process is meant the natural and progressive movement and activity of these social systems in interaction as they deal with one or more problems in their physical and/or social environment. Included in the constellation of other factors are the special characteristics of the social system(s) such as, the problem condition of central concern, the socio-economic and cultural characteristics of the social system(s), the characteristic responses and behavior of persons served, and the pattern of emphasis, orientation, adaptation and specific integration of elements in generic social work as demanded by the requirements of the social system or cluster of social systems. It is the uniqueness of a particular field of practice that is believed to characterize a particular social work method when applied to that field. In other words, social work methodology is believed to take on unique and identifiable characteristics when applied to various fields of practice.

It is suggested by Meyer Schwartz (37p.33) that within each field of practice, subfields may exist which require social work methodology to become even more specific, when applied in subfields. The specific sub-field may require more emphasis on the various methods, techniques, skills, and knowledge of any particular social work method; a movement from the generic elements to the more specific; a movement from higher levels of abstraction to operational principles on a lower level of abstraction.

Subfields of practice can be reduced to a lower level of abstraction which takes into consideration the specific practice settings within subfields of practice. At this level of abstraction one might hypothesize that social work methodology will take on more detailed and specific characteristics depending upon such factors as agency structure, sanction and mandate, specific problems of concern, power structure, systemic linkages, and socio-economic characteristics. At this level of abstraction, social work methodology and social work roles become as specific, operational and specialized as the setting demands.

Before one can determine the distinctive characteristics of a social work method enacted in a particular field of practice, the characteristic elements of the particular method must be examined at lower levels of abstraction or in interaction with various subfields of practice and specific practice settings. After this is done it may be possible to then factor out the unique elements of that method, in each subfield of practice, from the generic elements. These generic elements of the social work method can then be said to be "core" elements of the particular social work method when enacted in the particular field of practice.

For the purposes of this study, community development is identified as a field of practice characterized by broad social change and citizen participation, with a focus on modifying institutions and community life to better serve both participating and non-participating community members. Community development as a field of practice encompasses "organized efforts to improve conditions of living in a community, and involves (1) the application of technology and/or expert services from outside the community, and (2) the enlistment of self-help and cooperative participation on the part of the residents of the community". (10p.501) Ernest Harper and Arthur Dunham point out that the term "community development" is usually applied primarily to villages and communities. Earlier writers tended to restrict

community development to under-developed or pre-industrial countries but in recent years it has come to be seen as encompassing activities aimed at developing self-help and local initiative in urban or rural settings in both "developed" and "underdeveloped" countries.

Urban community development is a sub-field of practice characterized by neighbourhood social change and citizen participation with a focus on modifying vertical institutions and horizontal patterns in community life. The key words are "urban" and "development". This sub-field is set in sections of urban areas, and its focus is citizen participation in developmental as opposed to planning or coordination processes. The latter two are seen as separate fields of practice in community organization.

A review of definitions of community development reveals that it is regarded widely as a process. This study also defines fields of practice in terms of process, in relation to structure and other factors. These other definitions do not disprove the contention here that community development is a field of practice, but they do provide descriptions of the kinds of processes that may be found within the field as defined for the purposes of the study.

Carl C. Taylor (60) writing on the topic "Community Development Programs and Methods" identifies four main steps in community development which are as follows:

- (1) Systematic discussion of common felt needs by members of the community.
- (2) Systematic planning to carry out the first self-help undertaking that has been selected by the community.
- (3) Mobilization and harnessing of the physical economic and social potentials of local community groups.
- (4) The creation of aspiration and the determination to undertake additional community improvement projects.

"Basically community development is a social process by which human beings can become more competent to live with and gain some control over local aspects of a frustrating and changing world. It involves cooperative study, group decisions, collective action, and joint evaluation that leads to continuing action. It calls for the utilization of all helping

professions and agencies that can assist in problem solving. But personality growth through group responsibility for the local common good is the focus. The emphasis shifts from improvement of facilities, of economic life, and even of public opinion that supports community atmospheres, important as these are, to improvement in people. But the personal betterment is brought about in the midst of social action that serves a growing awareness of community need." (2, pp. 78-79)

The clearest definition of the goal of community development is that it places primary emphasis on human resource development and secondary emphasis on social change and completion of specific projects. Community development as a field of practice "stresses the value of cooperation, usually seeks to avoid conflict, attempts to organize people around positive goals stated in positive terms, rather than discontent or conflict, and helps to alter the attitudes of people toward change." (26, p. 58)

Roland L. Warren describes community development as being "a process of helping community people to analyze their problems, to exercise as large a measure of autonomy as is possible and feasible, and to promote a greater identification of the individual citizen and the individual organization with the community as a whole. Through such a process, communities may be helped to confront their problems as effectively as possible." (31, p. 20) It is felt that this deliberate attempt by community people to work together to guide the future of their communities and the development of a corresponding set of techniques for assisting community people in such a process is in itself an important advance in the current changes taking place in American and Canadian communities.

Irwin Sanders points out that community development is

"a process of change from a condition where one or two people or a small elite within or without the local community make a decision for the rest of the people, to a condition where the people themselves make these decisions about matters of common concern; from a state of minimum to one of maximum cooperation; from a condition where few participate to one where many participate; from a condition where all resources and specialists come from outside to one where local people make the most use of their own resources etc." (25 pp. 407-408)

As earlier stated, community development is not confined to activities with pre-industrial countries, nor is it necessarily concerned solely or even primarily with industrial development.

"The term is coming to be used increasingly in the United States and Canada to denote activities which have as an important focus the strengthening of the horizontal pattern in local communities. Much of what is considered community development abroad would not fall within the present definition for the activities involved frequently do not aim primarily at strengthening the horizontal pattern of the local community, but rather at accomplishing some specific objective such as changing methods of agriculture, improving the industrial base, improving sanitation, increasing literacy, and so on."(31pp.324-325)

A comparative awareness of the importance of helping communities to become more effective by strengthening their horizontal pattern has become apparent in the growing field of community development. Social workers and others active in this field have become specifically aware of the importance of the goal of strengthening the horizontal pattern and of the process through which specific task goals are achieved. It is generally believed by practitioners in this field of practice that "unless and until self-perpetuating groups are developed, communities as such have not developed no matter how many things have been done for them".(60p.528)

#### Aspects of Community Organization Methodology Examined.

Aspects of methodology in social work practice that are of particular interest to this study are the practitioner's differential emphasis upon enhancing task and maintenance processes of community action systems as he intervenes into community process.

Mildred Barry (33) suggests that the community organization practitioner is a catalyst who when intervening in the community situation, enables the community organization process to occur. The worker brings to the community attributes which are indicative of his part in the community organization process and serve to point up the knowledge and skill he needs in order to do his job effectively. According to Barry, these attributes are:

- "(1) A Social philosophy;
- (2) Knowledge and understanding of individuals and their behaviour, groups and their behaviour, communities and their behaviour;
- (3) Conscious use of one's role as an enabling, helping person;
- (4) Ability to work with the existing community structure without being bound by it, to recognize that institutions as well as more do not change overnight and that there are strong loyalties to groups, to institutions, and to establish patterns of living;
- (5) Knowledge of the setting, structure, and fields of practice of public and voluntary agencies;
- (6) Skill in utilizing various methods and techniques; administration, interviewing, committee leadership, research, recording, and public and personal relations." (33 p. 242)

These are the skills, knowledge, values, methods and techniques that the worker must bring to the community if he is to meaningfully and purposefully intervene in the community organization process.

An area of knowledge that is valuable to social work practice is systems theory, because it is one way of describing interactions and relationships. A review of important concepts of "system" as related to community is included because of its usefulness for descriptive purposes.

"A social system is a structural organization of the interaction of units which endures through time. It has both external and internal aspects relating the system to its environment and its units to each other. It can be distinguished from its surrounding environment, performing a function called boundary maintenance. It tends to maintain an equilibrium in the sense that it adapts to changes from outside the system in such a way as to minimize the impact of the change on the organizational structure and to regularize the subsequent relationships." (31 p. 136)

The study of social systems focuses on certain relations that emerge when two or more persons interact with one another. Thus the units of analysis of a social system are not persons as such but selected aspects of interaction among persons, such as roles and social organization which refers to clusters of roles.

In general, systems may be regarded as being of two types; closed and open, the major difference being that closed systems are isolated from, whereas open systems are related to and exchange matter with, their environment". (11 p. 39) Living organisms are examples of open systems. It should be noted, however, that the distinction between open and closed systems



is never absolute. There is no system that is completely isolated from its environment and similarly there are no living organisms which tend to act like closed systems.

Hearn points out that,

"every order of system with the exception of the smallest, has subsystems, and all but the largest are a part of a supra-system consisting of the system in its environment. There are factors in both the system and the environment which effect their respective structure and function. Such factors in a system or its subsystem are called variables, whereas those systems in the environment are called parameters."(11p.42)

Every system has a boundary which distinguishes it from its environment. The boundary of a system has been defined as "that region where greater energy is required for transmission across it than for transmission immediately outside that region or immediately inside it".(46p.516) Everything that is external to the boundary of a system can be described as its environment.

Talcott Parsons and others have developed a theory of social systems which they define as a system of interactive relationships of a plurality of individual actors. A society therefore is not only a social system but also a very complex network of interacting and interdependent subsystems, each of which is equally authentically a social system. Groups, communities, and societies are essentially living systems, or they are in Parson's terms social systems.

For Parsons a social system is defined as "two or more units related such that a change in the state of any unit, XI, will be followed by a change of state in the remaining units which in turn is followed by a change in the state of unit XI, etc."(22p.402) Put more simply a social system is formed of two or more units in dynamic interaction with each other.

A social system therefore consists of persons arranged in some ordered fashion. This arrangement is the social structure of the system. Social process is the dynamic interplay of the subsystems in maintaining the total social system in a state of dynamic equilibrium. Social structure and

social process are limited by function. Thus if the social work practitioner wishes to understand social life at any level of abstraction, be it at the individual, family or small group or community level, then consideration must be given to the relationship between structural features and the social process of the particular social system.

According to Loomis, a social system,

"is comprised of the patterned interaction of members, it is constituted of the interaction of a plurality of individual actors whose relations to each other are mutually oriented through the definition and mediation of a pattern of structured and shaped symbols and expectations". (18 p. 4)

Loomis identifies nine elements that constitute a social system: belief (knowledge); sentiment; end goal or objective; norm; status role (position); rank; power; sanction; and facility, each of which is articulated as a process.

Homans' definition of a social system is derived from his analysis of small groups. He feels that "the activities, interactions and sentiments of the group members, together with the mutual relations of those elements with one another during the time the group is active constitutes a social system." (12 p. 87)

Warren points out that

"when systems comprising groups of individuals, whether formally or informally structured are considered in their interrelationships as units of a still larger social system, they are often designated as subsystems. This indicates that they themselves are social systems, but at the same time they are part of a larger social system". (31 p. 138)

This concept is an important one in community analysis. The importance lies in the fact that to the extent that a community is a social system, many of its subsystems are at the same time subsystems of larger systems which extend beyond its borders.

In analyzing community as a social system it is necessary to consider the internal and external patterns involved. Homans identifies the external systems of a social system as "group behaviour that enables the system to

survive in its environment" and the internal system as "group behaviour that is an expression of the sentiments towards one another developed by the members of the group in the course of their life together". (12p.109) This coincides roughly with a distinction between task processes and maintenance processes of social systems.

"In order to accomplish its purpose with respect to its environment a group must not only perform goal-oriented tasks, but it must also be able to keep its members so organized with respect to each other that they will continue to function as a group and perform tasks. There are two important aspects to this process of maintaining the organization of the group. One is what Homans called sentiment. This has to do with the positive feelings which group members develop toward each other and toward the group as a whole as they interact in performing the tasks to fulfill the group's purpose. Another aspect of this process has to do with the structural organization of the group members within which labor is divided, subtasks are performed and rewards are allocated". (31p.139)

Task processes of social systems are seen by Warren as being related to external system and involve the activities through which the interdependence of the members are maintained.

Jack Rothman deals with "delimited functional problem goals" and "gross functional capacity goals" in much the same way as Warren deals with the task and maintenance activities of a social system. Rothman identifies delimited functional problem goals

"as relating to the completion of concrete tasks or the solution of a delimited problem having to do with the functioning of the community social system. The purpose may be to strengthen or rationalize welfare services (coordination), to establish new ones, to change some aspects of the social structure that is detrimental to the community system or to a segment of its population". (55p.1)

These goals are variously noted in the literature as "social reform goals" or "social action goals" and they relate very closely to what Warren refers to as task functions of social systems.

"Gross functional capacity goals" are identified as those involving such aims as

"establishing cooperative working relationships among groups and individuals in the community, creating a self-sustaining and self-propelling community planning and problem-solving structure; stimulating interest and practices in the community; enhancing widespread identification with the community and its values; locating and developing indigenous leadership; and teaching a community problem solving methodology." (55, p. 2)

These goals and activities are somewhat similar, though by no means identical, to the maintenance activities of social systems outlined by Warren. These goals have a great deal in common with the objectives and aims of the community development process in communities as described earlier.

The "Gross functional capacity goals" of community social systems as identified by Rothman tend to be focused on enhancing the growth and maturity of the members of the social system rather than on the solution of a specific problem or on meeting a special need. Ross (24) sees these functions or goals as being instrumental in bringing about community integration and his whole orientation and approach tends to be focused primarily upon nurturing and fostering these activities within the community action system. The objective of such functions and activities is to increase competence in problem solving and to sustain fraternal interrelationships. It is this objective that John Turner stresses when he states that "community organization...must broaden its strategies in problem-solving from one of social problem management to include a community development or a human development approach." (61, p. 12)

#### Community Action Episodes

Roland Warren states that community actions are episodes.

"They have their beginnings and their endings. They are initiated to accomplish some purpose; they involve a process of organization and task performance in the direction of accomplishing the purpose, which in the process may be modified; then with the resolution of their effort the action subsides, and the episode finishes." (31, p. 308)

Community action episodes can thus be viewed as "action systems developing from their inception to their dissolution or transformation, in relation to the action task which they have been instituted to accomplish." (31 p. 320)

Warren states that "such actions, involving participation from a number of diverse community units in ways not customarily employed, are clearly within the concepts of community action. Almost by definition, they call for the establishment of a special action system.(31p.312) The special action system involved in the community action episodes, being a social system in its own rights, engages in both task performances and in system maintenance behaviour. By examining the processes of task performance and system maintenance of community action systems in light of the operational definitions given these processes herein, it should be possible to readily identify them and analyse the practitioner's attempts to enhance these processes as he intervenes into the total community problem-solving process.

Warren points out that community action episodes proceed through various stages of structure and process and he has attempted to formulate a model which will capture the various key stages in this process. He suggests a fivefold pattern which includes the following stages: "(1)initial systemic environment, (2)inception of the action system, (3)expansion of the action system, (4)operation of the action system, and (5)transformation of the action system." (31 p.315) Other models have been developed for analyzing community action episodes but this will be the one used for the purposes of this study.

The first stage in Warren's 5-stage model is the "Initial Systemic Environment" from which the action system emerges. Here, the community and the various social systems which constitute it are examined. The concern is with the ways in which the new community action system can be related to the existing systemic organization of the community; the condition of operation of the existing system which creates a favorable situation for the inception of the particular community action system; and the systemic patterns for community action that already exist in the community to which the community action system may be related in some functional way. This would include an

examination of the vertical and horizontal patterns within the community and the relative stage of development of each. Vertical patterns of a community are defined as "the structural and functional relation of its various social units and subsystems to extra community systems". The community's horizontal pattern is defined as "the structural and functional relation of its various social units and subsystems to each other". (31p.161) Warren feels that much current thinking about the relative stress given to task and maintenance processes in any particular community activity could be clarified considerably by viewing the systemic context out of which the current action arises, particularly its horizontal pattern.

The second stage of this model the "inception of the action system", deals with the action systems locus within the existing systemic environment. It may originate with a particular formal organization such as a welfare council or a PTA or it may originate with a smaller formal committee or informal clique of people within such an organization. It may originate within the informal structure of the community, in a clique of friends and neighbors, or it may arise principally on the initiative of local people or principally under the stimulation of an outside agent. In any case the important question is the relation of the newly instituted action system to those other systems in the community which the action system must eventually involve in various ways in order for the action to be accomplished. Pertinent factors in this relationship would be the linkages which the members of the action system at this stage have to various individuals and organizations in the community, both formally and informally.

The principal task of the action system at this stage is to define the accomplishment which is to result from the community action and to determine which elements of the community must be involved in order to assure this accomplishment. Since these activities take place within the boundaries of

the social system they are considered for the purposes of this study as aspects of the maintenance process taking place within the social system.

The third stage of Warren's model is concerned with the "Expansion of the Action System". In order to achieve its purposes there must be an expansion of the action system, for, almost by definition, the type of action which any particular initial action system is capable of accomplishing is not community action. This is an important concept in distinguishing between an "action system" and a "community action system". It obviously relates to the horizontal linkages of the members of the initial action system to other community or extra community systems. A group of parents in a city block concerned about the street lighting could not be considered a "community action system" until it had expanded its boundaries to include other citizen representatives concerned about the same problem on their streets.

The expansion of the initial action system in order to achieve horizontal linkages with other community systems involves by definition, activity which is external to the boundaries of the initial action system and therefore is seen, for the purposes of this study, as being a "task function".

The principal question to ask in the expansion stage is, "For what purpose are additional individuals or groups to be brought into the action system?" It is probably safe to say that in most cases the initial action system is expanded according to what is expected from different individuals or groups in the community either in the operational stage of the action system or later on.

Warren identifies the fourth stage in his community action model as the "Operation of the Expanded Action System". This phase includes the carrying out of an extensive operation involving a large number of people

or groups. It may actually constitute the stage in which the community action as such, gets done. Much of the activity at this stage will depend on the nature of the objectives of the active system in relation to any additional system or task accomplishment which it sets up.

The "Transformation of the Action System" is the final stage in Warren's model of community action episodes. As the community action ends, the action system may have various fates. It may have arisen to accomplish some task and then dissolve. It may have arisen to become transformed into a future action system. It may have arisen to accomplish a task involving the setting up of a future action system and then dissolve. Or the action system may have been more diffuse, involving simply the restructuring of the informal aspects of the total community, building up stronger horizontal ties through the diffuse relationship of a change agent working with community members to help them function more effectively together in a widely diverse set of contexts.

At this stage we are concerned with the systemic residue of the community action. What is left from the action, systematically, after the action episode is terminated? An important dimension is the formal or informal nature of the systemic relations which remain. A new organization has been established which can take other community action in the future or a set of informal relations has been established or strengthened which may likewise facilitate future action.\* (31)

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\*In this particular part of the section on "Community Action Episodes" the study has drawn its material almost exclusively from Roland L. Warren's analysis of community action systems in his book Community in America; Rand McNally & Co., Chicago, 1963, pp. 303-327.



There are a number of other conceptual models which attempt to describe what happens in communities in response to stimuli. Some descriptive material has been borrowed from these, notably from the Cox model, (36) which uses the terms "action system", "client system", "change agent", "change agency", and "other actors in the action system". The first part of this Cox's model has particular relevance for this study, and is included below.

#### A PROBLEM SOLVING MODEL OF COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION PRACTICE (36)

##### 1. Social Structure - Actors and Setting

###### A. Change Agency

1. Sponsors and funding
2. Sanctions and restraints

###### B. Change Agent

1. Identity
2. What he brings to the situation

###### C. Client System

1. Designation and population size of client system.
2. Location and history of population within the context of neighbouring systems.
3. Significant demographic, social and cultural divisions in the client system in the light of historical developments.
4. Developments that led up to the possibility of intervention by the agency (or worker).
5. Resources within the client system which are available or lacking to support this intervention which may include the development of a change relationship.

###### D. Action System

###### E. Neighboring systems and the client system's relation to them.

Other models reflect similarities in major stages of action identified. There is an environment before intervention, there are new relationships caused by it, there are actions taken on the basis of these relationships, and there is evaluation or consideration of the results of these actions. What is important is the fact of stages and patterns believed to be present in community social change related to intervention.

## Consideration of Various Aspects of Process

An essential consideration in exploring the relationship between the community organization method of social work practice and a particular field of practice is that of "process".

The Oxford Pocket Dictionary defines process as "the state of going on or being carried on; a series of connected actions or events" over a period of time. This is a general definition which permits process to be conceived of as both a natural occurrence, a logical sequence of connected natural events, and as a sequence that can be influenced by the actors within it. "Process" according to one definition in Webster's Dictionary, is a "series of actions, motions or operations, definitely conducting to an end, whether voluntary or involuntary....It denotes a progressive action or series of acts or steps".

Sociology has developed the concept of "social process" to describe connected actions or changes in social interaction, that is, transitions from one social condition to another. Social process is thus social interaction over a period of time which produces a sequence of actions or changes, or both in the situation of one or more persons in interaction with their environment and other actors within it. In its fundamental aspects, social process is a concept of movement, change, and flux. An important function of this concept has been to stimulate a sense of time dimension in social theory. Social process theory thus represents an important reaction against static theories and theories of structure.

The application of the sociological concept of process means that community organization in social work is concerned with ongoing, dynamic, changing manifestations of interaction. Another view of process that sheds light on one of its important aspects, points out that the word may refer to

a series of stages or activities through which individuals are expected to pass automatically. The supposed inevitable deterioration of a neighborhood is often assumed to be one example of this automatic process. This view implies an operational definition of process that stresses a progression from one event to another and from a lower to a higher stage of development.

Biddle and Biddle see "social process" as referring to

"a progression of events that are planned by the participants to serve goals they progressively choose. The events point to changes in a group and in individuals that can be termed growth in social sensitivity and competence. The essence of process does not consist in any fixed succession of events but in the growth that occurs within individuals, within groups and within the communities they serve."(2p.79)

There is a suggestion here that there are two kinds of social process, planned and unplanned. It is the assumption of this study that it is the aim and essence of social work intervention to bring some degree of rationale and order to natural, unplanned social process, in other words, to bring about planned change at the individual, small group and community levels.

A general definition of what is meant by "social work process" may help to develop this idea further. Friedlander describes it as

"the interaction between the client and the social worker; between the members of the group with one another and the group worker; and between individuals and groups in the community."  
(7p.148)

There are conscious strivings of individuals and of groups toward better social work functioning, and then there are the efforts made by social work practitioners intervening into this natural process to develop it into a more effective means of enhancing better social functioning.

When such a social work practitioner (here referred to also as a change agent) is not an individual in the situation, or a member of the group or community, who takes some sort of leadership in the process, but is a person from outside the system within which the process is taking place,

intervention is thus taking place in the process of change. Intervention, is, therefore operationally defined as the entry into a social process by an actor who adds a dimension to the action system.

When a social worker is the change agent this becomes "social work intervention" which is defined in another way as "all attempts by social workers to influence social processes. The social process engaged in by the community action system emerges as the crucial dynamic in problem-solving by a community.

Therefore, social work intervention into community life is an attempt to influence community social processes. In this context Ross says:

"There are other processes of dealing with community problems, but here we call the community organization process that by which the capacity of the community to function as an integrated unit grows as it deals with one or more community problems. Sometimes it may be a deliberate process, at other times it may simply be the way people choose to work together. The process, may, therefore, evolve without the assistance of the professional worker in it (the process) is something apart from him. But the task of the professional worker is to help initiate, nourish, and develop this process...to make the (community organization) process conscious, deliberative, and understood"(24p.39-40)

Ross points out that "there are essentially two aspects to the community organization process: one having to do with planning, and the second with community integration".(24p.50) In his view these two aspects of community organization process are each important in their own right and are inseparable parts of the one process. Planning is seen as

"an inclusive term to take in all aspects of the act, from identification of a problem to action in respect to it. What is involved is the process of locating and defining a problem (or a set of problems), exploring the nature and scope of the problem, considering various solutions to it, selecting what appears to be a feasible solution and taking action with respect to the solution chosen".(24p.50)

This process is practically synonymous with the task processes of social systems considered earlier if one recognizes the fact that a process is involved before a social system actually takes action beyond its immediate

boundaries in order to influence and bring about change in its external environment.

The second aspect of the community organization process, which closely resembles the maintenance process of social systems, is termed "community integration".

"Community integration is a process in which the exercise of cooperative and collaborative attitudes and practices leads to greater (1) identification with the community, (2) interest and participation in the affairs of the community and (3) sharing of common values and means for expressing these values. This implies a process at work in the community which facilitates the growth of awareness of, and loyalty to, the larger community of which the individual is a part; development of a sense of responsibility for the condition and status of the community; emergence of attitudes which permit cooperation with people who are "different"; and growth of common values, symbols, and rituals in the community as a whole."(24p.51)

Considering what was said earlier with respect to various fields of practice, it may very well be that the natural community organization process, within any particular field of practice has unique characteristics which demand a unique application of the community organization problem-solving method of social work. It is for this reason that "process" must be considered when examining the interaction between a particular social work method and a specific field of practice.

Community organization as a method in social work practice has frequently been described as the process of creating and maintaining a progressively more effective adjustment between community resources and community needs. This adjustment is often achieved through the help of a professional practitioner and through the participation of individuals and groups in the community. It involves the identification and articulation of problems and needs, the determination of solutions, and the formulation and conduct of a plan of action.

Community organization as a method of social work is

"more or less comparable with the processes of social case-work and social group work. The community organization practitioner works with representatives of the community or segments of the community for the purpose of intervening in the community process with a problem-solving approach, taking into consideration the values, sanctions, knowledge, methods and techniques of social work." (37, p. 8)

In examining the community organization method in social work practice, as a means of intervening into community process, two general intervention activities may be identified: (1) the practitioner's attempts to enhance the task processes of the community social system or action system, and (2) the practitioner's attempts to enhance the maintenance processes of the community social system or action system. One way of analyzing social work intervention into the social process of a particular field of practice, by a community organization practitioner, is then, to examine the differential emphasis placed upon enhancing the task and/or maintenance processes of particular community action systems. This will include the conscious use of knowledge, skills and attitudes related to the dynamics of, the need for, and the importance of these processes, the goals of each; and their relationship to the overall objectives of the community action system.

## II Summary of the Problem

There have been growing inquiries in recent social work literature with respect to how social work methodology varies depending upon the specific field of practice in which it is enacted. It has been hypothesized by some that generic social work methodology takes on distinctive characteristics as a function of the particular field of practice in which it is applied. These distinctive characteristics may be illustrated by recurring patterns of emphasis on certain kinds of values, purposes, sanctions, knowledge, and methods with worker roles distinctive to the field of practice

in which the social work practice method is enacted.

The NASW Committee on Defining Community Organization Practice has pointed out the need for studies of the theoretical practice specifics of community organization methodology in relation to the various fields of practice in which it is applied. To the writers' knowledge few works have attempted to examine this area of concern.

#### Formulation of the Theory Base for the Study

On the basis of the material reviewed above, there follows a formulation of the theory base which will be used to focus the study, describe its field of exploration, and identify variables. This base is a general conceptual tool for obtaining and analyzing data, because it describes what is being studied (and what is not) and where the findings fit into the knowledge we possess about the nature of social life.

The present formulation contains a number of concepts from social work and from community literature. The operational definitions utilized here have been assigned on an arbitrary basis, so as to arrive at a temporary stability within an intellectual state that has very few concrete "knowns". The decision that has to be made in such circumstances is whether to devote the investigation to a process of concept clarification, or whether to resolve the problem of clarity by the arbitrary assignment of meanings and values to concepts so as to move beyond this stage to an actual exploration of variables in a field. The choice made here is the latter, and thus a framework can be constructed within which to study actual field situations or episodes. The analysis of collected data may in such cases say as much as, or more about the study of formulation itself than it does about the nature of the interaction observed.

The two major concepts employed to limit the study are a social work methodology and a field of practice identified as "community develop-

ment." Neither is as clearly and completely delineated as it needs to be for experimental studies, and in fact "community development" is usually described as a "method" or a "process". Each will be used in a clearly explicated way to place the study in its proper light and scope.

Other limits that should be placed on such a study are a community organization methodology and an urban community development sub-field of practice. For reasons suggested above the specifics of community organization methodology have not been introduced. It has been possible to limit the study to urban community development.

This particular study is not concerned with the specifics of a methodology, but with its interaction with a sub-field of practice. Therefore, the explication of what the formulation means by the term "method" need be no more exact than that the interaction produced by the intervention of a social worker is relevant to the advancement of our knowledge about method if the intervening social worker is a graduate of a school of social work. It is not even necessary that the intervenor be trained in the "community organization" method as his major concentration, as many of the major components of this method have a generic character. If it is discovered that social work intervention varies community life situations, and is in turn varied by them, in consistent and more or less predictable ways, there will be implications in this avenue of inquiry for all the methods utilized by social work.

A greater degree of exactitude is required for the use of the concept of a "field of practice", because this is how the study will formulate the character and dimensions of the field or situation that it is attempting to explore. In addition, it may be possible to hypothesize a relationship between "field" and "method" with the former as an independent variable.



Here, the field of practice concept is defined primarily in terms of the characteristic aggregates of processes which occur within it, and the structural relationships within which the interactions of interest to social work take place.

"A field of practice is identified by a constellation of factors -- structure, process, special characteristics of social systems (problem condition of central concern, socio-economic and cultural characteristics, and so forth), the characteristic responses and behavior of persons served, and the pattern of emphasis, orientation, adaptation, and specific integration of elements in generic social work as demanded by the requirements of the social system or clusters of systems." (41, p. 9)

From this array of components specific fields of practice may be formulated. "Community development" is seen for the purposes of this study as a field of practice with which social work methodology can interact in particular ways.

"Community development" is a field of practice characterized by "the application of technology and expert services from outside the community, and the enlistment of self-help and cooperative participation on the part of the residents of the community." Interactions with this field of practice would have the primary and shared objective of developing community life to better serve its participants in a variety of ways. There are identifiable community structures and developmental processes located in these interactions, and there are other technologies and expert services besides social work which interact with communities for developmental purposes. For this study it is enough to identify community structures and developmental processes in an interaction produced by social work intervention.

Systems theory applications are useful to describe structure and process in interactions, and to an extent, to describe the limits of the relevant interactions. Interaction is viewed here in terms of a "community"

as a system of systems, some of which interact to produce developmental processes. Their patterns of interaction are described as "structural relationships". Intervention constitutes an alteration of these patterns or structures, by definition, as it adds an actor to them. Such other alterations as occur will do so as a result of the reciprocal behavior of the actors following intervention, or else as a result of some as yet undiscovered variable located outside of the systemic interactions.

The descriptive term used to denote the new system within the community system, created by intervention, is "action system". There are action systems that do not have social workers employed in them, but the action systems explored by this study do.

Given this framework for watching actors engaged in interactions related to community processes, there needs to be a further conceptual tool for taking cognizance of the conscious efforts of one actor, the intervenor, to utilize and implement special knowledge to enhance the processes engaged in by the action system. One way to develop this tool is to look at the interactions which occur, and to divide them according to their direction. Those that occur between actors in the action system may be described as "internal" interactions; those that occur between one or more actors in the action system, and an actor or actors in another system, are "external" interactions.

It is possible to see internal interactions primarily as having the function of strengthening the system and its actors, and external interaction as primarily functioning to achieve, or move toward achieving the goals of the action system. A social worker intervening in a community action system will seek to strengthen the community by helping the action system achieve its goals; part of his knowledge and concern will be the need to strengthen the system to facilitate goal realization. It should be

possible to observe the way in which the social worker endeavours to achieve both of these objectives. An emphasis on internal or external interactions by the intervenor should be observable, and if deliberative selection patterns emerge, these will have significance for a methodology interacting with an action system and with its environment to achieve certain goals.

Another way to conceptualize this is in terms of "task" and "maintenance" processes of the action system, which correspond to the "external" and "internal" interactions in an approximate way.

Ultimately, what will be of significance to social work practice will be the patterns of interaction and intervention which emerge (or do not emerge) in a particular field of practice, and variance in such patterns from situation to situation, and from field to field. If the variance is not more significant or more pronounced from field to field than from situation to situation, there is need to re-examine the "field of practice" concept and the variables therein. Equally significant would be the degree and nature of the variance between the interactional patterns pursuant to social work intervention and those pursuant to non-social work intervention, as well as variance in outcomes of the intervention, and significant relationships between them.

Finally, a conceptual framework for the progression of the action system during its life is needed. Warren's model for community action lends itself to a general application as a description of stages of the lower action system. Some of the requirements made of various actors in the system change as it moves through its stages, and this has implications for the knowledge, skills, techniques, roles, and values of the intervenor.

An action episode is "action systems developing from their inception to their dissolution or transformation". The model has five stages, which are, briefly, initial environment, inception of the action system, expansion of the action system, operation of the action system, and transformation of the action system.

## CHAPTER III

### DESIGN OF THE STUDY

#### Level of Study Design

This is a study of interaction between method and field. This means that it is a study which will systematically observe one or more practice episodes involving a social work method and a field of practice, so as to produce data bearing upon the specifics of the interaction created by the intervention of method into situation.

In order to systematically observe practice episodes, the study must have an appropriate design, as well as a theoretical framework which will both limit the scope of the investigation to manageable proportions and order the data for subsequent analysis.

The general objective of the study is to locate and systematically observe practice episodes. This means, in operational terms, the study of situations in which a social worker is operating, or has operated.

The appropriate research design for such an investigation at the present level of knowledge is a field study. "A field study either attempts observations of social interaction or investigates thoroughly the reciprocal perceptions and attitudes of people playing interdependent roles". (6p.59) The same source says elsewhere "in the field investigation we attempt to study a single community or a single group in terms of its social structure- i.e., the interrelations of the parts of the structure and of the social interaction taking place". (6p.59)

Field studies vary in the level of research undertaken and the level of measurement attempted. The three major types of field studies, from the highest to the lowest levels, are field experiments, exploratory field studies,

and field surveys. Measurement ranges from standardized quantification of data collection in terms of observational and attitude scales, to an interpretive anthropological approach, which simply makes observations and inferences about the interactions being studied.

This study is an exploratory field study. It does not attempt an experiment nor does it confine itself to a survey of life situations. It seeks to explore a defined and limited field so as to discover the variables in social interaction that exist therein.

There are two levels of exploratory study. Beginning exploratory studies seek to identify the variables in a field. At a more advanced level, others endeavor to explore relationships between variables. This is a beginning study, which proposes an interactional field and seeks to discover something about the variables in the field.

It is hoped that in this way an avenue of investigation will be opened up that will eventually provide a clearer and more explicit understanding of the nature of social work intervention into community life, so that social work responses to community needs can be evaluated and more appropriately directed.

In order to extract from a field the significant variables that are present, a theoretical framework like the one offered in this study is necessary. The important concepts utilized require operational definitions. The assumptions from which the study springs require concise statement. An explication of these clarifies the language used to report the study, and locates it correctly with respect to where it begins and where it hopes to go.

#### Operational Definitions

1. "Social work methodology" is the core or generic elements of social work. These are seen to affect the operations of a trained social worker by exercising some influence upon his knowledge, values, skills, and objectives.

2. A "field of practice" is composed of the factors of structure, process, problem condition of central concern, socio-economic and cultural characteristics of the social system(s) involved, characteristic responses and behavior of persons served, and patterns of adaptation of generic social work as demanded by the requirements of the social system(s).
3. "Community Development" is a field of practice which has a community-based structure, one or more social development processes, a broadly felt problem condition, and characteristic responses and behavior on the part of community systems.
4. An "interactional field" is the sum of actors having some contact with one or more actors in the action system created by the community or by the intervenor.
5. An "action system" is the sum of actors in a structure which consciously promotes a social change process, and includes the process itself. It is that specific part of an interactional field which stimulates and promotes a social change process.
6. "Intervention" is the entry of a new actor into a process.
7. "Social work intervention" is the entry of a social worker into a community social process.
8. "Structure" is the linkages between actors in a process.
9. "Process" is a sequence of actions or events leading to one (or more) objectives.
10. "Social process" has social actions or events and social gain or change objectives.
11. "The Problem-Solving Approach" is the approach used by the professional community organization practitioner as he intervenes in the community process. The NASW document, Defining Community Organization Practice defines this approach as the community organization practitioner's attempts to "help the community identify and clarify the problems facing it. He helps the community select certain problems for attention, engages in orderly study, diagnoses or appraises probable causes, mounts and carries through plans of action after examination of alternative courses of action and finally evaluates the outcome".(37p.16)
12. "A Social System" is a structure of organization of the interaction of units which endures through time. It has both external and internal aspects relating the system to its environment and its units to each other. It can be distinguished from its surrounding environment, performing a function called boundary maintenance. It tends to maintain an equilibrium in the sense that it adapts to changes from outside the system in such a way as to minimize the impact of change on the organizational structure and to regularize the subsequent relationships".(31p.139) A social system is a

collection of social units within a permeable boundary, across which less interaction occurs than does among social units within it.

13. "Task Processes" of social systems are all those activities that are directed outside the boundaries of the social system in order to control its social and physical environments so that they will yield high outcomes for its members in achieving the goals of the system.
14. "Maintenance Processes" of social systems are all those activities directed within the boundaries of the social system in order that the interdependence of the members will be maintained and fostered.
15. "Horizontal Patterns" of Social Systems are defined "as the structural and functional relation of its various social units and subsystems to each other". (3lp.162)
16. "Vertical Patterns" of Social Systems are defined as "the structural and functional relation of its various social units and subsystems to systems external to the boundaries of the social system.
17. "Community Action Episodes" are community actions which have their beginnings and their endings. They are initiated to accomplish some purpose; they involve a process of organization and task performance in the direction of accomplishing the purpose, which in the process may be modified; then with the resolution of their effort the action subsides and the episode finishes. (3lp.308)
18. "A community Action System" is composed of two or more interacting community subsystems or representatives of community subsystems interacting with their environment in pursuit of agreed upon objectives, even though the target dysfunctions may not be handicapping all of the actors in the action system.
19. "A Change Agent" is a person who brings to an action system some skills, knowledge or position, or any combination of these, which enables him to assume one or more instrumental roles to the objective or objectives of the action system. This study sees the terms "change agent" and "community organization practitioner" as being synonymous.
20. "A Change Agency" is the agency under whose auspice the change agent or community organization practitioner operates.
21. "A Client System" is the specific community system whose actors may benefit directly from the activities of the action system.
22. "Stimuli for Social Processes Toward Social Objectives" are the discomforts or the other impulses toward social change that exist within the systemic environment.



### Assumptions Underlying the Study

Numerous assumptions operate to sustain and to rationalize social work intervention. Some of these may be identified as pertaining to this study. We assume that rational social change is beneficial to those affected by it. We assume that increasing our consciousness of what actually happens when things change will increase our power to control change.

We assume that the intervention of a social worker into community life can produce new interactions and alter others in observable ways. We assume that it is possible to discover the nature of interactions by observing the activities that demonstrate them.

### Plan for Data Collection

The data for this and subsequent studies in this line of inquiry is extracted from community action episodes characterized by social work intervention. This stage is one of ex post facto exploration, so an attempt will be made to secure the perceptions of actors in such episodes, in the form of recordings of activities or verbal recollections of activities occurring in action episodes. The community action episodes available for exploration are limited in number, as far as this geographic area is concerned, and those that are available are not extensively recorded. It has been necessary to confine the study at this point in time to a pre-test based upon the recall of two practitioners who have completed two more or less unrecorded episodes. It was intended that data be collected from other actors in these episodes, but time restricted the number of respondents and there is a priority to obtain the perceptions of the intervenors.

The method of data-collection selected for the study is a questionnaire composed entirely of open-ended questions. It is intended as a framework for structuring interviews with respondents to elicit their perceptual recall of action episodes in which they had acted. The interview schedule is included in the appendix.

The two community action episodes being explored occurred recently in two different parts of urban Vancouver. One involved the concerns of citizens in an urban neighbourhood around the issue of adequate playground facilities. The other involved the efforts of a tenants' association in a local public housing project to bring about better relations between themselves and the housing authority responsible for the administration of the project.

The two respondents are professionally-trained social workers of wide social work experience.

The interview schedule is administered by a team of three interviewers, the same team interviewing both respondents. Written notes and a tape recording machine are used for each interview. The member of the team asks the questions, a second makes notes on the responses, and a third operates the tape machine. The repetition of the same roles by the same group of interviewers is seen as a crude reliability measure.

The collected material is then recorded in an edited version which is intended to remove repetitions without altering the content. This material is analyzed by the total study team within a simple framework. Material judged relevant to a particular concept is extracted, and observations are made on the basis of the support inferred by the data for the viability of the concept. The identification of variables requires a suitable data-collection instrument, and gaps between the conceptual framework and the instrument, or between the instrument and the data necessary to an adequate exploration of a field may be discovered in this process.

At this stage of study of the field which concerns this present endeavor, data-analysis will not bear directly upon the exposure of all of the variables operative in this particular field, but is expected to do so indirectly by providing some direction to refinements of the theory base, study design, and data-collection instruments and procedures.

## CHAPTER IV

## DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

This chapter will present the action-episodes studied, the data-collection experience, analysis of the data, and criticisms of the study and its procedures. Its first task is to describe in a brief manner the two action episodes that have been studied to pre-test the interview schedule.

## ACTION-EPISODE NO. I

It was within the setting of a Public Housing Project that this action episode took place. The specific problem arose from the fact that many tenants within Public Housing Projects were dissatisfied with rental policy and felt that the rents they paid were unfair - either in the amount they paid, or in the method of calculating the amount they paid. They argued that the rental scale, and method used to apply it, was not one that was conducive to motivating individuals to rise above the low income group, or for many, to even attempt to get off Social Assistance. These were some of the complaints that the tenants had made to the particular community development worker involved in this action-episode.

One particular tenant who had spoken to the worker about the rent problem knew of others who had expressed their discontent to him. He wanted to do something about the situation and suggested that a meeting of the tenants be called in order to determine what could be done about the situation. The worker immediately supported him on this idea and they began to organize a meeting for the tenants who were interested in this endeavor.

The meeting was called for and advertised throughout the project (July 26, 1966). The worker made a point of involving the tenants of the other housing projects. The first meeting was very successful and from it

a steering committee was formed. The steering committee, in a series of meetings, drafted a brief of the tenant's complaints and set forth some recommended changes in the rental policies.

Another general meeting was held at which the brief was accepted in its final form. Decisions were also made as to who should receive copies of the brief. This list included Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation (C.M.H.C.); Vancouver Housing Authority; Housing Commissioner (Victoria); Special Planning Secretariat; Vancouver Members of Parliament; the Provincial Secretary and Vancouver City Council.

Copies of the Brief were sent out to these (August 11, 1966), and acknowledgements were in turn received. The answers indicated that the matter was being looked into by the C.M.H.C. and the Provincial Government and that the results would be made known to the tenants as soon as decisions were reached. When there was no reply from various levels of government or the C.M.H.C. for several months, the chairman of the steering committee sent more letters to enquire as to what was happening. On November 7, 1966 word was received from C.M.H.C. that the second recommendation of the brief had been accepted, and that discussion on the other recommendation was continuing.

Many of the same tenants who had been active in this particular action-episode are now active in forming an inter-project council that will act as an official spokesman for the various housing projects in attempting to solve other tenant problems.

#### ACTION-EPISODE No.II

This action-episode took place within a local urban neighborhood, consisting of different ethnic groups, primarily of lower socio-economic levels and characterized by a high degree of apathy and a feeling of powerlessness amongst its citizens. The specific problem that this action-episode

was concerned with was the inadequate facilities and lack of supervision within a small park in the neighborhood.

The community development worker came in contact with a small group of women who had been participating in a discussion group at the Y.W.C.A. in the area. This group had previously expressed some concern about the lack of facilities in the park and the discussion leader (a social worker from F.S.A.) had informed the community development worker of this. Through an informal contact with one of this group the worker had gradually become accepted by it and was able to form a relationship with it.

This group's first concern about parks was displayed when it planned a bus trip for mothers and children in the neighborhood. The purpose of this trip was to use their free time in a constructive manner by visiting other parks. Eventually their concern turned to their own local park with its inadequate services and facilities. They began to focus on their own ideas for improvement of the park. The conclusions they came to were that the park needed increased supervision (more than just one day a week) and that the hours of supervision were unrealistic and should be changed. The group then decided to phone the Parks Board to notify it of their concerns and to offer their ideas as solutions. The worker also suggested the idea to the group of presenting a petition to the Parks Board as a possible solution to the problem. The group finally decided to phone the Parks Board about their concerns over the supervision times at the park and to send a petition requesting improved facilities. The petition, which was drafted by the worker, was taken around the neighborhood by members of the group to obtain signatures and was later mailed to the Parks Board.

This action resulted in a change of hours and the frequency of supervision at the park. A reply to the petition was also sent by the Parks Board stating that the needs of the park were being studied and changes in the facilities would be dependent on the findings of their study.

After the success of this action-episode several members of the group withdrew as they were not interested in other concerns. However, certain individuals have moved to take action on other concerns in their neighborhood.

The second task of this chapter is to describe the data-collection process.

#### DATA COLLECTION AND DESCRIPTION OF INTERVIEWS

The data for this study was collected by means of an interview schedule. (Appendix A.) This method was used for two reasons. First, the researchers felt that the most effective way of collecting data would be to get it first hand from individuals involved in these action-episodes; more specifically, the interview schedule would be administered to the individual who was most aware of the process taking place within an action-episode. The study is of the ex post facto type and the episodes studied had been poorly recorded for research purposes, thus eliminating the case study as a data collection device.

Second, it was decided to use an interview schedule rather than a questionnaire because it was felt that in an interview situation the respondent's replies would be more spontaneous and hence less biased. The researchers felt that if the respondents were left with a questionnaire to 'fill in', their answers would be more carefully thought out in their own terms. This, it was thought, would increase the chances of the data being made to fit the change agent's own preconceived ideas of the process. In addition, the use of open-ended questions lent itself to face-to-face data collection because of considerations of time and energy of respondents.

The researchers recognized that this method might decrease the accuracy of some responses in regard to details. However, this limitation was not considered to be so great as to affect the overall description of the process at the level needed for this study.

The interview schedule was administered to a colleague who is not involved in the study, to gain a trial experience in using the instrument and administration methods before using it on the subjects of the study. This person was selected on the basis of having had a similar Community Development experience to the two principal subjects. Prior to delivery, this person was permitted to read the definitions of the terms used in the interview schedule. A tape recorder was not used during this interview. However, an analysis of written data taken during the interview led to the decision to apply the interview schedule to the principal subjects with a few minor alterations of the instrument, but not of the method of administration.

The interview schedule was then applied to the two principal subjects. They had been selected on the basis of their involvement in Community Development projects in Vancouver. They were also most accessible to the study team. Their background and experience were looked at by the study group and deemed suitable for study purposes before their participation was sought.

The interviews were conducted in private homes where interruptions were kept to a minimum. However, one interview took place in the respondent's home and there were several interruptions which tended to distract the respondent and the interview team. The other interview took place in a home of one of the interview team members and there were no interruptions.

The subjects were permitted to read the definitions of terms used in the interview schedule as defined in the study. Agreement as to the meanings and use of these terms was jointly established. Once the interview began, further clarification and discussion of questions and terms was avoided. However, it was found that some further clarification was needed a few times during both interviews.

During the interview the recorder noted in condensed form the answer to each question. It was thought that these notes could be used as a rapid guide to data content during the data analysis. This recording, however, was unnecessary since the entire interview was recorded on tape and it was not only easier, but also more accurate to refer to the tapes.

The respondents themselves took these interviews seriously and did all they could to help the interview team. The subjects were cooperative during the interview. They not only answered the questions as fully as possible, but often went further and attempted to explain and clarify their answers whenever they could. This cooperation greatly aided the interview team in its task of collecting data.

The interview team also processed the data into its final written form. Each question and response was replayed on the tape recorder and then typed. Typed answers are not a verbatim recording, but are a representative condensation of the subject's answer. Verbatim recording was not used due to lengthy responses frequently containing irrelevant and repetitious material. The responses contained in Appendix B and C were seen as accurate by three judges. Appendix B and C was then analyzed to obtain the data pertinent to this study.

The third task of this chapter is to analyse the data collected.

#### ANALYSIS OF DATA

The entire study team analyzed the data using a simple framework based upon the operational definitions formulated for the study. The data was sifted for material relevant to each concept as defined, in an attempt to substantiate the theory base for further study. In no way has the data been used to attempt to establish anything about the interactional field. Analysis has been confined to the potential usefulness of the study as a research tool.



## Interactional Field

Section I of the interview schedule indicates what subsystems existed within the interactional field. Sections II, III, IV and V extract data indicating the extent of the interactional field and the nature of the interactions within the field. However, it was felt greater exactness in this area is desirable.

Section II-G indicates the change agent's efforts to create an interactional field. Section III bears specifically on the outreach of the action system. Section IV-C and D bear indirectly upon it and G indicates the central involvement of the change agent through informal interaction within the action system and in external interactions. Part I relates to the effect of the action system's activity upon actors and systems in the interactional field. Section V covers the termination of interactions involving the change agent in the action system. This section should gauge more accurately the transformation of the interactional field and include more material about the continuing interaction following withdrawal of the change agent.

## Action System

Keeping in mind the conceptual bias of the study, the data seems to clearly indicate the presence of an action system with distinct life stages. Section II of the interview schedule extracts data about the inception of the action system, but there may be confusion about the actual location of the worker's intervention, which is seen by the study as a separate phenomena from the inception of the action system. Part A gives a good picture of the actors in the action system and the change agent's involvement and non-involvement in the action system's inception stage. Section III describes in some detail the outreach of the action system into the environment for support and the change agent's contribution to the system in this area. Section IV indicates in detail the operation of the action system. It

indicates the strength of the action system to some degree. However, what was hoped for here was clarity regarding structure and both formal and informal linkages. This information is embedded in material concerning process and action objectives. Part H distinguishes with some precision between the action system and interactional fields, but Part I again is a description of process. Section V does not relate clearly or at sufficient length the transformation of the action episode and the residua of the action system.

#### Intervention

The data suggests that intervention of the change agent had impact within the field, based upon the changes which occurred in the field. This information was obtained mainly in Sections I and II which contrast the field before and after intervention. It might have been helpful in terms of analyzing the intervention process if the interview schedule had used a comparative form of questioning. The addition of perceptions of the change agent's intervention by other actors in the system is required to develop a more accurate composite picture of the intervention and its effect on interactions in the interactional field.

The data indicates that the action system developed in the interactional field after the intervention of the change agent. There is also an indication in the data that formal and informal contacts can be identified in terms of their relative significance to the action system. The instrument appears to require more precision in order to obtain data which would improve our understanding of intervention and its impact upon community life.

#### Change Agent

It appears possible to extract from the main body of the data material that identifies the change agent as having some effect upon the interactions within the interactional field in which he has intervened. Furthermore it appears that the nature of the change agent's intervention can

also be extracted. One obvious limitation to the data must be recognized. The respondents selected for testing were defined and selected because they were seen as change agents in the episodes studied. However, the schedule does seem to separate and identify the change agent as a unique actor among a number of actors in an interactional field, and appears to be a tool that could be used to separate and identify change agents from a group of random respondents in any given interactional field. The relevant data can be obtained from responses to schedule items related to the point of intervention, values and goals of the change agent and other actors, and the general activity of the change agent in the interactional field. The data indicates that other perceptions and descriptions of particular roles in the action system may also be used to identify the change agent.

#### Task and Maintenance Processes

The data appears to extract information that can be used to form a picture of the change agent's intervention activity directed toward enhancing the task and maintenance processes within the action system. However, it does not reveal the change agent's conscious selection of priorities in terms of processes. It was hoped that the schedule would reveal this information. (A promising observation is that it seems possible to get at the emphasis on one or the other of these processes within each stage of the episode. Because of the lack of preciseness with which changing priorities for action were recalled, it was difficult to differentiate clearly between the worker's activities in this area.

#### Horizontal and Vertical Linkages

The interview schedule seems to have some value in specifying horizontal and vertical linkages within the interactional field, however the purpose behind such linkages is not always clear. The schedule appears to obtain data on the quantity of the linkage. The respondents also indicated

confusion regarding the application of horizontal and vertical criteria to the actual field situation, however this does not seem important as these linkages can be readily reported during the data analysis.

### Social Process

The data appears to point to existence of a social process within the interactional field. The nature of the social process, its components and motivating factors are not clear. The schedule seems to point out that the process had a beginning and an end; precision is lacking in determining the terminal point in the process. Therefore, the schedule may be useful only for ex post facto episodes data collection.

The total process outline in the data appears to be a complex one. Social process is described in the data as many processes interacting over a period of time that involves many actors and systems, one of which is the change agent. The change agent appears to affect the processes in the action system largely through contacts with actors in the system. This affect extends throughout the action episode. The presence of the change agent as an actor appears to affect a range of processes within the interactional field.

### Social Structure

The data fails to reveal in any precise way the internal structure of the action system or its external structural relationships. However, in a very general sense, some structures can at least be identified, but not qualified. Section I fails to indicate clearly the relationships between systems in the interactional field. Sections II and III data is scant regarding the structural developments during the inception and expansion stages. The main implication from the data contained in Section IV is that the change agent is a central figure in whatever structure exists. The reason for this may be a result of the type of questioning used which produces misleading data in this area. Section V is confusing regarding the structure because

there seems to be no clear distinction made in the schedule or in the data between the change agent and the structure surrounding him.

### Social Change

The data reveals some variance in the process of social change without indicating why there should be a difference. Data produced by the schedule lacks the detailed facts and cross-checks from other sources to assess the differences in social change processes. The data does not reveal the change agent's perception of phenomena at the time it occurred, nor does it show clearly how the change agent attempted to consciously control his intervention and thereby alter the processes of social change. Conscious use of self to alter process and affect social change is hinted at in all sections of the data, but not fully examined. Anything beyond stating that the change agent has an awareness of inducing social change in an action system would be premature on the basis of the way the data was abstracted.

### Change Stimuli

The data indicates that the change agent can be one stimulus for change. The change agent appears to increase the awareness of other actors of discomforts in the systemic environment which become better specified for concerted action. The schedule produces data supporting the contention that discomfort shared among a number of actors is a motivating factor for creating an action system, and that objectives of the action system can be directly or indirectly associated with this discomfort. What is not clear in the data is the degree to which the change agent must share this discomfort.

The fourth task of this chapter is to offer criticisms of the data-collection process.

### CRITIQUE OF INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

It is extremely difficult to criticize the data-collecting instrument objectively for two reasons. The first of these is that it is the creators of

the interview schedule and the interviewers themselves - all of whom obviously have a subjective involvement with the schedule - who are called upon to render the criticism. The second reason is that this particular interview schedule is an extremely subjective type of instrument. Although its primary intent was to collect facts about specific action episodes, it collects these facts from individuals who play the primary roles in these episodes. Thus, it follows that the subjective interests of the respondents will be reflected in the data. This is especially true in questions concerning their own actions. It is therefore recognized that many subjective variables enter into the 'accounting of facts' from the respondents. These variables include such things as the respondents' own interests, attitudes, beliefs, desires in relation to their goals, and memory. "The fallibility of memory for nonrecurring events, for events in the distant past, for events of little interest, and for events difficult to comprehend; the ephemeral quality of memory and its dependence on situational factors; the corruptibility of memory in relation to events of significance to the self -- all of these factors require caution in accepting as true the remembrance of things past." (27, p. 244)

The primary task in creating the interview schedule was to construct questions that would stimulate the respondents' memory. This was done in most cases by beginning with general questions on areas of activity and then following these up with more specific questions that would elicit more detail from the respondents.

Looking more closely at the reactions of the respondents themselves, the significant difference that personality can make on a data-collecting instrument of this kind was clearly demonstrated to the researchers. The two interview situations themselves were controlled and administered as similarly as possible by using the same interview team, the same interviewer,

and similar physical surroundings i.e. private homes. Personality differences of the two respondents became quite clear in the differing nature and dimensions of the responses they made to certain of the items in the schedule.

Following the first interview, the interview team was left with the impression that the data-collecting instrument tended to be vague, and that the questions asked were too general for the respondent to focus on them. However, after the second interview, these first impressions were not altogether upheld. The interview team was reassured that, although there existed many legitimate doubts as to the clarity of several questions, the instrument itself was not as vague as had first been feared. The second respondent appeared to have little difficulty in focussing on the questions and answered them without too much diffuse descriptive material. As Jahoda points out "a frequent problem in interviewing is that of limiting the response of the verbose individual", (27, p. 241), or, in limiting responses about situations which seem to demand verbose descriptions.

This was an aspect of the instrument design that was largely overlooked. The researchers were, in fact, more concerned about the possibility of not getting enough data from the responses than about the possibility that too much data might be presented. The first interview reflects this weakness on the part of the design. The second interview was controlled somewhat more by the interviewer. During the second interview, the interviewer broke in more often after a question had been answered, going on then to the next question, and in this way limiting, to a degree, the amount of unnecessary response.

In this same line of criticism it was found that much of the extraneous material given in a response would often include answers to questions that followed. It was extremely difficult to ask a question in an open-

ended manner that would evoke a response that was relevant only to that particular question. This weakness resulted in repetition of certain responses. A certain amount of this repetition was valid for it often provided new insights into the same data, and furthermore, it provided some kind of validity check. However, even when taking these factors into account, some material had needless repetition. The instrument design could be improved upon from this point of view.

Another kind of validity check became apparent during the second interview and perhaps, it could have been incorporated purposively into the design of the instrument itself. This check centers around questions that are followed by a 'if yes' or 'if no' sequence of questions. If the original question is answered in the affirmative then a following series of questions would be asked. However, if the original question was answered in the negative, then the sequence following it would be omitted. Once, however, when the original question was answered in the negative by the respondent, the interviewer, prompted by his knowledge of the situation, asked the sequence which followed as if the question had been answered in the affirmative. The result was that responses were obtained which were in direct contradiction to the respondent's original negative answer (see interview No. II, Section IV A, 2 & 3). This type of check could have been built into the instrument as part of its structure. There were other situations where the same technique could have been applied.

Looking more specifically at the construction of the questions themselves, it is apparent that there are at least three main areas open to criticism. The first of these, as has been discussed, is the ambiguous and vague nature of many of the questions. The wording of several questions needs to be improved to increase their clarity. It became evident to the researchers that although they were clear in their own minds as to what they



intended a particular question to explore, the respondents did not always perceive or interpret the question in the same manner. Therefore, it can be expected that the responses were not always exactly what was desired. The most obvious example of this is Section I of the interview schedule that asks for a description of the Initial Systemic Environment. The respondents were unsure as to whether this term referred to the time before they entered the community, or the time before they became involved in the particular action episode under discussion.

The second area of criticism, which pertains to the construction of the questions, is that several of them were 'double-barrelled' in that they consisted of two or more parts. The particular weakness of this type of question construction is that the respondents tended to answer the last part of the question first, and then the first part. However, it was discovered that, although the order of the responses could be sorted out later, the respondents often forgot to answer the first part of the question at all, or did so only partially. There seemed to be a difference between the two respondents in terms of this difficulty.

The third area of criticism centers around those questions that are followed by questions comprised of very few words. An example of this is found in Section III, B. 2, 3, & 4, where the questions read: "2. How was this done?, 3. For what reason?, and 4. If not done, why not?. The original intent of this kind of question was to expand upon the particular question that preceded these sequences. However, these questions did not stand well alone and often brought a counter-reply from the respondent such as "How was what done? or Reason for what?". This pointed out to the interview team that these short questions must be regarded as complete questions in themselves and worded as such so that they are not necessarily dependent upon the preceding question.

More generally, it was found that most sections of the interview schedule were able to obtain relevant data. Section V however, seemed to be the weakest section in the schedule in this respect. The researchers had hoped to get more information about the conditions of termination of the action-episode than this section was able to obtain. It is now thought that perhaps questions pertaining to a description of the client system at the time of the change agent's termination may help get more relevant information.

One last criticism that has both positive and negative aspects was that the interview team decided to attempt to follow the interview schedule as closely as possible in order to make the interview situations as similar as they could. This decision produced two results. The first, which has positive aspects, was that little interpretation was done during the interviews. This did result in the setting of some kind of controls and limitations over the interview situation. The second, which has negative aspects, was that probing, which could have led to greater detail and clarification of the data, was held to a minimum during the interviews.

Generally, the data collection instrument was found wanting in many areas and its weaknesses became quite apparent to the interview team. Many of these faults can be overcome to improve the interview schedule and increase its effectiveness. However, used as it was, the instrument did cover nearly all aspects of the particular action episodes being studied. Further, it produced a description by each respondent that was sufficiently detailed that several variables were differentiated and identified.

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The conclusions that may be drawn from the study at this stage are methodological ones. Their implications for ongoing study of the interactional fields set up by social work intervention can be presented in the form of recommendations for carrying the study forward. Specifically, revisions in the formulation, design, and data-collection procedures of the study can be suggested to strengthen it.

#### CONCLUSIONS

The first task of this chapter is to draw such conclusions as it may be feasible to extract from the study experience to this point.

The analysis of the pre-test data offers some encouragement to continue the line of exploration attempted here. There is the distinct possibility that as many as ten or twelve major variables may be isolated and identified by the study, because some data relating to this many potential variables was present in the body of data extracted for the pre-test. Data collected from perhaps 30 action episodes involving a social worker may establish a pattern of variables in such interactional fields, or at least the range of variables. It would appear that the number of episodes studied should be about 30, because of the large number of major variables that potentially may be operative. This means the collection of data from a number of urban areas spread out over a large part of the continent. Whatever instrument is used to gather data will need to be carefully set up and explained so that the various persons collecting data will be consistent enough to produce a small measure of reliability in the collection process. In addition, reliability should probably be enhanced by tightening the structure of the questions and avoiding the ambiguities that can arise from

making free use of a number of words or phrases that have specialized meanings.

If an accurate description of the action episode, the action system and the interactional field is to be gained, the perceptions of other actors than the intervenor will be needed. This means that the study instrument should be administered to the other actors in an action episode as well as to the intervenor. The kinds of questions that can be asked such respondents are limited by the training, experience, and word-familiarity of the persons from whom answers are sought. This has implications for the structure and language of the instrument.

Simplified descriptions of the interactions being studied are possible to obtain, but their preciseness in relation to the formulation of the study would need to be carefully checked. It may be possible to express the formulation itself in simpler terms. This might have a second direct benefit in that it is not now exactly clear to what extent the data-collection instrument is a valid reflection of the study formulation as articulated.

The study design seems appropriate to the purpose the study is intended to serve. There is the possibility that the present stage of exploration of variables in the field could be combined with an exploration of the relationships between them. This would probably mean major revisions to the data-collection instrument and division of the variables into groups for partialized study. The "discovery of variables" stage certainly can be conducted on its own, with hypotheses to provide some focus for the next level of study, which might well be divided into pairs of variables.

Hopefully, the relationships between variables will be verified in further studies, and the results utilized to fashion a factual base for social work operatives in community life. This would provide directive and evaluative components for ongoing study of the profession of social work to

determine the specifics of its methodology in interaction with fields of practice.

Although it would be premature to advance hypotheses about variables and their relationships, some general areas for future hypothesizing can be inferred from the pre-test data. The relevance of task and maintenance processes for the conscious use of intervention and social change techniques is one such area. Another is the significance of horizontal and vertical linkage for the speed and permanency of social change. Then there is the influence of the change agent upon the setting of objectives. Others are the relationship between an actor's proximity to the problem situation and the number and force of interactions produced by him in pursuit of a solution. Finally there is the size of the interactional field in relation to the size and activity (and problem-focus) of the action-system. It seems reasonable to suggest that hypotheses could be constructed to propose the relationships between variables in at least these areas.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The second task of this chapter is to make recommendations for furtherance of the study. The recommendations presented here are listed in point form for brevity and clarity.

1. The sample used for completion of this initial study should comprise at least 30 action episodes, because of the large number of variables suspected of being present in the patterns under study. These would have to be drawn from several urban centres from other parts of the continent.
2. The interview schedule can be retained as the main data-collection instrument, but should be extensively revised in terms of its language, explicitness, and reliability, using the current data-analysis as a guide.

3. The schedule should be administered to several key actors in each episode, to gain a multi-dimensional picture of the interactions. Other variables related to the social circumstances of these actors would have to be taken into account in redesigning the schedule.
4. Greater care should be taken to ensure continuity of concepts between the formulation and the interview schedule.
5. Some consideration could be given to combining this study with the second stage, that of exploring relationships between variables, or to pairing the variables for study at the second stage, following completion of the first stage.
6. It should be kept clearly in mind that this study is concentrated upon a particular field of practice, and plans should be laid for defining other fields of practice and then studying social work methodology in interaction with them.
7. A clear explication of how data might be collected, should be developed for inclusion with the schedule. Interviewers previously unconnected with the study can thereby gain a firm impression of the manner in which the needed materials should be collected to ensure at least a small measure of reliability.
8. It might be fruitful to attempt to general hypotheses about the range of variables that are expectable in this kind of interactional field. One such prediction might be, loosely, that the major variables in such interactional fields are exclusively social in nature. That is, they are directly related to the fact of the presence of two or more persons

in some relationship to each other, rather than to other facts of physical, economic, religious, or cultural life.

It is our conviction that if this study is pursued, valuable indicators of the nature of and persons effected by social work intervention into community life will be identified. The implications of this kind of knowledge for social work practice are many, and the need for studies such as are being initiated and advocated here is a pressing one.

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## APPENDIX A

## INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

## I. INITIAL SYSTEMIC ENVIRONMENT

- A. What was the state of the client system prior to your intervention?
  - 1. Had the client system identified any of its felt need within its immediate environment?
  - 2. What were these needs?
  - 3. Can you describe the horizontal patterns for action that existed at this time within the client system?
  - 4. Can you describe the vertical patterns for action that existed at this time within the client system?
  - 5. Were there any existing organizations in the client system that were attempting to deal with these problems?
  - 6. Were these organizations professional, volunteer, or citizens' groups?
  - 7. How often did they meet?
  - 8. How representative were they of the client system?
  - 9. What had they achieved relative to the problem?
- B. What was your assessment of the client system at this time? (including socio-economic characteristics, degree of mutual support, neighbourliness etc.,)
  - 1. Did you identify any individuals or groups who were active in client system?
  - 2. Who were they?
  - 3. What were they doing (in relation to the client system's needs)?
  - 4. With what results?
- C. What were your
  - a) general goals upon going into the client system?
  - b) specific goals upon going into the client system?
  - 1. Were these goals related primarily to strengthening horizontal patterns in the client system?
  - 2. If yes, how were they related?
  - 3. If no, were they related to vertical patterns? How?

## II. INCEPTION OF THE ACTION SYSTEM

- A. What brought the members of the particular action system together?
- B. Was any of the action system in operation before your intervention?
- C. What, or who, kept the action system together before your involvement?
- D. How did you become involved with this particular action system -
  - 1. by invitation
  - 2. on your own initiative
  - 3. through a third party?

- F. If action system formed independently of you, at what stage did you become involved?
1. Under what circumstances did this occur?
- G. Before introduction to the action system, were you in contact with any of its members?
1. Who was contacted? How?
  2. What was the purpose of the contact?
  3. What was discussed?
  4. Did these contacts relate in any way to
    - a) goals and objectives of the action system?
    - b) your goals?
  5. Were any important decisions made during these informal contacts?
  6. Were these contacts made on a continuing basis?
  7. What effect did these contacts have on the group?
    - ie.-did they improve individual functioning of the members?
    - did they strengthen group bonds?
    - did they help solve conflict within the action system?
    - did they facilitate decision-making?
  8. Did you give direct or indirect leadership to the action system through these contacts? Explain.
  9. Did you spend a lot of time contacting any particular member of the action system? If yes, who was it? Why was it necessary to contact this person?
  10. What were the results of these informal contacts? Were they what you had hoped for?
  11. What proportion of your time was taken up with these informal contacts (as opposed to time taken up with formal contacts such as meetings)?
- H. What was the relationship of the members of the action system to each other?

### III. EXPANSION OF THE ACTION SYSTEM

- A. Did the action system try to broaden its membership?
1. How was this done?
  2. For what purpose were additional individuals or groups brought into the action system?
    - ie.-to plan the task aspects of the action?
    - to execute the various tasks involved in carrying out the plans?
    - to constitute linkages or channels of communication to various groups or individuals whose cooperation might be needed?
    - to lend prestige and sanction to the action system?
    - to ensure their cooperation with the end product of the action?
  3. At whose suggestion or pressuring were they brought into the action system?
  4. Were you involved in this decision? How?

- B. What, if anything, did you do to broaden the membership base of the action system?
  - 1. Did you make an attempt to increase the representativeness and/or representation?
  - 2. How was this done?
  - 3. For what reason?
  - 4. If not done, why not?
- C. Did the action system form any coalitions with other groups attempting to reach the same goals?
  - 1. If yes, how was this done?
  - 2. Did this coalition strengthen the action system, or weaken it?
  - 3. Was conflict introduced as a result of this coalition?
  - 4. How was it resolved or put to use?
  - 5. What part did you play in the coalition?
    - ie.-did you suggest it?
    - did you support it?
    - did you oppose it?
  - 6. Why?

#### IV. OPERATION OF THE EXPANDED ACTION SYSTEM

##### A. Meetings.

- 1. How often did you meet with the action system?
- 2. Did you help in organization of formal meetings?
- 3. How did you do this?
  - ie. did you work with the chairman, executive or other members, etc.?
- 4. Were you involved in instituting some type of formal structure within the action system?
  - If yes,
    - a) how did you do this?
    - b) what was your purpose in doing this?
    - c) what was your reason for doing so?

##### B. Problem Identification

- 1. Who identified the problem(s) that the action system was concerned with?
- 2. Did you take part in identifying or formulating the problem(s)?
- 3. How did you participate in this process?
- 4. With what purpose?
- 5. Was the problem identified by an outside system?
- 6. If yes, did this in any way influence the action system or any of its members?
- 7. How?
- 8. What was the problem(s) identified?
- 9. How long did it take to identify the problem(s)? Why?

### C. Gathering Facts

1. How did the action system go about exploring the nature, scope and implications of the problem(s)?
2. Who was involved in this process?
3. What was the reason(s) for their involvement?
4. What part did you play? (i.e. Did you help to clarify the action system's perception of the problem?)
5. If yes, in what way did you do this?
  - a) by providing them with factual information?
  - b) by sharing experiences with them from other situations?
  - c) by directing them to sources of information such as experts?

### D. Proposed solutions

1. Who suggested solutions to the problem(s)?
2. How was this done? When? (i.e. during formal or informal meetings?)
3. What were the proposed solutions?
4. What impact did they have on the action system?
5. Were they supported or opposed by any members of the action system, including yourself?
6. Was tension (conflict) created as a result of these proposed solution?
7. How was this resolved?
8. Did you participate in suggesting or presenting possible solutions to the problem(s)?
9. How did you do this?
10. Why did you do this? (i.e. to ease conflict, strengthen group bonds?)
11. Were you aware of possible outcomes?
12. How much time was spent in formulating possible solutions to the problem?

### E. Decision-Making

1. What course of action was chosen in attempting to solve the problem(s)?
2. How was this decision(s) reached?
3. What was the effect of this decision(s) on the action system?
4. Did the decision made correspond to the goals and objectives
  - a) of the action system
  - b) your goals and objectives
  - c) an outside system
  - d) none of these?
5. How were you involved in the process of decision-making?
6. Did you influence the action system in any way in reaching its decision?
7. How did you do this?
8. What was your purpose in doing this?
9. Did you do anything to facilitate the decision-making process within the action system?
10. If yes
  - a) what did you do?
  - b) how did you do it?
  - c) why?

11. Were you in agreement with the action system's final decision on the course of action to be taken?
12. Did you show approval or disapproval for this final decision?
13. How did you do this?
14. Why?
15. Was it necessary for the action system to decide upon an alternate course of action? Why?
16. What was this alternate course(s) of action?
17. Were you instrumental in suggesting alternate courses of action?
18. How did you do this?
19. What were these courses of action?
20. Why did you suggest these particular alternate courses of action?
21. How long did it take the action system to reach its final decision on the course of action to be taken?

#### F. Conflict

1. Was there conflict within the action system at any time?
  - a) How and why did this conflict arise?
  - b) Between whom did this conflict arise?
2. Was there conflict between the action system and any outside group(s) or individuals?
  - a) How and why did this conflict arise?
  - b) Between whom did this conflict arise?
3. What were the effects of the conflict on:
  - a) problem-identification
  - b) decision-making
  - c) implementation of decisions
  - d) achievement of desired goals?
4. What, if any, use did you make of this conflict?

#### G. Informal Contacts Within the Action System

1. Did you have any informal contacts with members of the action system throughout the problem-solving process?
2. Whom did you contact?
3. How often were these contacts made?
4. Were these contacts deliberately arranged or accidental?
5. What was the reason for these contacts?
6. Did these contacts relate directly or indirectly to the goals of
  - a) the action system
  - b) your goals
  - c) groups or individuals outside the action system?
7. What, if any, effect did these contacts have on the action system?
8. What proportion of your total time (working with the action system) was spent on information contacts?

#### H. Contacts with External Systems

1. Did the action system, or any of its members, have any contacts with other individuals, groups or organizations at any time during the problem-solving process?
  - a) Between whom did these contacts exist?



- b) What was the purpose of these contacts?
- c) What effect did these contacts have on the action system?
- 2. Were you directly involved in making these contacts?
  - a) Did you make these contacts on your own initiative, or with the sanction of the action system to act on its behalf?
- 3. What was your purpose in making these contacts?
- 4. Whom did you contact?
- 5. What was the outcome of these contacts?
- 6. What proportion of your total time in this action episode was spent on working with individuals, groups, or agencies outside the action system?

#### I. Action

- 1. What action was taken by the action system in its efforts to solve the problem?
- 2. What was the outcome of this action
  - a) within the action system?
  - b) on individuals, groups or organizations outside the action systems?
  - c) in terms of the goals and objectives of the action system?
  - d) in terms of your goals and objectives?
- 3. How were you involved in helping the action system to carry out this action?
- 4. Were any specific tasks suggested for or assigned to you?
- 5. By whom? Why?
- 6. What were these tasks?
- 7. What was the outcome?
- 8. Did you set any tasks for yourself?
- 9. What was your purpose for doing so?
- 10. What were the tasks?
- 11. What was the outcome?
- 12. What did you perceive as the outcome of the action?
  - a) Were the results what you had hoped or planned for?
  - b) If not, why not?
- 13. What was the outcome of the action as seen by other members of the action system?
  - a) Were the results what they had hoped for or expected?
  - b) If not, why not?
- 14. Were any of the results of the action unexpected? (explain)

#### V. TRANSFORMATION OF THE ACTION SYSTEM

- A. At what point did you withdraw from the action system?
  - 1. Before the attainment of their goals?
  - 2. Following the attainment of their goals?
  - 3. How did you leave?
  - 4. What was your reason for leaving at the time you did?
  - 5. How did your departure affect the action system?
- B. What was left of the action system after the action had been carried out?
  - 1. Did the action system disband?

2. If it did not, would you say that it might need future help?
3. Did you see the action system as being able to handle increased responsibility?
4. What, if any, strengths existed in the group?

## APPENDIX B

## INTERVIEW NO. I

## I. INITIAL SYSTEMIC ENVIRONMENT

- A. What was the state of the client system prior to your intervention?  
 There was a tenants association in existence, but it was a sick type of group with many personality conflicts among members. Events sponsored by this group consisted mainly of social activities. The members would have been quite fearful to think that they could speak up about their needs or problems.
1. Had the client system identified any of its felt needs within its immediate environment?  
 Yes, various tenants in the housing project had been interviewed as individuals about their needs and problems when the agency employing this worker first moved into the area.
  2. What were these needs?  
 The general atmosphere of the housing project was poor. There was constant fighting among children, and bickering among the tenants. There was inadequate recreation and play space in the project. No leadership was apparent.
  3. Can you describe the horizontal patterns for action that existed at this time within the client system?  
 There was little communication between tenants of the housing project and others in the community when worker's agency first moved into the neighbourhood. Tenants felt that they were second-class citizens; others in the community saw them as a 'bunch of characters'. The agency acted as a catalyst, bringing tenants into contact with the surrounding community. Co-operative projects were started with the Parent-Teachers Association of an elementary school and with the existing neighbourhood Community Association, which were also concerned with getting more recreation for the area, including a community centre. The Tenants Association, together with the elementary school PTA and various service clubs, helped to start a Study Club program which provided tutoring for those children who needed it most. The Tenants Association and individual tenants conducted an All-Candidates political meeting in the project which was open to the wider community. This was very successful, and tenants began to feel that they had some ties with the power structure. They began to voice concerns.
  4. Can you describe the vertical patterns for action that existed at this time within the client system?  
 There was no official communication between tenants and the Housing Authority before worker's agency moved into the area. After the agency helped tenants form a tot-lot committee, which was successful in getting what it wanted from the Housing Authority, communication was greatly improved.

5. Were there any existing organizations in the client system that were attempting to deal with these problems?  
A mothers group, tenants of the project, attempted some action but failed. The Tenants Association existed but was ineffective.
6. Were these organizations professional, volunteer or citizens' groups?  
See above.
7. How often did they meet?  
Worker doesn't know.
8. How representative were they of the client system?  
They were not very representative.
9. What had they achieved relative to the problem?  
Nothing, as far as rents were concerned, but a mothers group got a tot lot for the project.

- B. What was your assessment of the client system at this time?  
It was a low income neighbourhood, with a high proportion of families on social assistance, high proportion of multi-problem families, high incidence of social problems, and a high proportion of single-parent families with only the mother in the home, thus creating an almost matriarchal society.

There was some degree of mutual support because of proximity in the housing project. There were several factions within the project. Some of the more mature tenants capable of giving leadership dissociated themselves from those most active in the Tenants Association because they didn't like what was going on. The tenants most active in this organization had neurotic needs, and sick patterns of relationships existed within the organization.

1. Did you identify any individuals or groups that were active in the project? Yes. The Tenants Association had some active members. The worker also obtained names of tenants not connected with this organization (from the project manager and others) who might be interested in the community.
2. Who were they?  
See above.
3. What were they doing in relation to the client system's needs?  
Nothing. The Tenants Association was sponsoring special events of a social nature for the project.
4. With what results?  
The Tenants Association was at a stalemate, but it did at least give the opportunity to some tenants to participate in activities.

- C. What were a) your general goals upon going into the client system?  
b) your specific goals upon going into the client system?

The overall goal was a community development one - to try to help people to help themselves.

a) General goals were to try to relate to people, to find out their concerns and needs, and to locate people who might begin to work for the improvement of the community.

b) Specific goals were to strengthen the Tenants Association within their own terms of reference, that is, to help them achieve what they wanted to achieve, and to help them broaden their horizons so that they might do something about public housing needs and problems in a broader sense.

1. Were these goals related primarily to strengthening horizontal patterns in the client system?

Not primarily.

2. If yes, how were they related?

They were related to both horizontal and perhaps vertical patterns as well as not too many improvements would have been possible unless management was contacted.

3. If no, were they related to vertical patterns? How?

See No. 2.

## II. INCEPTION OF THE ACTION SYSTEM

A. What brought the members of the particular action system together? (The action system referred to is the Steering Committee for the Tenants Brief). Many were together all along because they were living in the housing project. The worker was responsible for bringing them together into cooperative action. Prior to this, only individual concerns had been expressed. Several working mothers had written regarding rents to Ottawa, but had done so individually.

B. Was any of the action system in operation before your intervention? No. The Tenants Association was in operation prior to worker intervention but was not effective, nor was it dealing with rental problems.

C. What or who kept the action system together before your involvement? Not applicable.

D. How did you become involved with this particular action system? Worker became involved as a result of preceding relationships that she had established with individuals whom she had encouraged to verbalize. The first meeting to talk about rents was stimulated by a particular tenant who suggested that tenants do something instead of just sitting around complaining. Worker actually became involved on her own initiative.

E. Was this involvement intentional? Yes.

1. If yes, what was the intention?

The intention was to try to help tenants to do something about their situation rather than just sitting around beefing about it. Worker was more interested in trying to initiate cooperative action than in the end result.

2. What was the action system's reaction to this involvement?

The first reaction was that people came to the meeting held re: rents. A more representative section of the housing project came. The meeting tended to attract different tenants than those involved in the Tenants Association, particularly the working men, who were concerned by the fact that rents were based on gross rather than take-home pay.

3. Was it what you had hoped for?

No answer.

- F. If the action system formed independently of you, at what stage did you become involved? Under what circumstances did this occur?  
Not applicable.

- G. Before introduction to the action system, were you in contact with any of its members?

Yes.

1. Who was contacted? How?

Worker contacted several individuals who had concerns about rents. These included some mothers who were not members of the Tenants Association who had earlier been involved with concerns around the day-care issue, the male tenant who had expressed concern about rents and had stimulated the first meeting, and other individuals concerned about rents, including some members of the Tenants Association.

2. What was the purpose of the contact?

The purpose was the achievement of community development goals, and helping the housing project get involved in improving its situation.

3. What was discussed?

A million things were discussed, many of them unrelated to rental problems.

4. Did these contacts relate in any way to:

- a) goals and objectives of the action system?
- b) your goals?

The contacts related to worker goals, and since some individuals had expressed concerns about rents and other problems in housing projects, probably to their goals as well.

5. Were any important decisions made during these informal contacts?

Yes. Three persons wrote down their own cases on paper, and two of these sent letters to the Housing Authority to serve as examples of other people under similar circumstances. They were encouraged to do so by the worker.

6. Were these contacts made on a continuing basis?  
They were continuing only in the sense that the worker and the tenants were in the same community. These contacts were not organized prior to the first meeting on rental problems.
7. What effect did these contacts have on the action system?  
This was a key stage in trying to build relationships, trying to get tenants to do something about rents, and trying to keep up their interest.
8. Did you give direct or indirect leadership to the action system through these contacts? Explain.  
Worker gave both direct and indirect leadership, but it was mostly indirect in the form of stimulating interest, supporting tenant action and communicating with the Housing Authority.
9. Did you spend a lot of time contacting any particular member of the action system? If yes, who was it? Why was it necessary to contact this person? No. Worker contacted a large number of individuals concerned about the problem of rents, and others who would be useful in taking action. She also initiated contacts with various resources.
10. What were the results of these informal contacts? Were they what you had hoped for?  
Worker felt that if no informal contacts had been made, no action at all would have been taken, and there would have been no results. The results of the contacts were what she had hoped for.
11. What proportion of your time was taken up with these informal contacts?  
Worker didn't know (see day sheets).
- H. What was the relationship of the members of the action system to each other?  
They were all tenants of the housing project, but not necessarily associated with each other in other ways.

### III. EXPANSION OF THE ACTION SYSTEM

- A. Did the action system try to broaden its membership?  
Yes, it called an open meeting of interested persons.
  1. How was this done?  
Notices of the meeting were sent out from the agency office.
  2. For what purpose were additional individuals or groups brought into the action system?  
At the first meeting a Steering Committee was formed, which included a representative from one other housing project. There was expansion in the direction of the other housing projects.

3. At whose suggestion or pressuring were they brought into the action system?

There were not many people brought into the Committee after the first meeting. However, more representatives were added from two other housing projects as well as from the project in which the action started. There was communication with yet a third housing project but no representatives.

4. Were you involved in this decision? How?

Yes, worker suggested some people who might join. Although no definite decision had been made to recruit in the project in which action started, the worker went out as part of a team of the Steering Committee to other housing projects to recruit members.

- B. What, if anything, did you do to broaden the membership base of the action system?

Worker stated that she didn't try to broaden membership as much as set up casual communication. She tried to direct this back to the Tenants Association so that they would be informed as to what was going on, and yet at the same time to support what seemed to be a very healthy trend for other tenants to be involved in what was not an action of the Tenants Association.

1. Did you make an attempt to increase the representativeness and/or representation?

The tenants themselves had set up a good structure at the first meeting. The Steering Committee had representatives of working tenants, tenants on social assistance and tenants from the various housing projects on it. Worker didn't think that intervention was necessary - she didn't feel that it was up to her to change this structure.

- C. Did the action system form any coalitions with other groups attempting to reach the same goals?

Yes, it definitely did so. A coalition was formed between housing projects over rents.

1. If yes, how was this done?

Worker and Steering Committee contacted the other housing projects.

2. Did this coalition strengthen the action system or weaken it?

It was a positive coalition, and therefore strengthened the action system.

3. Was conflict introduced as a result of this coalition?

Worker had anticipated conflict; however, it did not develop, although it might have if she hadn't intervened. Worker played an intermediary role, keeping the Tenants Association informed as to what was going on, and she tried to involve this organization by making sure that it was represented on the Steering Committee.



4. How was it resolved or put to use?  
This was done through the worker's intervention (see above).
5. What part did you play in the coalition?  
Worker had suggested that a visitor be brought in from one of the other housing projects to the first meeting. The tenants then picked up this idea, approved of it, and the action system expanded to include the other housing projects.

#### IV. OPERATION OF THE EXPANDED ACTION SYSTEM

##### A. Meetings

1. How often did you meet with the action system?  
Worker met with the action system over the course of one month. This included three general meetings plus two or three meetings with the Steering Committee, from mid-August to mid-September.
2. Did you help in organization of formal meetings?  
Yes, the agency office helped a great deal.
3. How did you do this?  
Worker acted as secretary, as did one of the tenants; she also helped to draft the brief, collected material for documenting the brief, and acted as consultant. The agency office typed minutes, helped to mimeograph and circulate questionnaires.
4. Were you involved in instituting some type of formal structure within the action system?  
Before the first meeting and the formation of the Steering Committee, worker was responsible for setting up the structure of the first meeting, by persuading individual tenants to take on certain roles in the meeting, such as the chairman's role. The Steering Committee evolved from the first general meeting, and structure was a mutual development. Worker then assumed a secretarial role, but was fairly active in participating in the meeting.
5. Did you attempt to develop leadership within the action system?  
Yes, worker did so but more in terms of active participation than in the individual sense. She was willing, at least on a short-term basis, to use a few individuals who could carry leadership roles temporarily. She saw herself as a leader of a sort.

##### B. Problem Identification

1. Who identified the problem(s) that the action system was concerned about?  
A number of problems were identified by the tenants before the first meeting. During the first meeting itself other problems were identified by tenants. For example, problems of social assistance, working mothers, day care, working teenagers were cited.

2. Did you take part in identifying or formulating the problem(s)?  
"No, I don't think so. I may have encouraged someone who could speak to certain problems to bring them up, but I didn't present them as an outsider."
3. How did you participate in this process?  
Worker acted as an enabler; she helped around the procedure of the meeting, supported the chairman, and made suggestions regarding the course of action within the meeting.
4. With what purpose?  
The purpose was to help the tenants get something done.
5. Was the problem identified by an outside system?  
No, but the Housing Authority recognized it as a problem when it was identified. After problem identified, Housing Authority and Welfare officials were involved.
6. If yes, did this in any way influence the action system or any of its members?  
Not applicable.
7. How?  
Not applicable.
8. What was the problem(s) identified?  
A great number of problems were identified, but it was decided to concentrate on the problem of rents.
9. How long did it take to identify the problem(s)?  
One meeting.

#### C. Gathering Facts

1. How did the action system go about exploring the nature, scope and implications of the problem?  
A questionnaire was developed and circulated to the people who had attended the meeting, and also to some in other projects. It was used to document the brief with case examples.
2. Who was involved in this process?  
All the tenants at the meeting and some individuals in other projects were involved.
3. What was the reason for their involvement?  
It was to do something about the rents in public housing projects.
4. What part did you play?  
Worker played a very active role throughout. She helped to draft the questionnaire, she was active in Steering Committee meetings, she helped the tenants to verbalize in the actual brief, and also took minutes at meetings so that she had the facts at hand.

5. In what way did you do this?

Worker obtained a copy of the rental scale, which was very useful. She had contacts with other resources, and access to literature that came to the agency office. She obtained information from the Housing Association as to when the brief should be presented to be most effective, and this information was vital to the course of action taken. She also suggested contacting a lawyer to check the brief over.

D. Proposed Solutions

1. Who suggested solutions to the problem(s)?

Solutions came from many persons present at the meeting. Some questions were also clarified with the Manager of the Housing Authority who was present at this meeting.

2. How was this done, and when?

Solutions were proposed from the floor at the first general meeting, and then developed by the Steering Committee.

3. What were the proposed solutions?

They were to present the brief to all levels of government - local, provincial and federal; to present the brief to the local Housing Authority and to Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation; and to use the Housing Association representative in Ottawa.

4. What impact did they have on the action system?

None. (?)

5. Were they supported or opposed by any members of the action system, including yourself?

The brief was supported by members of the action system.

6. Was tension or conflict created as a result of these proposed solutions?

There was no real conflict, only a difference of opinion as to what should go into the brief.

7. How was this resolved?

By common agreement.

8. Did you participate in suggesting or presenting possible solutions to the problem?

Yes.

9. How did you do this?

Worker asked questions and clarified issues.

10. Why did you do this?

Not applicable.

11. Were you aware of possible outcomes?

Yes. Worker knew that a possibility for a change in rent scales existed. Also, the action system had the support of the local

## Housing Authority management and Board.

12. How much time was spent in formulating possible solutions to the problem? The time spent on problem-formulation consisted of two meetings of the Steering Committee, the first of which was a very long one, with research in-between meetings.

## E. Decision - Making

1. What course of action was chosen in attempting to solve the problem? The action system decided to present a brief to different levels of government as well as to the Housing Authority, at all levels.
2. How was this decision reached?  
Already answered.
3. What was the effect of this decision on the action system? It gave the tenants something tangible to work on. It also gave them a feeling of achievement, and there was a fair chance of success.
4. Did the decision made correspond to the goals and objectives of:
  - a) the action system?
  - b) your goals and objectives?
  - c) an outside system?
  - d) none of these?
 It corresponded to all of these (a - c).
5. How were you involved in the process of decision-making?  
Already answered.
6. Did you influence the action system in any way in reaching its decision?  
Yes, worker did so to some degree; the situation already existed - worker just reminded tenants of it.
7. How did you do this?  
Worker got firsthand information for the Housing Association consultant and the Housing Authority about the timing of the brief; she was influential in speeding up the process and setting limits. She also participated in the general discussions, and offered to help in appropriate ways such as by performing secretarial duties.
8. What was your purpose in doing this?  
The purpose was to help tenants do something about rents, and from the worker's point of view, to start constructive, co-operative action which might lead to other things.  
(See also original statement of goals - I, C).

9. Did you do anything to facilitate the decision-making process within the action system?  
Yes. "I was a very vital part of the whole process. I do not think that it would ever have started if I had not been there".
10. If yes, what did you do? How did you do it? Why?  
Worker played a participating role as well as a staff advisory one. She acted as a resource person, and through her, contacts were established with other resources which the action system probably would not have been able to get in touch with if she had not been there.
11. Were you in agreement with the action system's final decision on the course of action to be taken?  
Yes, however, worker was disappointed that the brief was slanted only towards working tenants, and not others. She was also disappointed that the mothers who had been working for a number of months on the day-care issue were not included.
12. Did you show approval or disapproval for this final decision?  
Worker showed strong approval and strong support.
13. How did you do this?  
Worker did this through positive help in a variety of ways such as giving encouragement and support.
14. Why?  
Not applicable.
15. Was it necessary for the action system to decide upon an alternate course of action to be taken?  
No, not at that particular time. However, they had a few items on the agenda for future meetings and future concerns. The course of action decided upon i.e. the brief, was so obvious and so timely, and the action system was given so much encouragement to go ahead with it, that there was no question of alternate courses of action. It was the obvious direction for action.

(Questions #16 - 21 not applicable)

#### F. Conflict

1. Was there conflict within the action system at any time?
  - a) how and why did this conflict arise?
  - b) between whom did this conflict arise?

There was not so much conflict as differences of opinion as to what the brief should contain. There were two other special interests i.e. the problems of tenants on social assistance and those of working mothers, and a fair degree of concern existed about these.

2. Was there conflict between the action system and any outside groups or individuals?

- a) how and why did this conflict arise?
- b) between whom did this conflict arise?

There was no conflict. The action system tried to form constructive relationships and get involvement of the Housing Authority right from the early stages of planning. The worker did this consciously and so did the tenants; it was the tenants decision to invite the Housing Authority Manager to their first general meeting, for example, although worker was wary of this idea. Tenants involved the Housing Authority in the role of consultant. "We avoided conflict because we anticipated it and we tried to get good communication".

\*see footnote at end of questionnaire re: a conflict situation which did arise.

3. What were the effects of this conflict on:

- a) problem-identification?
- b) decision-making?
- c) implementation of decisions?
- d) achievement of desired goals?

\*see footnote at end of questionnaire.

4. What, if any, use did you make of this conflict?

\*see footnote at end of questionnaire.

#### G. Informal Contacts Within the Action System

1. Did you have any informal contacts with members of the action system throughout the problem-solving process?

Very much so. Worker made such contacts all the time; this is the way she worked - before, during and after action was taken.

2. Whom did you contact?

A number of people phoned, or dropped into the local neighbourhood office; worker also talked to people after the meetings, both those that had attended meetings and those who had not, to tell them about what went on, to get their ideas, and if possible, to involve them as well.

3. How often were these contacts made?

Worker did not remember.

4. Were these contacts deliberately arranged, or accidental?

Both.

5. What was the reason for these contacts?

The purpose was to broaden participation, to get more people involved in action and to get more facts.

6. Did these contacts relate directly or indirectly to the goals of:
  - a) the action system?
  - b) your goals?
  - c) groups or individuals outside the action system?

This is difficult to answer because most of these contacts were also made in relation to a great variety of things going on in the community. However, worker stated that they were related to all of the above points as well as to a variety of others.
7. What, if any, effect did these contacts have on the action system? They supported and strengthened it, enlarged participation, and allowed the action system to get a broader point of view.
8. What proportion of your total time working with the action system was spent on informal contacts?  
Worker did not remember.

#### H. Contacts with External Systems

1. Did the action system, or any of its members, have any contacts with other individuals, groups or organizations, at any time during the problem-solving process?
  - a) between whom did these contacts exist?
  - b) what was the purpose of these contacts?
  - c) what effect did these contacts have on the action system?

Yes, a great many contacts were made, most of which were stimulated by the worker; this was an important role of the community development worker.

  - a) Contacts existed between:
    - worker and the Housing Association; she contacted them to find out if it was timely to present a brief or do something about rents.
    - worker and the Housing Authority Manager; at the suggestion of the tenants and invitation of the worker, he attended the first meeting.
    - worker and a Housing Authority Board member, who was also on the Board of Governors of worker's agency: he was well-informed, and supported the action at the Board level.
    - worker and managers of the different housing projects, most of whom proved quite sympathetic to the action system: so that they would know what was going on.
    - worker and the City Clerk: to get advice on circulating the brief.
    - worker and a lawyer; he was brought in to help with the verbal structure of the brief.
  - b) The purpose was to get well-informed information, to try and get the facts, in the earlier stages (worker wanted to be sure that tenants understood the broad policies and the various responsibilities of government), to get correct channels for circulating the brief, to promote communication so as to get support from influential persons. At the same time, a great

deal of other related activity was going on in the greater community in which the worker was often involved.

c) These contacts had the effect of getting attention to the brief, resulted in a good piece of action, got results on the recommendations in the brief, and got good press coverage.

2. Were you directly involved in making these contacts?  
Did you make these contacts on your own initiative, or with the sanction of the action system to act on its behalf?  
Yes, worker was directly involved in making these contacts. She did so usually with the sanction of the tenant group, unless it was just a contact to get facts. However, all decisions were left to the tenants to make.
3. What was your purpose in making these contacts?  
It was to get an effective brief.
4. Whom did you contact?  
see #1 a) above.
5. What was the outcome of these contacts?  
Already answered.
6. What proportion of your total time in this action episode was spent on working with individuals, groups or agencies outside the action system?  
Worker did not remember.

#### I. Action

1. What action was taken by the action system in its efforts to solve the problem?  
A brief was prepared, circulated and contacts with various resources, officials, organizations and political systems were made. Once the brief was presented, it was followed up by correspondence to all levels of government to find out what had happened to the brief. Meeting was also held in the Fall to find out what had happened to the brief.
2. What was the outcome of this action?
  - a) within the action system?
  - b) on individuals, groups or organizations outside the action system?
  - c) in terms of the goals and objectives of the action system and the worker?
- a) The action resulted in positive changes in two policies: Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation changed policies in regards to the first recommendation of the brief, and a rent decrease was forthcoming. Also, tenants from different projects had communicated and found that they had mutual concerns. They had, therefore, proposed the formation of an ongoing steering committee that would be-



- come an inter-project Tenants Council.
- b) The Board of the Housing Authority had been unaware of the problems of housing project tenants until the brief was presented. It was, therefore, a real eye-opener for this Board. The brief also had considerable influence at all levels of government; for example, an MLA (or MP?) made reference to the brief in a speech in the House of Commons in Ottawa. The action taken also helped to stimulate and strengthen Tenants Associations in other projects, and was instrumental in the formation of the new inter-project Tenants Council.
  - c) The outcome achieved, and even more than achieved, the goals of both worker and tenants. Tenants had been realistic in hoping that one recommendation be accepted, but had not expected this much success.
3. How were you involved in helping the action system to carry out this action?  
Already answered.
4. Were any specific tasks suggested for or assigned to you?  
Yes, quite a few.

Questions #5 - 7 already answered.

8. Did you set any tasks for yourself?  
Worker assumed one task: this was the staffing of the inter-project Tenants Council, until such time as there could be ongoing professional staff related to it.
9. What was your purpose for doing so?  
The tenants had started something that worker thought was important. They were asking for help, they needed help, so she helped them.
10. What were the tasks?  
See #8 above.
11. What was the outcome?  
The outcome is not apparent as yet.
12. What did you perceive as the outcome of the action?  
a) Were the results what you had hoped for?  
b) If not, why not?  
The results were greater than had been anticipated; for example, the worker had not anticipated that there would be an ongoing process i.e. the Tenants Council, arising out of the action.
13. What was the outcome of the action as seen by other members of the action system?  
a) Were the results what they had hoped for or expected?  
b) If not, why not?

The results were far above what the tenants had hoped for. For example, one man had been very cynical about the influence of the 'little man'; he had not expected anything to happen at all. The results of the action nearly restored his faith in human nature!

14. Were any of the results of the action unexpected?  
See #12 & 13 above.

## V. TRANSFORMATION OF THE ACTION SYSTEM

- A. At what point did you withdraw from the action system?  
Worker had not as yet completely withdrawn from the action system. She has assumed less of a stimulating, and more of an enabling, supporting background role. She is also acting as a staff consultant to the inter-project Tenants Council.
- B. What was left of the action system after the action had been carried out?  
For a little while, not very much was left of the action system. If the worker had not been there to check with the summer chairman and through the chairman, to call together the Steering Committee once or twice during the Fall, the action system could have dissipated. It almost did disappear, because the chairman was forced to move out of the project. There was, therefore, no official leader, so worker held things together until recently when tenants got to the point of having mass meetings and officially endorsing delegates, by election.
1. Did the action system disband?  
See # B. above.
  2. If it did not, would you say that it might need future help?  
Worker feels that it will need future help. The tenants think so too, and have already asked for professional help with the Tenants Council. A leader has gone forward to the proper agency requesting such assistance.
  3. Did you see the action system as being able to handle increased responsibility?  
Yes, it has already done so. It has begun to deal with new issues, such as considering the problems of university students living in projects. It has also become involved in public relations ventures, and sees itself as a negotiating group between tenants and the Housing Authority.
  4. What, if any, strengths existed in the group?  
The group is gaining strength. It has decided to elect officials representing the various projects, and not just use several individuals in each project who have been coopted.

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- \* Footnote to p.10, questions #2, 3 and 4.  
Conflict With an External System

Worker described one conflict situation, which almost destroyed the brief. This occurred after the brief had been drafted and there had been consultation with the Housing Authority Manager as to the timing of the presentation of the brief to the Board of the local Housing Authority.

- the original copy of the brief with the original signatures on it was sent to the local Authority;
- worker still does not know how this happened but somehow someone reported this whole process to the Press before the brief officially got to the Housing Authority and before it went to the Board;
- in the Press, the story came out in a very aggressive way, stating that the tenants were marching on the Authority, and making them sound like a very militant group and anti-Housing Authority;
- a reporter called the Manager of the Authority before worker was aware of the story;
- the Manager became very angry; he called the worker, saying that the story had been a deliberate attempt to bring politics into the situation (there was a provincial election just starting at this point). He felt someone took the story to the newspapers before it went to the Housing Authority Board as a pressure tactic.
- worker assured him that this was not true, and asked him to phone a tenant at one of the projects who had been interviewed by reporters, and had done so quite innocently;
- worker phoned the man in question, who in turn got in touch with the Manager, and explained that the reporters had got to him in the same way as they got to the Manager. He did not know how the Press story had originated - he had not stimulated it. It must have been released by someone who disclosed contents of the brief while it was still in draft form without permission from the general meeting.
- the Manager was so angry that he stated he would not support the brief; he reconsidered, however, after he found out that the committee was not responsible for the story.

## APPENDIX C

## INTERVIEW NO. II

## I. INITIAL SYSTEMIC ENVIRONMENT

- A. What was the state of the client system prior to your intervention?

The community was accustomed to having agencies impose programmes. There was very little planning by or involvement of citizens living in the area.

1. Had the client system identified any of its felt needs within its immediate environment?

Yes.

2. What were these needs?

There was a need for a library, for park facilities and equipment, for public recreational programmes, and for additional special programmes at the schools.

3. Can you describe the horizontal patterns for action that existed at this time within the client system?

Worker was not aware of all the groups existing in the client system. However, several local groups did exist in the community. Relationships between these groups were not very 'viable', that is, planning was done only within the groups' own boundaries, without consultation or reference to other groups, agencies or other resources in the community.

4. Can you describe the vertical patterns for action that existed at this time within the client system?

There was a Rate-payers Association and a Chamber of Commerce in the community.

5. Were there any existing organizations in the client system that were attempting to deal with these problems?

No, not really. The Chamber of Commerce, in a very haphazard manner, was interested in the library issue but did not do as much as it could have, the reason probably being that it had no real commitment to see the action through to the end.

6. Were these organizations professional, volunteer, or citizens' groups?

Worker stated that this was hard to determine.

7. How often did they meet?

Worker does not know how often they met.

8. How representative were they of the client system?

They were not very representative of the client system.

9. What had they achieved relative to the problem?  
Nothing.

- B. What was your assessment of the client system at this time - including socio-economic characteristics, degree of mutual support, neighbourliness, etc.?

The community was a very heterogeneous one in terms of ethnic groups and socio-economic levels. The knowledge and use of resources was at a minimum. There was a high degree of apathy, of feelings of powerlessness, and of being second-class citizens as a result of living in a depressed area.

1. Did you identify any individuals or groups who were active in the client system?  
Yes.

2. Who were they?  
One woman was identified who was participating in discussion groups at the YMCA.

3. What were they doing in relation to the client system's needs?  
The women's discussion group at the YMCA mentioned above, besides trying to solve their own personal needs were concerned about lack of facilities in the park.

4. With what results?  
Before the worker was introduced to this group no attempts had been made to do anything about this problem. It existed as a problem in the minds of the group members however.

- C. What were a) your general goals upon going into the client system?  
b) your specific goals upon going into the client system?

- a) The general goals of worker were to develop a sense of community identity, commitment to and responsibility for their area.
- b) Specific goals of worker were to enable the citizens to voice what the problems of the community were as they saw them, and to begin to take some action themselves to do something about these problems.

1. Were these goals related primarily to strengthening horizontal patterns in the client system?  
No, not necessarily.

2. If yes, how were they related?  
N/A.

3. If no, were they related to vertical patterns? How?  
These goals were related to vertical patterns only in the sense that it was hoped that the citizens could begin to see that they could affect the power structure within and outside their community.

## II. INCEPTION OF THE ACTION SYSTEM

- A. What brought the members of the particular action system together?

Members were brought together by personal needs but a bus trip with the purpose of using free time in a constructive way, which was seen as having some value to them, started this episode.

- B. Was any of the action system in operation before your intervention?

Yes, the group was already formed and meeting around family concerns.

- C. What, or who, kept the action system together before your involvement?

A social worker from a family service agency who was meeting with the group.

- D. How did you become involved with this particular action system?

The worker initially contacted one member of the group while knocking on doors to find out what needs of the area were. This member reported back to the group who then decided to invite the worker. The social worker from the family service agency also helped to prepare the group for this worker's coming.

- E. Was this involvement intentional?

It was intentional on the worker's part.

1. If yes, what was the intention?

The worker did not want to get too involved in a planning programme as just another staff person. He saw this as an opportunity to become involved with the group on other concerns as well.

2. What was the action system's reaction to this involvement?

The reaction was a very neutral one - initially, they were just testing him. However, they understood his role as they had been prepared by the social worker from the family service agency.

3. Was it what you had hoped for?

Yes, it was.

- F. If action system formed independently of you, at what stage did you become involved? Under what circumstances did this occur?

Worker became involved at the point in group's development where it wanted to plan something beyond which the family service worker's role did not extend. There was a sense of give and take,

and solidarity within the group at this point. This worker had little to do with group building and group cohesion.

- G. Before introduction to the action system, were you in contact with any of its members?

Yes.

1. Who was contacted and how?  
Mrs. A. was contacted. She had previously been contacted by worker when he was knocking on doors. The second contact pertained to the group's meeting around specific problem (the park).
2. What was the purpose of the contact?  
Worker's purpose was to introduce himself, first to members of the community at large, and secondly to make himself accessible in the community. At his first meeting with the action system, his purpose was to again interpret his role.
3. What was discussed?  
Plans for the scheduled bus trip were discussed, and at the end of the meeting, group members voiced their concerns about the park, the playground, recreation programmes and housing.
4. Did these contacts relate in any way to -  
a) goals and objectives of action system?  
b) your goals and objectives?  
Yes, worker saw this as a way to build relationships in the community.
5. Were any important decisions made during these informal contacts?  
Yes. After speaking with worker, Mrs. A. went back to the group who decided to meet with the worker.
6. Were these contacts made on a continuing basis?  
No. Worker had only one contact with Mrs. A before first meeting with the group.
7. What effect did these contacts have on the group?  
Worker does not know. However, after Mrs. A spoke to them the group decided to meet with the worker.
8. Did you give direct or indirect leadership to the action system through these contacts? Explain?  
Worker gave indirect leadership in that group could relate to him.
9. Did you spend a lot of time contacting any particular member of the action system? If yes, who was it? Why was it necessary to contact this person?  
No.
10. What were the results of these informal contacts? Were they what you had hoped for?

Yes, contact was what worker had hoped for in that Mrs. A listened to him rather than slamming the door in his face.

11. What proportion of your time was taken up with these informal contacts, as opposed to time taken up with formal contacts - such as meetings?  
This contact only took 15 minutes.

- H. What was the relationship of the members of the action system to each other?  
Worker does not know this.

### III. EXPANSION OF THE ACTION SYSTEM

- A. Did the action system try to broaden its membership?

Yes.

1. How was this done?  
The group attempted to broaden membership by advertising the bus trip i.e. by flyers, and through professionals working in the area.
2. For what purpose were additional individuals or groups brought into the action system?  
The purpose was actually to get greater participation in the event (the bus trip) not to broaden membership of the group. Each member of the group attempted to get as many mothers in the district as possible to go on the trip, but no one other than the original eight women were involved in the planning.
3. At whose suggestion or pressuring were they brought into the action system?  
Their own.
4. Were you involved in this decision? How?  
No.

- B. What, if anything, did you do to broaden the membership base of the action system?

Worker did nothing to broaden the membership base of the action system.

(Questions # 1 - 4 not applicable)

- C. Did the action system form any coalitions with other groups attempting to reach the same goals?

No, it did not.

(Questions # 1 - 6 not applicable)



## IV. OPERATION OF THE EXPANDED ACTION SYSTEM

## A. Meetings?

1. How often did you meet with the action system?  
Worker met with the action system once a week.
2. Did you help in organization of formal meetings?  
No, the worker did not do this. The group decided when, how often to meet, and established its own structure.
3. How did you do this?  
Worker worked mainly through the chairman. (see answer to #2)
4. Were you involved in instituting some type of formal structure within the action system?  
No, the worker was not.
5. Did you attempt to develop leadership within the action system?  
If yes,
  - a) how did you do this?
  - b) what was your reason for doing so?
 Worker attempted to develop leadership indirectly -
  - a) by contributing to group discussions as to what roles individuals would have to play in regard to responsibilities in the programme
  - b) mainly to support what members were suggesting.

## B. Problem Identification

1. Who identified the problem(s) that the action system was concerned with?  
The members of the group did this.
2. Did you take part in identifying or formulating the problem(s)?  
No, the worker did not.
3. N/A
4. N/A
5. Was the problem identified by an outside system?  
No, it was not.
6. Not applicable
7. Not applicable
8. What was the problem(s) identified?  
The problems identified concerned parks, and the need for more recreational facilities.
9. How long did it take to identify the problem(s)? Why?  
It took only one meeting to identify the problems.

### C. Gathering Facts

1. How did the action system go about exploring the nature, scope, and implications of the problem(s)?  
Previous observation by individuals in the group provided most of the facts. The worker's role in the playground issue at this stage was trying to verify these facts. He did this by touring the neighbouring park and the adjoining block.
2. Who was involved in this process?  
The worker and members of the group were involved.
3. What was the reason for their involvement?  
They had a desire to provide some programmes in this particular area in the summertime.
4. What part did you play? Did you help to clarify the action system's perception of the problem, for example?  
Yes, worker did this.
5. If yes, in what way did you do this?  
During discussions, worker helped the group focus on such things as: existing facilities in the park, how many people used the park, what age groups used the park, existing dangers, if any, i.e. traffic, the amount of supervision given in the park. The worker also helped them focus on what they wanted in the park.

### D. Proposed Solutions

1. Who suggested solutions to the problem?  
Upon the worker's intervention i.e. saying that there was not sufficient equipment in the park, the group members began to focus on their own ideas for improvement of the park.
2. How was this done? When?  
This was done both during formal and informal meetings. During formal meetings, the problem was defined and proposals for improvements made.
3. What were the proposed solutions?  
The main proposals were for increased supervision in the park from one day per week to more, and for a change in the hours of supervision which were considered unrealistic. The group decided to phone the Parks Board to tell them what they had noticed and to give proposed solutions.
4. What impact did they have on the action system?  
Worker felt that by becoming involved, the group members felt more competent and they had moved beyond the stage of just ventilating concerns.
5. Were they supported or opposed by any members of the action system, including yourself?  
They were not opposed.

6. Was tension or conflict created as a result of these proposed solutions?  
No tension was created within this group.
7. Not applicable
8. Did you participate in suggesting or presenting possible solutions to the problem?  
Yes, worker did this.
9. How did you do this?  
Worker did this by suggesting that a petition be submitted to the Parks Board.
10. Why did you do this?  
The group, after having discussed various proposals, found themselves at the stage of not knowing what to do. The worker felt that a petition would have the most impact, and suggested it as a solution.
11. Were you aware of possible outcome?  
Yes. The worker felt that group might go along with this proposed solution. He was also aware that the group might not receive support other than verbal support from neighbouring blocks.
12. How much time was spent in formulating possible solutions to the problem?  
Quite a bit of time was spent in doing this. It took most of the action system's time over a month and a half.

#### E. Decision-Making

1. What course of action was chosen in attempting to solve the problem?  
Two things were actually decided upon:
  - i) it was decided to phone the Parks Board to suggest that supervision of the park be changed - that it should be increased from one to five days per week;
  - ii) it was also decided that a petition be circulated to get more facilities for the park effective the next summer.
2. How was this decision reached?  
This decision was reached through group discussions and informal voting on proposals.
3. What was the effect of this decision(s) on the action system?  
This is difficult to tell. The group was enthusiastic and eagerly awaiting to see what results their actions would get and what kind of support they would get from neighbours.
4. Did the decision made correspond to the goals and objectives of:
  - a) your goals and objectives?
  - b) the action system?
  - c) an outside system?

d) none of these?

It certainly corresponded to a) and b); worker did not know about c).

5. How were you involved in the process of decision-making?  
Worker acted as a catalyst; for example, when the group got stuck he presented alternatives for consideration.
6. Did you influence the action system in anyway in reaching its decision?  
Yes.
7. How did you do this?  
Worker interpreted to the group that they had a responsibility to be concerned - that their concern was a legitimate one. He also supported the group strongly and identified with it.
8. What was your purpose in doing this?  
Worker was simply doing his job - making the citizens of the area feel that they have responsibilities, and can effect things that affect their lives.
9. Did you do anything to facilitate the decision-making process within the action system?  
Yes.
10. If yes, what did you do? How did you do it?  
Worker made himself available to the group any time it wanted to meet, and demonstrated his willingness to discuss its concerns not his. He helped the group reach the decisions it wanted to reach. He demonstrated by his behaviour, both in the group and outside of it, that his commitment was to the citizens of the community rather than structure outside of it.
11. Were you in agreement with the action system's final decision on the course of action to be taken?  
Yes.
12. Did you show approval or disapproval for this final decision?  
Worker showed approval not in words but in expression.
13. How did you do this?  
Worker did this through his expression.
14. Why?  
No answer.
15. Was it necessary for the action system to decide upon an alternate course of action?  
No.

(Questions #16 - 21 not applicable)

F. Conflict

1. Was there conflict within the action system at any time?

a) how and why did this conflict arise?

b) between whom did this conflict arise?

Yes. There was mild tension and hostility between members in the group as to whether the Chinese and Italians in the area would support the petition. This was not a real problem, i.e. the group had gone through conflict situations like this before, and it was resolved because the group was developed enough so that it could talk out its problems.

2. Was there conflict between the action system and any outside groups or individuals?

a) how and why did this conflict arise?

b) between whom did this conflict arise?

Yes, there was some conflict between the group and the Parks Board. Although the Parks Board agreed to the proposals of the group they did not appear to sympathize with all the proposals, and provided what was requested in a half-hearted way.

3. What were the effects of the conflict on:

a) problem-identification?

b) decision-making?

c) implementation?

d) achievement of desired goals?

The group got to the point where individual prejudices were submerged in order to realize goals. Members realized that personal prejudices had no place in this action, and were able to resolve some of their own internal feelings.

4. What, if any, use did you make of this conflict?

Worker attempted not to ignore the conflict. He tried to assist members to say what they wanted to say, and defended their right to speak and hold their opinions. He did not identify with these feelings (of prejudice), but tried to resolve them for the benefit of the project.

#### G. Informal Contacts Within the Action System.

1. Did you have any informal contacts with members of the action system throughout the problem-solving process?

Yes.

2. Whom did you contact?

Worker contacted most members of the group at one point or another, either immediately after meetings or between meetings, or perhaps during visits to the park.

3. How often were these contacts made?

They were made perhaps two or three times before a meeting.

4. Were these contacts deliberately arranged or accidental?

The majority of them were accidental.

5. What was the reason for these contacts?

The deliberate ones were for the purpose of getting or

giving more support to individuals who had a given task assigned to them, to help work out steps to accomplish these tasks or perhaps refer them to other members of the group. For example, many felt uneasy about taking the petition around, so worker helped them with techniques, and also to overcome their reluctance.

6. Did these contacts relate directly or indirectly to the:
  - a) goals of the action system?
  - b) your goals?
  - c) goals of groups or individuals outside the action system?
 Yes, they were related to all of these. People had wanted to get involved in this project.
7. What, if any, effect did these contacts have on the action system?
 

They had a tremendous effect on the action system. Through informal contacts people begin to see that you are honest in what you are doing, or that you believe in what you are doing. They also get the idea that you are able to meet with them when they want you to, not through appointments.
8. What proportion of your total time working with the action system was spent on informal contacts?
 

A high proportion of time was spent on informal contacts.

#### H. Contacts With External Systems

1. Did the action system or any of its members have any contacts with other individuals, groups or organizations at any time during the problem-solving process?
  - a) between whom did these contacts exist?
  - b) what was the purpose of these contacts?
  - c) what effect did these contacts have on the action system?
  - a) Yes, members of the action system phoned the Parks Board, wrote to the Parks Board, and sent the petition to the Parks Board.
  - b) The purpose in so doing was to get supervision times changed, to get increased supervision at the park and to get improved facilities.
  - c) The effect was that people began to feel that it was possible to get some change in the community as the reaction from the Parks Board was not negative. They were able to speak to people in authority without getting a negative response.
2. Were you directly involved in making these contacts?
  - a) did you make these contacts on your own initiative?
  - b) or with the sanction of the action system to act on its behalf?
 Yes, worker was directly involved in making such contacts.
3. What was your purpose in making these contacts?

After the group contacted the external systems, worker did so as well. He explained his role, and asked about possible outcomes of the action system's requests.

4. Whom did you contact?  
The Parks Board was contacted.
5. What was the outcome of these contacts?  
A change in supervision times was brought about by the Parks Board.
6. What proportion of your total time in this action episode was spent on working with individuals, groups or agencies outside the action system?  
About one-eighth of the worker's time was spent on this.

#### I. Action

1. What action was taken by the action system in its efforts to solve the problem?  
The group identified the problem, assessed what they felt were their needs, put these in the form of recommendations, went out and got the signatures on the petition, and mailed it to the Parks Board. The petitions were drafted by the worker although the group suggested what form it should take. The bulk of recommendations re: improvements was their main contribution.
2. What was the outcome of this action?  
The outcome was gratifying for the group in that the hours and frequency of supervision in the park were changed, and they got a reply to their petition from the Parks Board stating that the Parks Board were studying the needs of the park, and would inform the group of findings. The worker was gratified to see that the group could move on its own; even though the issue involved was a small one, it was very time consuming. Agencies in the community were able to assign some kind of integrity to this group, and felt that in the future they would be able to support more citizen ventures.
3. How were you involved in helping the action system to carry out this action?  
The worker was very instrumental in drafting the petition once the facts were presented at meetings. He played the role of encourager all along so that the group would not give up but carry the action through to completion.
4. Were any specific tasks suggested for or assigned to you?  
Not really, other than drafting the petition.

(Question #5 - 7 not applicable)

8. Did you set any tasks for yourself?  
Yes.

9. What was your purpose for doing so?  
See question #10.
10. What were the tasks?  
Worker made himself available to the group any time they wanted to see him. He also set himself the goal of not letting this project be the end of citizen action in the area. For example, the citizens had other concerns in relation to housing, and one goal in the worker's mind was how they could begin to attack these.
11. What was the outcome?  
Not applicable.
12. What did you perceive as the outcome of the action?  
a) were the results what you had hoped or planned for?  
b) if not, why not?  
The results were what the worker had hoped and planned for.
13. What was the outcome of the action as seen by other members of the action system?  
a) were the results what they had hoped or planned for?  
b) if not, why not:  
The results were gratifying and rewarding to the group (see #2, Section I).
14. Were any of the results of the action unexpected? Explain.  
Yes. The group was surprised by the speed of the results rather than the actual outcome. The reply came within a week.

## V. TRANSFORMATION OF THE ACTION SYSTEM

### A. At what point did you withdraw from the action system?

Worker still hasn't withdrawn although this particular action episode ended when the Parks Board sent a reply to the group. (In its reply, the Parks Board stated that it was in agreement with the recommendations, and that it was including in the budget an application to City Hall for coverage of the recommendations contained in the petition). At this point, however, worker withdrew from active meeting with the group but other members began to call him on other concerns.

### B. What was left of the action system after the action had been carried out?

Several members of the group withdrew because they were not interested in some concerns now being considered. However, they were still interested in the park issue should it be reactivated i.e. they were waiting for the results of the budget presentation to City Hall.

1. Did the action system disband?  
See above.



2. Would you say that it might need further help?  
Yes, depending on the kind of concern members have other than the park issue, and depending on the kind of reaction to the last reply from the Parks Board - they might.
3. Did you see the action system as being able to handle increased responsibility?  
Certainly.
4. What, if any, strengths existed in the group?  
It is hard to say whether the strength was not there before; it probably was but now it had been demonstrated. Certain individuals had moved to take action on other concerns i.e. a cross-walk, proper use of a black topped area. Also, individual members of the group now felt free to come to worker with their problems.

## APPENDIX D

SECTIONS OF THE INTERVIEW SCHEDULE RELATING TO CENTRAL CONCEPTS OF  
STUDY

Interactional Field:	Sections I, II, III, IV, V. Sections II-G, IV-C, D. G.
Action System:	Sections II-(Total section), III-A, B, C. IV-A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I., V-A, B.
Change Agent:	Sections I-B, C, II-D, E, F, G, III-A(4), B, C(5), IV-A, B(3, 4), C(4, 5), D(5, 8, 9, 10, 11), E(5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 17, 18, 19, 20), F(4), G, H(2, 3, 4, 5, 6), I(3, 4, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12), V-A, B(2).
Intervention:	Sections I-B, C, II-D, E, F, G.
Task and Maintenance Processes:	Sections II-A, B, C, E, F, G, H, III-A, B, C, IV-A, B(3, 4), C, D, E, F, G, H, I, V-B.
Horizontal & Vertical Linkages:	Sections I-A(3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9), B, II-C, III-A, B, C, IV-C, F(2), H, I(I, 2, 3), V-A, B.
Social Process:	Sections I-A, B, II-A, B, C, E(2), F, G(7, 10), H, III-A, B, C, IV-A, B, C, D, E, F, G(6, 7) H, I, V-B.
Social Structure:	Sections I-A, B, II-B, F, H, III-A, B, C, IV-A, D(2), E(2), G(5), H(I), V-B.
Social Change:	Sections I-B(3, 4), C, II-A, B, C, E, F, G(3, 4, 5, 7) 8, 9), III-(Total section) IV- (Total section), V-(Total section).
Stimuli for Social Processes:	Sections I-A(I, 2), B(I, 2, 3), II-A, C, E(2), III-A(2, 3), IV-B(I, 2, 3), D(I, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 12), E(4, 12, 13, 14), V-B(I, 2, 3, 4).