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A STUDY OF THE UTILIZATION OF COM-
MUNITY RESOURCES IN THE LANSING
PAROLE OFFICE OF THE MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

By
David Roscoe Walters



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A PROJECT REPORT

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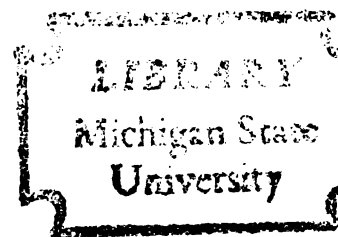
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	11
CHAPTER	
I. INTRODUCTION.	1
II. SURVEY OF LITERATURE	10
III. THE SETTING	26
IV. PROCEDURES	30
V. PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF DATA	34
VI. CONCLUSION	41
APPENDIX.	44
BIBLIOGRAPHY	46

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This project is a study of referrals in a parole agency to determine if adequate use is being made of community resources.

Evaluation of society's resources is an ongoing process, and is one of the ways through which society adjusts and changes to meet evolving community needs. One of the main areas now being evaluated is the field of corrections. The goal of this research is to assess advances in the social sciences, evaluate techniques, and determine what courses of action best meet the needs of this setting.

In selecting referrals as the focus of this study, the writer has the concern of both the client and society in mind. By this study, it is hoped that in a limited area we can view the meeting of the needs of the client through community resources, and determine if the available resources are being utilized to the fullest extent. Because of the lack of sufficient supervisory personnel, and due to the definition of the service offered in a parole setting, it becomes increasingly vital to use community resources. In examining the caseloads that

Michigan parole officers carry, we find that all are handling caseloads far above the ideal set forth by the National Probation and Parole Association in their study of 1953 pertaining to the State of Michigan.¹ Too, the requirements for employment of parole officers in Michigan are rather vague and undefined in terms of present professional standards. Most have a bachelor's degree in one of the social sciences; however, we find some with degrees from other disciplines. The above mentioned factors lead us to an evaluation of the roles and function of the parole officer. Due to the demands of an excessive caseload, and due in part to limited training, many are unable to give needed casework services to the client, the parolee. Although in broad principle, the parole officer is responsible for all aspects of the parolee's life, the limitations mentioned force a reliance upon community agencies and resources to enable him to function at an optimum level. If the concern is service to the client, a maximum use of the parole officer, and the tax dollar, we must view the parole officer as not only utilizing referral as a technique, but actually employing this technique more frequently than we would see it used in some other settings.

¹National Probation & Parole Association, Report to the Governor's Study Commission, State of Michigan, 1953-1954.

Referral in corrections is not a one way process however. Other societal resources and forces are involved in this also. Social agencies have every right to limit intake and establish goals of the agency, but to deny service to a client because his behavior has brought him into contact with the law is not consistent with the expectations of society and we cannot exclude nor deny him professional services for this reason. Too, a lack of awareness on the part of a referring agency and reluctance to accept a referral due to this reason is likewise an untenable position for any community agency.

A concern over the process and use of referral in corrections agencies led this writer to examine this process. With some awareness of the functions of the parole officer and the pressures of society and some knowledge of the involvements of the client, it was decided that this topic could be studied within the framework of formal research.

Underpinning this study are two basic hypotheses. First, the hypothesis that inadequate use is made of community resources by the parole officer. This is to say that for a multiplicity of reasons referral as a technique is little used in this setting. Operating from the postulate that the function of the parole officer should include concern with referrals, it is the writer's belief that this particular aspect of the role of the parole

officer is not being exploited nor used to its fullest extent. Secondly, it is hypothesized that referrals to community agencies are applicable and appropriate in a parole setting. The clients of a parole agency are similar in terms of problems many times to clients seen in any other community agency. It has been previously noted that the individual under supervision of a parole agency has overtly acted out intrapsychic, social, and environmental conflict in a manner that has brought him into contact with the law.

Three central questions underlie this study. First, knowledge of the community chest agencies most frequently used for referral would be enlightening in attempting to meet the goals of this study. It would, hopefully, show the type of problem most referred. Secondly, the reason for referral of a parolee to a community agency would point to the perception of this process by the parole officer. It is known that there are different "types" of referrals and it is believed that if the parole officers referred their clients to community agencies for a variety of problems it would point to the individual parole officer's conception of the process of referrals. Third, determination of the effectiveness of referral is important in evaluating this device. Limitations of time and money prohibited examination of referrals on any large scale, and requirements of research also pointed to limiting this exploratory

study. The present system of record keeping of the Michigan Department of Corrections makes it somewhat difficult to verify some aspects of parole records. Due to these limitations, the writer decided that the most appropriate office for the study would be in the city of Lansing of the state of Michigan. This office will be discussed later in terms of composition, limits, et cetera.

Essentially, this study has as its base the goals and values of social work. This implies that referrals made in the Lansing parole office will be viewed from the frame of reference of social work. Referral as a process has been developed by the field of social work and is a well defined and structured process. For the purpose of this study it was believed that a contact of a personal nature by a parole officer with a member of a community agency for a predetermined goal such as tangible aid did not constitute a referral. To illustrate, it does not fall within the definition of a referral if a parole officer calls an agency for a bed for the night for a parolee just released from prison. This is utilization of the community resource to aid a client but it does not fall within the definition of a referral. In this incident the client or parolee has no choice in determining his destiny.

The social work framework includes several basic

postulates that must be kept in mind fully to understand the process of referral. Further, a referral can only be effective if these beliefs underscore the process. A belief in the democratic process and belief in the client's right to participate in determining his own destiny are but two of these values.¹ Implicit in this is belief in the inherent worth of the individual, and respect for the client's capabilities in meeting his needs.² These principles point up some of the expectations and pitfalls of referrals. Another important principle deals with the utilization of community resources to meet a given need. During the period that social agencies were first established referral was not well used, but as urban areas and their resultant agencies increased in size, the need for referral became evident and was exploited. If community resources are utilized adequately by professional workers, it aids both the client and the community. Overlap in services will be reduced with better focus upon meeting the needs of the client in view of available community resources.

Corrections, not originally involved with social work, remained somewhat aloof to these techniques and processes, and it has been only in recent years that

¹Gordon Hamilton, Theory and Practice of Social Case Work, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1951), p.7.

²Ibid., pp.7-9

social work and corrections have drawn together, recognizing their common goals and needs. Many forces were at work that closed the gap between corrections and social work. One of the primary forces in corrections has been the realization that punishment per se has little effect on the offender. The code of Hammurabi established both broad and specific principles that were adhered to for centuries, prevailing somewhat even to this day. Evaluation of these principles, as they affect the offender, gave the impetus for reforms and ultimately the idea of treating the criminal through various techniques. The idea is to facilitate the adjustment of the offender returned to society. Sometimes this involves not only rehabilitation, but habilitation itself and due to this fact many disciplines have been drawn into the field of corrections.

Some limitations of this corrections agency have already been noted. In understanding how these limitations affect this area of investigation, it is necessary to explore the causes. Some of the limitations of the parole office are inherent due to the structure and nature as defined by law. This agency is charged with several functions, some of which at first glance appear to conflict with one another. It is the responsibility of this agency to protect the rights of society, and enforce its standards.¹ In a

¹This is a basic assumption underlying the parole

sense then, a police function is inherent in the supervision of parolees. Similarly, the parole officer is charged with the well being of the parolee in guidance and service to affect all areas of his life.¹ This means that when the parolee enters the office there are limitations intrinsic in his relationship with his parole officer that are seldom seen in any other setting in which social work is applied. The parolee is given a set of rules which he must live by and the parole officer is charged with responsibility for seeing that the parolee abides by these rules.² They cover such daily activities as place of work, communication, transportation, and deal with the relationships of the parolee.³ The parolee may not marry without permission of his parole officer, nor drive a car, nor leave the county. Other similar regulations are highly restrictive of the client's everyday activities.⁴ He is aware that if he does not abide by these rules he may spend time in the county jail, or be returned to prison. This authority inherent in the situation poses limits to the relationship and is a reflection

process as is evidenced by the legal nature of the parole contract and the penalties (legal) for violation of this contract.

¹Act 232, P.A. 1953, Mich., C.L. 1948, Sec. 791.231, Subs. 31.

²Ibid.

³See Certificate of Parole in Appendix.

⁴Ibid.

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of the limits of the agency. As has been previously noted, corrections remained somewhat aloof to other community agencies and consequently tended to operate out of contact with community agencies. This attitude has been reinforced by some professional workers in every community and this too is reflective of an agency limit. The parole officer is forced to work alone and appears to have the feeling that other community agencies are not interested in this particular area and the problems that the clients present. Due to this fact, historically, there has been a lack of communication and interchange between the corrections worker and other community workers.

CHAPTER II

SURVEY OF LITERATURE

As was noted in Chapter I, referral as a process has its roots in the field of social work. Mary Richmond was the first to define and point up the need for referral in social work.¹ From her initial efforts stems the foundation for the thinking now prevalent in the field regarding the process of referral. Following Mary Richmond, the process of referral evolved to the point where it has become an integral part of agency limit and definition.

The corrections setting, being somewhat removed from social work, has not given the matter of referral much consideration. The literature is sparse in this area and it has been contributed primarily by social workers in the corrections setting. In 1947 Harleigh Trecker identified the need for referral in a discussion of the use of community agencies in probation work.²

¹Mary Richmond, Social Diagnosis, (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1917), 511 p.

²Harleigh Trecker, "The Use of Community Agencies in Probation work," Federal Probation, Vol. XI, (October-December, 1947), p.21.

Three main points are to be noted: (1) A wide range of agencies and programs is available to render service to the needs of persons with social adjustment problems; (2) More effective coordination of these agencies must be arranged so that their maximum energies may be mobilized and brought to bear systematically and continuously in behalf of the people with whom they work; (3) Many persons are being served by one agency, and need additional help from one or several other agencies.

The complex organization of social welfare resources makes it difficult, and in some cases impossible, for people to utilize available programs without help from professional workers. In discussing referral, Trecker points out that the corrections setting modifies some aspects of referral, but that five major points should be kept in mind: (1) The referral must always be individualized because each referral is different due to the individual and his needs; (2) The purpose of the referral should be clearly understood by the worker, the individual being referred, and the receiving agency; (3) Referrals should be personalized. The worker should be aware of the purpose, function, procedures, and personnel of the agency to which the individual is being referred; (4) Preparation of the individual for referral and preparation of the agency to receive the individual is very important. The worker should interpret the individual

being referred to the receiving agency, and should share orally or in writing, pertinent information required by the receiving agency; (5) Immediately after the referral has been made, the follow-up process should begin. The initiating worker should seek to establish cooperative relationships with the receiving agency. In this article, Trecker discusses the meaning of referral and feels that it is an integral and inherent part of the treatment process. He feels that the worker must take sufficient time in conference with the individual and with the receiving agency to define the reason for the referral and anticipate results. One paragraph best states his position:¹

It is increasingly evident that prevention, treatment, and eventual control of delinquency rests with the community. The cooperative, interagency approach on a case-by-case referral basis will do much to weave together our network of community resources. The results will be demonstrated not only in improved services for the individuals, important as this is, but also in more effective community organization. When professional workers accept the fact of their own limitations and begin to use the community resources to the full, they actually build professional practice beyond the specialized level to the level of integration....All of us at one time or another need some help from community resources.

Kenneth L. M. Pray contributed a pioneer article to corrections dealing with the role of social casework and its processes.² He points up the basic assumption

¹Ibid., p.22.

²Kenneth L. M. Pray, "The Principles of Social Case Work as Applied to Probation and Parole," Federal Probation, Vol. IX, No. 2, (April-June, 1945), p.14.

of social work that "Change enforced upon an individual from outside is, in all truth, no change at all. He will in the end do only what he himself genuinely wants to do, from his own motivations, to achieve his own satisfactions."¹ He sees the role of the probation and parole officer as being primarily enabling. Pray points out that one of the pitfalls and misconceptions that some probation and parole officers are saddled with is related to the client in his social setting. He states, "The social worker's preoccupation with the inner life of the individual, with the personality problem, if you please -- his effort to respond to the client's own personal need, without outer limit or definition -- seems to leave out of account the community's stake in its own protection against individual violation of its own rules."² It is an established principle that the community does have a stake in probation, parole, and other social work settings. It is also believed that the worker in each of these settings must be cognizant of the community agencies and be both willing and able to use them to their highest degree of effectiveness. In regard to this, Pray feels that the basic function of probation and parole is protection of the community. Its concern for the individual is as a member of the community. Probation and parole are justified only because the community

¹Ibid., p.15.

²Ibid., p.17.

is convinced that its own protection against crime is best achieved through individualized treatment of the offender. That treatment consists in affording the offender opportunity and help, in the community rather than outside or in opposition to these limitations. The limitations remain, however; they are not abrogated or denied. This is compatible with the conviction that the individual must, and in any event will, accept responsibility for his own behavior; that no decisions made under duress are final or binding; that no behavior based upon fear is likely to be maintained when danger is past. The parole officer must always be aware of the community's stake in the process in which he is engaged. He has a right and an obligation to utilize to the fullest the community services available in meeting a given client's needs. The offender, whether probationer or parolee, must assume responsibility for himself in all areas and activities, but is entitled to the help and service of the worker in this setting. It is the achievement of self-control and self-responsibility that indicates when this service should be discontinued. Donald R. Taft points this up well:

Certainly an excessive attitude of blame, excessive reliance upon fear of commitment, and excessive restrictions upon the voluntary activities of the probationer will defeat the main purpose of supervision -- namely, the restoration of 'self-control' through the voluntary acceptance of social behavior as more satisfying than asocial behavior.... Probation supervision is casework in an authoritative setting. Delinquents not needing restraint do not need probation, and probationers who have achieved full

self-control should be discharged, though they may well need assistance.¹

Louis Ziskind, in discussing the application of social work in the correctional field, points out that many types of agencies are involved in referrals.² He feels that the corrections worker should be concerned, because of the nature of his setting and client, with all different types of community agencies. He states:

Since government is charged with the major responsibility for maintaining the well-being of its citizens, the public agencies do welfare work on a mass basis and predominate in the social welfare field. The private agencies operate primarily in those areas where public agencies do not function, or where because of specialized interests, or large gaps in either personnel or funds, some supplementary and cooperative service is desirable.³

Other than governmental agencies, he lists four separate types: (1) Sectarian agencies with religious motivations, such as the Volunteers of America, and the Salvation Army; (2) Sectarian agencies without direct church affiliation; (3) The non-sectarian agencies with quasi-governmental status, such as the Pennsylvania Prison Society, and the New York Prison Society; (4) The non-sectarian agencies without any governmental status, such as the John Howard Societies which operate throughout

¹ Donald Taft, Criminology, (New York: McKillan Company, 1956), p.426.

² Louis Ziskind, "Social Work and the Correctional Field," Federal Probation, Vol. XIV, No. 1, (March, 1950), p.46.

³Ibid.

the United States and Canada, and the Osborne Association of New York City. This article illustrates well the foci in broad function with which the correctional worker in the probation or parole setting is faced. Unlike community chest agencies, limited in scope and purpose, the corrections agency is forced to view all resources available.

Elliot Studt followed Eiskind's article with a dissertation on casework in the correctional field.¹ In discussing the characteristics of casework in corrections she points out that , unlike the worker in many community agencies, the correctional worker has a legal relationship to the client. The legal relationship, with all its implications for control, between the caseworker in corrections and the offender for whom he has responsibility is both the content and the means of casework in the correctional field. In this article she pointed out that there are both similarities and differences in the clients that both agencies deal with. She points out that (1) Neither society nor our clients define legally determined offenders as "patients." Our correctional client is held within the supervisory relationship by legal authority, and he is defined by the community as an offender against society; (2) Many of the clients in the correctional

¹Elliot Studt, "Casework in the Correctional Field," Federal Probation, Vol. XVIII, No. 3, (September, 1954).

caseload come from lower-class socio-economic level by reason of the selective effect which money and social status have in determining who shall commit certain offenses and who shall be caught and convicted offenders. This fact places on the caseworker the responsibility for understanding some of the characteristics of this lower-class group so that he can communicate comfortably with clients who will be less responsive to middle-class values and symbols than might predominate in some other agencies; (3) Furthermore, all clients in correctional agencies will have been through a series of "acculturating" experiences, such as arrest, detention, trial, and institutionalization, which may well have left definite marks on their lives that must be recognized and dealt with if the caseworker is to help them; (4) Within the correctional caseload will be found a core group of offenders who evidence personality patterns not well understood by psychiatrists and other social scientists. These personalities are variously labeled "psychopathic," "delinquent," "acting-out," and "character disorders." They all share characteristics of aggressive tendencies, high impulsivity, deep-lying hostility, inaccessibility to normal relationships, et cetera; (5) Finally, we find on the correctional caseloads many individuals who have been exposed to all of the traditional services of the community without successful modification of their behavior. What this means for

selection of appropriate helping techniques, and for our self-imposed standards of success, must be analyzed and described if we are to have any comfort in our work with this group of clients.

Stadt also discusses a third factor which must be taken into consideration when we describe casework in the correctional field.¹ This is the agency structure within which the offender-supervisor relationship takes place. These structural characteristics affect the nature of the casework process as follows: (1) The correctional agency is part of a system of organized social control. This means that every correctional worker is responsible for teamwork relationships with personnel in law enforcement and in the other processes of justice, that is, police, judges, and others. (2) The agency in which the correctional caseworker is employed has received a variety of assignments from society, some of them contradictory, and all of them reflecting the uneven historical development from the days of "Let punishment fit the offender" to the modern approach of "Let the treatment fit the offender." Therefore, the correctional agency's executive may find it difficult to set up any agency structure which will support the casework process.²

The community attitude is also significant in the

¹Ibid., p. 21.

²Ibid.

relationship of the correctional worker and the client.

Stutt believes:

A final factor which affects casework in the correctional field is the community attitude toward the worker and the client, and the stigma from the community which affects them both. This factor requires that much of the focus of correctional casework will necessarily be concerned with helping the community reformulate its attitudes toward offenders. The caseworker in corrections will need to use the authority given to him by the community, not only to help the offender change his ways, but also to help the rejecting segments of the community modify their attitudes toward those individuals who have offended.¹

Another significant contribution to correctional literature in regard to the process of referral has been made by Lt. Jacob Chwast, discussing casework treatment in a police setting.² He points out the advantages of the authoritative setting, and feels that the authority can be used to refer for treatment to another agency, to bring into treatment by another agency or professional person, to maintain in treatment by an outside agency or other professional person, and to keep the offender in close contact with the agency. He feels that the focus of agencies should be the assessment of the client's needs, the extent to which they are being met, and the manner in which his unfulfilled needs, if these lead to maladjustment, can be met. Referral should not be considered an

¹Ibid., p.23.

²Jacob Chwast, "Casework Treatment in a Police Setting," Federal Probation, Vol. XVIII, No. 4, (December, 1954), p.35.

information-giving procedure but a process which may entail considerable preparation of both the client and the appropriate agency. An effective referral can itself be of therapeutic value to the client, and also in many cases demands the same positive orientation essential in good casework or psychotherapy.¹

Perhaps one of the most cogent articles in correctional literature as it relates to social work and the process of referral is by Kogon.² He discusses the role of the family agency and the judicial process and discusses many aspects of which the correctional worker should be aware. He believes that social work and corrections are now in a position where we should start looking to improvement of service. Historically the two were close together and have common roots. In the growth of the two, they were in competition as siblings and did not speak to each other for quite a period of time. He believes strongly that we must have cooperation between corrections agency and the family service agency. We must (1) reaffirm our commonness of purpose, (2) make mutual efforts in the solutions of problems, (3) rid ourselves of the many residual remnants, such as "Can casework be done in an authoritarian setting?", and (4) utilize the

¹Ibid., p.37.

²B. Kogon, "The Family Agency in the Judicial Process," Federal Probation, (September, 1955), p.31.

process of referrals.¹ Corrections, he believes does not have all of the services needed for the client. A referral, however, is a two-way process and he believes that we have to define the role of the community agency in relation to corrections and referral. He states, "...While family service agencies have every right to limit their intake, they must face their responsibility as community agencies in taking cognizance of the needs of clients who show their maladjustment by delinquent behavior and who are permitted to remain in the community."²

Kogon discusses the use of corrections agencies by the community resources. In discussing his own Los Angeles County probation office, he states that out of the 9,000 referrals to the juvenile intake section only four came from private agencies. This strongly suggests that as corrections has been reluctant to use community agencies, likewise the community has not exploited to the fullest the corrections agency. Perhaps we can view this as a reflection of the gap between social work and corrections, and we can see that the client and the community suffer from this mutual lack of understanding.

Essentially, then, there has been a gradual involvement of social work in the corrections field. The literature

¹Ibid., p.31.

²Ibid., p.32.

on one aspect, that is, referrals, is sparse and has been mainly prepared by social workers due to the fact that it originally was a social work process. There are many modifications that must arise when this process is applied in the correctional setting and only by modification can it be effective. Gordon Hamilton, in discussing the role of referrals in social work, has stressed that this is primarily a function of intake in the agency.¹ By and large, correctional agencies do not have intake sections, and this is particularly applicable in the probation and parole setting that deals with the adult rather than juvenile offender. Although the literature in this area is sparse, social work has defined and exploited the process of referral until at this point it is a well-standardized process. Although social work has accepted this as a given proposition, corrections has not been involved due to the gap that existed between the correctional agency and the community agency. This is a two-way process, as we have seen, and the gap is slowly being narrowed. The corrections agency has a responsibility to both the client and the community to make adequate use of the process of referral in a somewhat modified form. Underpinning this whole discussion is the premise that referrals can be effectively made and should be made in the corrections setting. Due to its nature and structure it is as

¹Hamilton, op. cit., p. 179.

applicable in the corrections setting as it is in the family service agency.

There are various methods of utilizing the process of referral, and specifically, to determine when referral is indicated. In defining this study, it became increasingly evident that indications for referral seemed to be varied and partially undefined. Unlike the family service and other community agencies, the corrections agency has no intake section when referral most frequently occurs in the community agency. This means in effect that referrals are somewhat different inasmuch as they are tempered by the setting. The need for referral sometimes becomes apparent shortly after release from the institutions, and sometimes does not occur for a considerable period of time. Another factor is that, unlike the intake section of a community agency, corrections agencies must by law continue to be involved inasmuch as they are charged with the supervision and welfare of the parolee. As defined by law, problems involving asocial or acting out behavior which bring the parolee into contact with the law cannot be handled by an agency other than the parole agency. This means that there are problems that are seen by the parole officer and his client that usually fall outside the scope of most agencies. For this reason they are referred to the agency having and/or offering services around a given type of problem. It is

felt that Helen Perlman discusses fully certain factors to be considered in both treating and referring clients.¹ It is essential that the client has sufficient ego strengths to be involved in a relationship if he is to receive any service. In referring a parolee to a community agency for service or treatment of any type, motivation for this treatment must be evidenced. This means that the parolee must have a conscious desire and need for treatment as a condition of referral. As has been previously noted, a referral that is forced upon the client who because of defensiveness or any other reason does not desire help, is not indicated. Secondly, the client must have a capacity to use a given service. This means that in terms of intellectual endowment and personality structure, he will be able to use a service offered. Agencies frequently define their services and recognize that they are ill-equipped to deal with certain types of clients. As an illustration, it is known that people usually do not have the capacity to use intensive casework services, or psychotherapy, if their intelligence is limited. These are two of the primary indices that must be used in determining whether or not a referral is indicated and if it is feasible. Some difference exists in terms of the people who would be involved in a given service. In a case involving difficulty in relationship between a husband and spouse, referral

¹ Helen H. Perlman, Social Casework, A Problem Solving Process, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957), 268 p.

of the wife is sometimes indicated if she has the desire and capacity to use the services of an agency. The focus of this study is to determine primarily situations the person under supervision of the Michigan Department of Corrections is involved in, because this agency defines its goal as being primarily concerned with the client and concern with the family and others involved is important yet secondary. The indication for referral in this agency is also tempered by the community resources involved. Some problems are evidenced that the community is unable to deal with, that is, existing services are not sufficient to cover all problems evidenced by the client. This means that both the client and the parole officer have a responsibility in determining what agency may fit the need and it may well be that no agency in the community could meet the needs of a given client. Referral is not and cannot be a prescription given a client but an ongoing process in which two people, the parole officer and the parolee, are involved in seeking a resource, desired by the client, to meet a given need in the hope of alleviating pressures and making an effort to facilitate adjustment in the community; this is the primary goal of the parole agency.

CHAPTER III

THE SETTING

In 1937 the State of Michigan enacted a bill creating the Department of Corrections.¹ Prior to this time the prisons were independent of each other and each warden was responsible to a Board of Commissioners. The system of paroles was organized with the Governor as its head. Each parole officer was appointed by the Governor of the State of Michigan and serviced a given district, supervising parolees from each prison. With the enactment of the Bill of 1937 a central office for the Department of Corrections was established with a five-member commission appointed by the Governor and responsible to him.² The three existing prisons, and Bureaus of Probation and Parole were to be responsible to a director of the Department of Corrections through the creation of positions of assistant directors to supervise the three aspects. However, the Bureau of Pardons and Paroles is not responsible for granting the parole. The parole board, consisting of five members, is responsible for granting paroles. Thus a man is granted a parole by the parole

¹Act 255, P.A. 1937, Michigan.

²Ibid.

board and is supervised by the Bureau of Pardons and Paroles. Various criteria are used in determining whether a man is to be granted a parole, but if he is he must consent both verbally and in writing to abide by various stipulations of the parole board.¹ This means that the parolee leaving any state penal institution enters a relationship with definite limits placed upon him. The parole officer and the parolee are both cognizant of the limits of this relationship which are legal and binding in nature. The parole officer does not have the authority to terminate a man's parole and return him to the prison, inasmuch as this is the function of the assistant director of the Bureau of Pardons and Paroles. In the initial interview in any local agency the parolee has the rules explained to him and clarifies any questions that may arise from these rules. It is usually stressed by the parole officer that these are limits of the relationship and, hopefully, it is understood that any testing of the limits of the relationship will result in a parole violation being reported to the assistant director of the Bureau of Pardons and Paroles. Neither the parolee nor the parole agent are operating autonomously in the community but both have limits and restrictions placed upon them. The length of time of relationship is determined neither by the

¹See Certificate of Parole in Appendix.

parolee nor by the parole officer. When a man is granted a parole the length of time he will be under supervision is stipulated on his parole papers, and may vary from a few months to four years. Thus the parolee enters the parole agency for his initial interview with well defined restrictions placed upon him. In rare instances the parole is terminated prior to the time stipulated in his original parole contract; this decision must be made by the parole board. A man must have both an outstanding institutional and parole record and must be a first felony offender in prison. To iterate, this is a very rare occurrence and for all intents and purposes the parolee is under supervision of a parole officer and is involved in a relationship for a period of time that is both specific and emphatic.

The function of the parole officer originally was undefined and rather nebulous; however, with the passage of time it became clear as to what duties, obligations, and responsibilities he would have. Legally he is responsible for the protection of the community and of the parolee, and morally he is responsible for aiding the released prisoner in his attempts to make an adjustment to societal goals and standards.¹ This involves the use of casework techniques in an authoritarian setting. It is becoming an accepted fact that casework can be done in

¹Act 232, op.cit., Section 31.

an authoritarian setting and that the role of the parole officer may be consistent within this framework. At the time this study was undertaken, there were three parole officers in the Lansing Office of the Bureau of Pardons and Paroles, Michigan Department of Corrections. One parole officer has a Bachelor's degree in police administration, one a Bachelor's degree in police administration with advanced work in corrections administration, and the third was the writer, a graduate student in the School of Social work at Michigan State University. In terms of attitudes all three parole officers had well defined concepts of the role of the parole officer and employed casework techniques in their relationships with their parolees. This office was one of three in a district covering several counties in the Bureau of Pardons and Paroles. The district supervisor had weekly contact with the parole officers and his function was to supervise their activities and lend guidance to the parole officers in their relationships with their parolees. Further, the parole officers were required to attend in-service training sessions sponsored by the Michigan Department of Corrections on an infrequent basis.

The function of the parole officer, then, was well defined and understood by the three officers involved. The basic subscription to social work goals, values, and techniques by the personnel of this office made appropriate a research project of this type.

CHAPTER IV

PROCEDURES

In structuring this study, it appeared best to limit as much as possible the variables that are present in a study of this kind. Time is an important factor in any study and it was the writer's opinion that the time factor in this study should be limited to a one year period. In this manner it was hoped that trends in referral and changes of personnel would be equalized to the point where they would lose their significance as a factor. It was therefore decided that this study would encompass the one year period of October 1, 1956, to October 1, 1957.

A list was compiled of all persons under supervision of the Lansing Parole Office of the Bureau of Pardons and Paroles, Michigan Department of Corrections for this one year period. It was found that there were 267 persons, predominantly male, under the supervision of three parole officers in this office during the twelve month period. Within this total of 267 twelve who had completed most of their parole and were discharged during the months of October and November of 1957. These were not excluded as it is felt that it would be significant to determine if the request or indication for referral

appeared during the months under study. Also included in the 267 were those discharged during the year and those who had absconded from supervision and had been declared parole violators and either apprehended or returned to prison during the one year span. Although this in itself is a limitation to the study it also offered aids in the study due to the fact that it was not a static, but a dynamic and changing caseload. Also included in the 267 were those who transferred from different parole districts throughout the state to a home and residence in the area serviced by the Lansing Parole Office. Contact with the clients or parolees and their respective parole officers varied from monthly to daily interviews, depending upon the needs of the individual case.

Next, the 267 cases were surveyed by means of reading files, correspondence, field notes, and interviews with individual parole officers to determine how many were referred to community agencies for help with problems. A Survey of this total revealed that twenty-six parolees were referred to community chest agencies in a manner that fell within the definition of a "referral." As previously noted, if a man is released from prison and the parole officer is forced to contact a community agency for lodging for the night without consulting the parolee, it was not considered a proper referral. It should be noted that this was extremely rare. After determining the

number of referrals from this office to community service agencies, the cases referred were then more closely scrutinized to determine the outcome of the referral. Cases were surveyed to determine if the parolee and parole officer followed through with the referral and what the disposition of the case might be. It should be noted that some of the records were incomplete and therefore disposition of the case was not determined by the writer.

After compiling the data on the referrals proper, ten percent of the remaining caseload of the one year period was surveyed to see if referral was indicated. It appeared that this would be the best method to determine what percent of the total cases in need of referral were actually being referred in a professional sense to community agencies. Ten percent of the remainder of the cases not referred, or 241 cases remained. A ten percent sample of the 241 would be 24.1. The ten percent remainder, or 24 cases, were surveyed to determine if referral was indicated or appropriate. The method of study remained the same in the survey of the remainder as it was in the survey of the cases referred, that is, Department of Corrections files, progress notes, correspondence, and interviews with individual parole officers were the primary tools by which this information was gained.

Following the survey of the remainder of the cases, the data were analyzed in terms of the underlying hypothesis

of the study, namely that inadequate use is made of the process of referral in a parole setting.

CHAPTER V

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF DATA

It has been noted that 267 cases or parolees were under the supervision of the Lansing Parole Office of the Michigan Department of Corrections during October 1, 1956, to October 1, 1957. Of this number, 26 were referred to community agencies for help with a variety of problems. There was a wide distribution in the community agencies used. Seven persons were referred to the Bureau of Social Aid for casework services for problems which fall within the definition of this agency. Six clients were referred to the Lansing Mental Health Center for evaluation and treatment. Four were referred to a family service agency for needed help with marital problems. Three were referred to Catholic Social Service and two each were referred to the Lansing Branch of the Michigan Children Aid Society, the Curative Workshop, and the Society for Better Hearing. Those referred to Michigan Children Aid Society were unwed mothers who were on parole at the time they became pregnant.

Originally this study was structured in a manner whereby only community chest agencies that received referrals from the parole office would be included. After

studying the data, it became increasingly apparent that for the needs of the corrections client, the community chest agencies are not sufficient nor do they encompass all the areas in which the parolee may have conflict. It is for this reason that the seven referrals to the Bureau of Social Aid are included. Although they are members of the Community Services Council, the bureaus do not receive any financial aid from the chests. There is a noticeable lack of referrals to Children's agencies, or rather those which deal exclusively with the problems of children. Illustrations of this would be the Boy Scouts and the Girl Scouts. This primarily is due to the fact that the corrections clientele is somewhat structured in terms of age. The youngest person on parole during this calendar year was 13.1 years of age and the oldest 73.4 years of age. This is due to the fact that persons are rarely committed to prison at an early age inasmuch as facilities such as the Girls Training School at Adrian, Michigan, and Boys Vocational School at Lansing, Michigan, are available to meet the needs of the delinquent. The Michigan Department of Corrections does not supervise those on parole from facilities such as these. Another limiting factor is that these referrals that are noted center primarily around casework services and help with intrapsychic problems rather than with tangible aid. It is interesting to note that referral resulted after discussion with the parole

officer of inability to handle finances and particularly grants in aid that were received in eight cases.

Of the seven cases referred to the Bureau of Social Aid, six continued contact for casework services until the relationship was terminated by mutual agreement of the Bureau and the client. The records in the remaining case are not sufficiently clear to determine disposition. Of the two clients referred to Michigan Childrens Aid Society, one continued contact and this agency handled the adoption of the parolee's child when it was born. The remaining client did not continue contact with this agency. Of the four clients referred to the Family Service Agency two continued their relationship with the agency until they felt that they had received sufficient aid with their marital difficulty, one did not follow through with the referral, and one was not accepted by this agency.

Of the six clients referred to the Lansing Mental Health Center, none had a continuing relationship with this clinic although each wanted and needed help. This agency consistently did not follow through with referrals of parolees and consequently all six were referred to the Psychological Testing Center at Michigan State University. Of the six, two were evaluated and service did not appear to be indicated; The remaining four had contacts varying from three to ten interviews with this center until such time as service was no longer deemed advisable.

The problems of the two referred to the Curative Workshop centered around physical impairment with emotional involvements which precluded satisfactory adjustment. One who received limited aid and a prosthetic device, felt that he had received some service from this agency. One did not follow through with the referral. Three persons were referred to Catholic Social Service and each received casework services for varying lengths of time. Two were referred to the Society for Better Hearing due to the fact that they had emotional involvements with a hearing impairment that gave them difficulty in their social relationships. The Society for Better Hearing rejected both of these referrals and they were treated at the Speech and Hearing Clinic of Michigan State University. One received needed service and one absconded from supervision. There were twelve referrals of children of the primary client, the parolee. In this sense youth serving agencies are being used, and yet these referrals do not fall within the focus of this study and are not included.

These data have many ramifications. It is apparent that some of the referrals resulted in a re-referral to another community resource. These resources were primarily university centers that define their function as being concerned with persons in the community. It is interesting to note that in each of the referrals that

was not accepted for service, workers had seemed willing and able in pre-referral conferences between parole officers and the agency to accept the referral. However, they contacted the parole officer at a later date to inform him in each case that the agency could not give service due to the long waiting list and high caseloads. However, a large number of the total referred did receive aid with different types of problems that they presented. Each of these referrals, upon close scrutiny, reflected the fact that these clients were amenable to casework services, did benefit by them, and underlying each of these referrals is the community's concern and involvement with those who have difficulty with their personal life.

One of the main limiting factors in this study is the fact that several referrals for tangible aid and services from agencies such as the Volunteers of America, Salvation Army, and other Agencies offering tangible aid but not casework services, are not included in this study. In terms of relative ratios, there was a preponderance of referrals for tangible aid, varying from food orders to lodging. There were also several referrals to the Ingham County Probate Court, which is not a community chest agency but is a community resource, and these, by definition of this study, must be omitted. It is felt that the final figure of those referred fell within the definition of a

professional referral as to the propriety or method in the referral process.

Survey of the 10% Remainder

Ten percent of the remainder of the cases not referred, or 24 cases, were surveyed to determine if referral was indicated. Essentially, the survey of the remainder of the cases can be summed up in the statement that within the framework used for a professional referral, no case in the total of 24 displayed any sign in terms of established criteria that referral was indicated. The ten percent remainder was obtained by means of a random number (3) being selected. The writer then examined each case in the remainder whose prison number ended in a "3." This group had only 24 cases on parole and in contact with this agency during the calendar year of October 1, 1956, to October 1, 1957. Cases were viewed from different aspects regarding referral and primarily within Perlman's frame of reference.¹ The file, field notes, and case histories were all deemed adequate and contained enough information so that the need for referral, if indicated, could be ascertained from the material available. Not one of the 24 cases made a request for any casework service nor tangible service nor did the parole officer see any need for referral. The field records that

¹Op. cit.

these officers kept were examined to see if there were any hints of problems that cropped up during interviews, and the notes and data disclosed no indication that there had been either an active or tacit recognition of any problem requiring referral. Particular attention was given to those cases in which the parolee either absconded or was returned to an institution as a parole violator or with a new felony commitment. In surveying these records it was apparent that the parole officer knew of the involvements of the parolee and yet little if anything could be done for these clients due to the fact that they did not have sufficient ego strengths nor desire to receive any help with their problems.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

Approximately ten percent of the active caseload during the calendar year of October 1, 1956, to October 1, 1957, in the Lansing parole office were referred to community agencies for difficulty in their personal lives and for casework services which both they and the parole officer felt were indicated. In the survey of the ten percent of the remainder of cases not referred, not one instance was identified in which referral was indicated or feasible. From this it is concluded that the original hypothesis of this study has been disproved. Underlying this study was the hypothesis that inadequate use is made of community resources in the parole office. This study disproves this. It has been found that a good many cases are referred in a parole office, and that referral was not indicated in any of the ten percent of the remainder of the cases. It was the writer's belief that the proof or disproof of the hypothesis would be found in a survey of the ten percent remainder. It was previously noted that children's agencies are not used due to the fact that the clients of this agency are not within the scope nor definition of these youth service

agencies. It is also apparent that some agencies are reluctant to give service to the client who has come in contact with the law. The writer is not aware whether this is due to the definition of the services offered by the agency, or to a reluctance to become involved with the person who acts out his conflicts in asocial behavior, but it is a situation that should be rectified if possible. It may be a matter of interpretation to community agencies and to the personnel functioning within these agencies, that is indicated.

This study has pointed out that there is need for a larger study of the problem of referrals in corrections agencies and that referral is a process that corrections should be concerned with. It is this writer's feeling that there is a need to study all "types" of referrals made in corrections agencies, such as referral of children and members of the client's family to community agencies, and an evaluation of referrals for tangible services is likewise indicated to see if this is a stop-gap measure that could be rectified by further casework on the part of the parole officer or to see in effect if this is a different kind of referral. Further study of this problem may show that there is a need for a total study of the parole agency in terms of community reference and identification, and it may point up a need for further expansion of the role of the parole officer.

In conclusion, this study has examined one area of corrections, that of referrals in a parole agency. Within the limitations of an exploratory study, referral has been shown to be needed and applicable in the corrections setting. This study indicates that one parole office is apparently making maximum use of the professional process of referral consistent with both the doctrines of social work and of corrections. In reflecting upon the hypothesis underlying the study, it may be that the writer perceived the gap between social work and corrections as being larger than it is at the present time. We have seen that the corrections agency is in reality functioning within the framework of social work in the area of referrals. It is apparent that there is need for further exploration in this area, so that we may continually evaluate our role as practitioners and give better service to the client in any setting.

APPENDIX

COPY

**STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS
CERTIFICATE OF PAROLE**

Whereas _____ Inmate No. _____, now confined

_____ ,
eligible for parole; Therefore, in consideration of the signed promises made by said inmate, We, the
Michigan Parole Board, hereby order that the said inmate be paroled after _____

_____ to the confines of _____

county, under the supervision of Parole Officer _____

Name

Address

Home Phone

for a period of _____ ending _____

providing the conditions of this parole are faithfully carried out.

We further order that said inmate will proceed to _____ ,
City County or State

where he will be employed by _____ ,
Name Address

and will reside with _____ ,
Name Address

SPECIAL CONDITIONS

Given at Lansing under the seal of the Michigan Department of Corrections this _____
y of _____.

MICHIGAN PAROLE BOARD

test: By _____
Chairman

In consideration of my release upon parole, and having full knowledge that failure to live up to all of the conditions of this parole may result in my being returned to prison, AND HAVING READ OR HAVING READ TO ME AND UNDERSTANDING THE SAID CONDITIONS OF PAROLE PRINTED HERE-
UNDER, I do hereby promise and agree that:

1. Upon arrival at my destination I will immediately contact my Parole Officer as instructed.
2. Once a month or as instructed by my Parole Officer I will make a truthful written report to him on forms provided. *I will not falsify this report.*

3. I will first obtain permission from my Parole Officer to do any of the following:

- a. To leave the State or County to which I am paroled. (written)
- b. To change my place of residence.
- c. To change my place of employment.
- d. To marry. (written)
- e. To drive or buy any motor vehicle or to provide money for the purchase of any motor vehicle. (written)
- f. To become involved in debt beyond reasonable current living expenses.
- g. To own, purchase, or possess a firearm or any object used as a dangerous weapon or be in the company of a person possessing a dangerous object or weapon.
- h. To associate or communicate with a person having any type of criminal or police record.

4. I must work steadily at an approved job.

5. I must be in my approved residence each night at a reasonable hour.

6. I will provide for my family to the best of my ability.

7. I will not use intoxicating beverages to excess nor frequent any places of illegal activity or occupation.

8. I will not own, possess, use, sell, distribute, or have under my control narcotic drugs in any form or narcotic paraphernalia, or be in the company of a person having same.

9. I understand it is my responsibility to keep my Parole Officer informed at all times of my whereabouts, movements and activities.

10. I will reply at once to any letter or request from my Parole Officer.

11. I will live up to such Special Conditions of Parole as ordered.

12. I will comply with all Municipal and County ordinances or orders, and all State and Federal laws.

13. All matters not covered by the above rules I will seek and be guided by the advice of my Parole Officer.

In presence of _____

Signature of Parolee _____

Date _____



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