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**CHILD FOSTER CARE: THE POLITICS
AND IDEOLOGY OF SOCIAL WELFARE WORK**

W. MICHAEL CUSHION

A DISSERTATION

**Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
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ABSTRACT

CHILD FOSTER CARE: THE POLITICS AND IDEOLOGY OF SOCIAL WELFARE WORK

By

W. Michael Cushion

Foster parenting is examined as a form of unwaged social welfare work. Foster parents act as surrogate parents for abused and neglected children until the biological parents are deemed prepared to have the children return. This analysis includes the ways in which foster parenting can be seen as labor and the reasons it is not considered social welfare work. Face to face interviews were conducted with 54 foster parents to assess their behaviors and attitudes toward the money they receive for the care of the children, their motivations for fostering and the source of their ability to foster. Although volunteer parents are licensed to provide their family setting, foster parents perform work above and beyond normal parenting. This unwaged labor serves the state by providing services which would cost hundreds of thousands of dollars if it had to pay for equivalent services. The question of foster parents' ability to transform what they do into waged work is considered. It is concluded that foster parents wishing to transform their work into an occupation are limited by the gender ideology that mystifies women's labor

done in the home as natural rather than labor deserving of compensation.

Secondary analyses of the occupations of professional social worker and day care provider are used to place social welfare work in the context of the political economy of the welfare state. Social welfare work is seen as undergoing a movement out of the home and into either the state or market. At the same time, a process of privatization is being attempted in an effort to drive social welfare activities either back to the home or transform them into commodities for sale. At the same time that these political processes affect social welfare work, the ideology of individualism plays a part in determining the nature of the welfare state. Politics and ideology combine with economics to govern the mixture of social welfare services. The political, ideological and economic processes affecting the welfare state are part of the larger ongoing process of social reproduction of the capitalist system.

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CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

As the United States approaches the 21st century, it faces a number of questions, many of which involve the role of the state and the market in providing basic services. The question of the degree of state intervention in public life is no less a matter of concern in the area of social welfare and social services than it is for the realm of production. For example, crises in health care and the educational system in this country are forcing people to look at new ways to deliver services to the entire citizenry.

This dissertation reviews professional social work, day care and child foster care, in order to look at the role of the state and market in structuring social welfare work. Two hundred years ago, social welfare was something that was provided for entirely in the home since the home was the source of the production of goods and the site of personal caregiving. Since then both production and personal care have moved from the home. The question to be answered here is how are those services provided once they leave the home and what are the processes that govern whether a service is offered by the state, as part of the welfare state, or through the market, sold as a commodity.

Social reproduction occurs as surplus is extracted and the wage labor relation continued, but it also requires

labor that sustains the worker in his/her labor. I contend that the extra-economic activities represented by family support and child rearing are social reproduction activities that allow capitalism to continue and that also contribute to the general social welfare. Social welfare work can be seen as part of the social reproduction of capitalism not only because it carries out socially necessary functions such as child rearing and education, but because it too, as will be demonstrated, is being pushed into the realm of exchange relations.

Social workers have struggled to move their work closer to that of the true professions of medicine and law and, in the process, have moved social welfare work away from its origins as the volunteer work of middle and upper class women working out of their homes and within the neighborhoods. The beginning of the transformation of social work occurred around the turn of the century during the concentration and centralization of capital. Both the desire to attain professional status and present social work as a commodity to be sold have shaped the development of the occupation.

Day care is becoming more and more like a commodity (Kammerman and Kahn, 1989: 236-44) as it is being seen as educational or developmental (M. Nelson, 1990: 180-94) rather than parenting or child tending. Just as early social work was performed by unpaid volunteer women working out of their homes, the care of children was principally

performed by women in their own homes. However, as more and more women have moved into paid labor outside of the home, there is a growing need for alternative means of child care. This is increasingly being provided for through proprietary operations.

The examples of social work and day care illustrate how responsibility for social welfare has moved out of the home into the realm of the state and market. This thesis uses a secondary analysis to illustrate the broad development of the state in the funding and provision of social welfare in general and day care in particular. Secondary sources are also used to demonstrate the efforts of early social workers to package their services as a commodity.

Social work has moved out of the home completely and day care is in the process of making that move. Because day care and social work can be seen on a continuum of movement from the home to the larger social division of labor, they are used as comparisons to child foster care. Children who have been victimized by abuse or neglect are placed in the care of families licensed by the state and voluntary agencies. They are placed in foster homes to provide a family-like setting until it is safe for them to return to their biological homes.

Fostering can be seen as unpaid labor in service to the state. If the services of out of home placement for abused children had to be provided through waged workers, the cost would be unbearable for the state. And although only a few

foster parents see what they do as work, several elements of fostering reveal its resemblance to paid social welfare labor. The political and ideological context in which professional social work and day care have assumed their place in the division of labor will be used here to analyze why child foster care has remained unpaid and unrecognized as social welfare labor.

The question of the degree to which the state, market, and unpaid labor within the family are involved in providing needed services is essential to how people provide for the continuation of the society. The issue of social reproduction touches on the nature of production of goods and services, the way people are reared and transformed into workers, and how they are supported in their work. The tasks of creating and supporting workers are performed in the market, state, and home and constitute what can be thought of as social welfare work.

If social welfare work is moving out of the home, what determines how this move occurs and where the service is provided once it does move out of the home? What are the processes that govern whether a service is provided or funded by the welfare state or whether it is relegated to the forces of supply and demand?

The analysis of Michael Burawoy (1985: 13-16), in The Politics of Production, is useful because it addresses the question of how the capitalist system reproduces itself. Reproduction can be seen as the perpetuation of the mode of

production. For the production of goods, reproduction resides in surplus value creation and the re-creation of the wage labor relationship between capitalist and worker. The critique of a strictly economic explanation for the reproduction of capitalism, by Feminists and others (Ehrenreich and Ehrenreich, 1979; Barrett, 1980; Offe, 1984), points out the existence of extra-economic processes and relations that are part of social reproduction without being a part of exchange relations.

These extra-economic processes include those which produce the workers who enter the wage labor relationship. The "family/household system," with a male breadwinner and dependent female performing household labor, has been a prominent site for extra-economic social reproduction. In this family form, women have provided unpaid labor in sustaining capitalism through their child rearing and family support activities. Foster care can be seen as a small part of the non-commodity relations that support capitalist production. At any given time in this country, there are approximately 175,000 children in foster care (Stein, 1987: 640) whose rearing and socialization¹ would be deficient, or even non-existent, without the families who provide care.

¹In this context, socialization refers to the standard, introductory sociology definition as the teaching of the culture and ways of the society. Beginning on page 5, and throughout the remainder of this work, I use a different meaning of the term socialization. To avoid confusion, I will not use this meaning again.

And just as production has moved out of the home, so has this extra-economic social reproduction. The family/household system is no longer the sole place for the reproduction of wage laborers; not only are there other family forms, but non-family structures such as public education and day care also act in this reproduction. Burawoy contributes a theoretical analysis which can be used to show how social reproduction processes are socialized, or moved from the realm of the home to the sphere of the market or the state.

Burawoy focusses on the social reproduction inherent in the replication of the capital-labor relation in the industrial workplace. The analysis in this thesis is concerned with the connection between social welfare services and capitalism since the move from home to market or the state involves the transformation of social welfare work into paid labor and into commodities. Social work has made this transition and day care is in the process of becoming a commodity. This analysis will briefly review how these two occupations have become commodified in order to see the elements of a potential home to market transition in foster care.

Just as welfare state intervention determines a certain amount of freedom from wage labor (Burawoy, 1984:38) through unemployment compensation and social security, welfare state involvement, or non-involvement, dictates the degree to which social reproduction functions are moved from the home

to the market or need to be purchased as a commodity. That is, if a service is not provided by or through the state, the need must either be met in the home, through purchase on the market, or through private charity. Examining social welfare by applying Burawoy's framework to social welfare work provides an explanation for the development of the social welfare division of labor that includes state provided services, services sold as commodities, and those still provided in the home.

Burawoy sees politics, economics, and ideology operating at the state level as well as at the level of the firm. For Burawoy, politics is the creation of relations, and in social welfare, politics is represented in two processes that affect social relations. One of these political processes is the previously mentioned movement of social welfare or social reproduction activities from the home to the market or the state. As activities move out of the home and into the larger society, they undergo a process of socialization.

In this socialization, a complex division of labor is utilized to carry out the activity. This can be seen in the example of child bearing as it is carried out today. A couple may begin by seeing a physician specializing in fertility to assist the woman in getting pregnant. The pregnancy might then be supervised by an obstetrician as well as a nurse practitioner, while the couple attends child birth (Lamaze) classes run by another nurse or health

care provider. The labor would be supervised by a hospital delivery room nurse while the delivery itself would be handled by an obstetrician, possibly other than the principal physician supervising the pregnancy. After delivery, the mother would be cared for by the maternity ward nurses and counseled on breastfeeding through the volunteers of the La Leche League. This complex sequence would seem incomprehensible to the woman experiencing a home birth 100 years ago.

While socialization affects social relations of service provision, privatization is another political process occurring at the same time. Privatization is the effort to remove the state presence from production and services. As privatization proponents envision, social reproduction activities are moved from the state back to either the home or to the market. Both socialization and privatization are political in the sense that they affect the social relations of social welfare provision, but they are also political in the sense of being debated and decided through political structures.

Economics, the production of things, exists in social welfare in the form of individuals and firms attempting to transform services into commodities, as can be seen in elderly care being performed by nursing homes and adult home care firms rather than family. Politics and economics can be seen as the same process when the social relations of caring are transformed into commodities. Ideology is the

perception of social relations and in this country, in social welfare matters, an ideology of individualism is pervasive, a view that values self-sufficiency over collective action.

Politics, economics and ideology are all under dispute in making decisions about how a social welfare service should be provided and the degree of state involvement. If an issue or social problem is not thought to be worthy of inclusion within the realm of welfare state provisions, this has a direct effect on potential client groups and their social relations. In the case of day care (chapter IV), the degree and manner of state provision has resulted in the growth of for-profit day care and the decrease in the amount of direct provision by the state, limiting the options of women as they seek to enter the labor force. Chapter III, as well as further outlining the ideas of Michael Burawoy and other theorists, examines the politics, economics and ideology under which our current welfare state operates.

The state has varying degrees of involvement in each social service, from a high degree in the area of public assistance and education, to a low degree in the area of child care. As a service is no longer produced or performed in the home, there is no definitive manner in which that service is relegated to production by the state, proprietary or voluntary sector.

An example of the way the entry of the state directly influences the service and the relations of the potential

clients is given by Nancy Fraser (1990) in the case of spouse abuse which, through the increase in public discourse, has been turned into a national issue. The debate has given the issue of women's safety in their own homes credence as a social problem worthy of being considered a part of the general welfare. Absent any interest in domestic violence through the welfare state provisions of police, courts, and support agencies, the domestic relations, or household politics, of the victims would be left unaltered. When services are not deemed worthy of collective provision through the state it is, in part, for reasons of ideology. In the case of domestic abuse, the ideology of the indivisibility of the family had to be overcome in order to consider spouse abuse more than a personal problem.

Social welfare "regimes" include the state, the non-profit or voluntary agencies, proprietary firms, and unaffiliated providers not connected with the state, voluntary or proprietary firms. When the state does not step in to provide a service, proprietary, voluntary or unaffiliated providers must fill in the gaps. In the case of domestic violence, funding for women's shelters is spotty and dependent on private donations, since they are generally not funded by the state, nor do they have the potential for profitability in order to be turned into a commodity.

Burawoy has put forth the concept of a regime to illustrate various means of surplus extraction and labor

control. I use the concept here to define the various venues for the provision of social welfare services: state, proprietary, voluntary and unaffiliated providers. There is a different composition of regimes for each social welfare service because of the way each unique service is affected by its own particular politics, economics, and ideology. In teaching, for instance, the state sector is predominant with a much smaller proprietary sector, a very small voluntary sector, and a tiny contingent of unaffiliated providers, or private tutors. Yet in family social welfare services, there is a more balanced mix between state, voluntary and proprietary regimes.

The combination of the regimes for each social welfare service make up the social welfare division of labor. Rather than use the concept of regimes as does Burawoy, to illustrate the way in which workers in particular sectors are controlled, I simply use it as a categorization of the modes of social welfare delivery. Chapter IV provides a brief history of the development of the provision of social welfare work in order to provide a picture of the social welfare division of labor.

Although a social welfare service is made a part of the welfare state through the struggle over politics and ideology, a social welfare regime and its practitioners are also governed by three determinants: the relation of the firm to the state and market, the labor process, and reproduction of labor (Burawoy, 1984). Acting together,

these factors do three things. They determine or define the social welfare regimes themselves by creating the possibility of state, voluntary, etc. provision of services. They also act to locate a particular service in one or another of the regimes. I will use these three factors in chapter IV to illustrate the key relations in the state/agency connection, labor process, and reproduction of labor.

For social welfare work, the relation of the firm to the state and market is defined by whether or not the state is involved in the direct provision of the service; the degree to which the state funds the service; and the nature of state regulation. In essence, the presence of the state or lack thereof defines the market for that particular service. For example, the availability of medicaid funding for nursing homes has promoted the growth of proprietary care of the elderly. In the case of foster care, which is provided through the state and voluntary agencies, the voluntary regime can be seen as a part of or an extension of the state because the state controls the fate of the children, funds the voluntary agencies it contracts with and governs foster care agencies through its regulation and oversight.

An important facet of the social welfare labor process is its embrace of the ideology of science, or the ability of the workers to draw on or claim mastery of a body of knowledge. The degree to which people can claim the

legitimacy that the mantle of science provides, dictates the recognition by the public of that service as a commodity worth purchasing. At the same time, the acceptance of a discipline as scientific determines the degree to which the service will be allowed to be brought into the state regime as a legitimate undertaking. Chiropractors' location on the fringe of medical science is a good example in that it not only colors chiropractors' reputation in the eyes of the public, but also determines their ability to receive medicaid funds. Chiropractors' marginality in this regard is illustrated by their alternate removal and inclusion in the receipt of federal reimbursement. Foster parenting is much more closely aligned with the ideology of the family rather than that of science and that inhibits its recognition as social welfare labor.

Another notion of the social welfare labor process is that of caring or care work. As used here, caring locates the labor relative to its place in the day-to-day work of providing for people's needs. Conceiving of social welfare work as caring permits an analysis of the labor process as it moves from the home to the market. This is especially useful in comparing the work of foster parents to that of the social workers and juvenile court judges with whom they interact.

For Burawoy, the reproduction of labor refers to the way people are drawn or forced into becoming wage laborers and for the purposes of this analysis, the reproduction of

labor will be a focus on the way that social welfare workers are brought into the labor process. For the state regime, this often means the civil service system of hiring, or affirmative action guidelines for distributing federal contracts. How workers are brought into the labor process can be a source of struggle for control of an occupation. This can be seen in the efforts of those in the social work discipline to control who will be given the social work credential. The attempt by professional social workers to obtain a mandate has been undercut by efforts to reclassify public social welfare positions and delegitimize the social work credential by equating it with other entry criteria. Foster parents' entry into the field through the family rather than through accredited training programs inhibits its recognition as more than parenting.

The ideas drawn out by Michael Burawoy provide the means for analyzing the political economy of social welfare work. Day care and professional social work provide points of comparison for foster parenting since each has a different place on a continuum of service starting in the home and ending in either the state or market.

The principal empirical data upon which this work is based are (54) face-to-face interviews with foster parents from the Detroit metropolitan area. These interviews covered the general topics of the foster parents' motivation for fostering, relations with their social workers and agencies, and the structure of their households. A one page

questionnaire eliciting demographic information was also administered.

These data revealed a diversity of personalities, behaviors and attitudes. They also revealed a mixture of approaches toward foster parenting. It can be seen from these data that foster parenting involves much more than simply taking children into one's home, and can be classified as social welfare labor. Several categories emerged from the data which demonstrate the transitional nature of foster parenting. The money foster parents receive contributes to their standard of living, yet they do not consider it income; they enter fostering with a service ethic, yet meet their own needs as well; they believe that it takes particular skills and temperament to be a foster parent, yet they believe that parenting is instinctual. The reflections of foster parents reveal that some of them take a worklike approach to fostering on some issues, but not on others. The result is that no ideal-type foster parent emerges who approaches fostering as social welfare work for each of the analytical categories discussed here.

Yet foster parenting is social welfare work. If the services had to be purchased in the market, they would cost the state many times the current cost. This unpaid labor is bound by the ideology of the family in which it is performed, and that prevents it from being considered social welfare labor. It is often performed under the supervision of nominally non-profit agencies and, in Michigan, faces a

state government which wishes to shed the expenses of paying for social welfare services whenever possible. The politics of privatization are at work here to continue to keep foster care unpaid home labor.

Secondary sources are used to give a brief review of some of the history of the development of social work in this country and recent policy developments in day care. Social work history is that of the emergence of organized helping work in an era of great social upheaval (Fink, Wilson, and Conover, 1964: 55-67). The work has developed into a semi-profession (Toren, 1972) with what those in the field consider to be its own technology. One can go to the telephone book in order to personally procure social work services; it exists as a commodity. Day care is equally able to be bought and sold, though it has a much closer connection to the traditional work of the home. These two occupations provide points of comparison for the unpaid labor of foster care and illustrate how politics and ideology operate to commodify social welfare services.

What an analysis of the three types of social welfare work reveals is the power of the state to shape the market and the power of providers to utilize the market to enhance their own occupational goals. It also illustrates the role of the state in reproducing the system of exchange relations. The role of the state and market in the provision of social welfare will continue to be the source of debate and struggle. This dissertation provides an

analysis of the elements that enter into the debate and the effect of those elements on day care providers, social workers, and foster parents.

CHAPTER II METHODS

INTRODUCTION AND ORIENTATION

The first, and principal focus of this dissertation is to apply Michael Burawoy's theoretical framework to the division of social welfare labor in order to illustrate the role of the state and market in structuring social welfare work. Chapter III analyzes the political and ideological context within which our present welfare state operates, yet politics and ideology alone do not demonstrate how a particular service comes to be located in a particular regime.

Chapter IV illustrates the development of the social welfare division of labor by applying Burawoy's analysis to the occupations of day care and professional social work. The chapter relies on secondary sources to examine some of the historical development of the welfare state to discover how we arrived at the current mix of state, voluntary and proprietary social welfare.

Burawoy (1975: 17) puts forth three determinants which combine to structure a regime and are pertinent to the development of the social welfare division of labor: the relation of the firm to the state and market, the labor process, and the reproduction of labor. But how are each of these manifest for the three services under consideration?

The critical issue in the relation of the firm to the state and market is the degree to which the state funds, directly provides, or regulates the service. What are the politics and ideology that motivate the state to take on particular services and jettison others? How have voluntary and proprietary agencies come to take their place in social welfare provision? An examination of recent changes in day care highlight one example of the process of distribution of social welfare services to one regime or the other.

The labor process in social welfare work can be defined as caring work, and the structure of caregiving determines the place of the social welfare worker in the division of labor. However, caring work has been merged with science. How has each of these conceptions of social welfare work been enhanced or subverted as social welfare labor has undergone a process of commodification? An analysis of the development of professional social work illustrates how social workers attempted to embrace science in seeking an occupational mandate.

The reproduction of labor represents the manner in which workers are drawn into the particular social welfare work; it contains issues of control over the entry into the work. What qualifications are important in the performance of social welfare work and how are they determined? How have credentials been used to include and exclude people from social welfare work? How have those qualifications been affected by the politics of the profession and larger

state politics? The social work declassification debate contains the essence of the arguments for and against stringent credentialization.

A second objective, originally contained in this research project, was to determine differences in the family structures of foster families licensed by agencies from different regimes. I approached this through direct interviews with foster parents and in the process was able to uncover data which revealed foster parents' activities as work within the capitalist welfare state. The results of centering the thesis around these interviews caused a diversion in the focus of the study. See the methodological appendix for an elaboration of the evolution of the study. An analysis of the distribution of families across the agencies, contained within chapter VI, helps illustrate how family structure affects the conception of fostering as work.

Just as chapter IV illustrates the labor process and reproduction of labor issues for professional social workers and day care providers, chapters VI and VII demonstrate the labor process and reproduction of labor issues within child foster care work. These chapters reveal the facets of foster parenting that define it as work as well as the political and ideological characteristics that prevent it from being considered social welfare work.

FOSTER FAMILY INTERVIEWS

My original aim was to describe social workers' evaluations of foster families as reported in their licensing home studies. This plan was thwarted by the state social services agency which failed to approve my method, citing lack of available staff time needed to ensure anonymity to the principals. The next choice was to interview foster families directly. Interviewing the families directly provided advantages and disadvantages over reviewing worker evaluations of families. The advantage was the ability to assess the families using criteria that were important to my research agenda. There was no guarantee that the home studies would have revealed the same information regarding foster parent motivations, money, etc., nor was there any assurance that the evaluators, in their role as social workers, would have been able to elicit the same responses even if they had presented the same questions to the families. In addition, interviews with foster families provided the opportunity to explore the nature of the relationships between foster families and their workers and agencies from an outsider's point of view.

Interviewing the foster families provided a rich source of data, over 1,000 pages of single spaced text as well as the demographic data derived from a one page questionnaire. Some interviews were lengthy, up to 35 pages, and were filled with detail and insight. Others were short and devoid of any elaboration. The best example of the latter

can be seen in one of the foster parent answers to the question of what the monthly stipend meant to her family and their quality of life. The reply was, "It's 618 dollars" (Case #5, p.3). This kind of brevity was the exception rather than the rule, as most foster parents embraced the opportunity to talk about something important to their lives.

As mentioned, a result of interviewing the families directly rather than reviewing social workers' home studies was that this strategy played a part in shifting the focus of the dissertation. The interviews moved the focus away from the relations between professional social workers and their agency employers. The focus became the relationships of foster parents with their agency employers and their caseworker supervisors. That is, it shifted the analysis to the politics influencing a potential shift of fostering from the home to the market.

Data collection began in the Fall of 1991 with the interviews of foster families, followed by an analysis of social welfare work. Given the opportunity to begin again, a better strategy might have been to write the analysis of social welfare work regimes first and then follow with focused interviews of foster families or interviews with social workers or agency representatives. It is impossible to know how different the result would have been. As it stands, the interviews provided an excellent view of foster parents' place within the social welfare division of labor

and a vehicle for examining what they do in the context of unpaid social reproduction work.

The responses of the foster parents can be divided into two categories: those related to their own experiences, actions, and feelings; and those explaining agency and social worker policy and actions. The former are reliable, within the limits of the foster parents' memory and ability to be truthful¹, because they deal with the foster parents' first-hand experiences and feelings. Responses which reflect on agency policy and procedures and/or the actions of particular workers may be reliable in the methodological sense of being reproducible, but may lack validity.

One social worker who served as a key informant questioned the foster parents' ability to correctly know and interpret the workings of the agency or the foster parenting system in general because of their particular vantage point in the system. He contended that in the absence of knowledge, foster parents created theories to explain the workings of the system. There is a certain amount of truth to this depending on the background and experience of the particular foster parent. Some foster parents spoke with a large degree of insider knowledge and experience while others seemed to show a lack of desire to understand the totality of the foster care system.

¹With themselves as well as the researcher

However, the social worker's assertion that foster parents' judgements concerning the fostering system are questionable may be based on his own interpretation. The question arose in the key informant interview during discussion of a statement by one of the foster parents implying that the agencies engaged in an auction for foster children. My informant explained the process as one where several agency representatives meet to discuss the needs of certain "problem cases," the availability of services within the agencies and which agencies would be interested in having the case. He stated that in the black humor argot of the workers, it was called a "slave auction," but that it really was not.

It is impossible to know, from the data collected here, the nature of the relationships and interests in the above process (the "auction") connecting children with voluntary agencies. The informant's view of the process was a generous interpretation coming from his position as a helping person. The foster parent's view was based on a conception of the agencies as being very much interested in maximizing their financial position. The data on which the analysis in this dissertation are based are principally from the first hand actions and feelings of the foster parents. Use of foster parent references to agency policy or worker actions are utilized in order to represent foster parent reactions as they affect the foster parents behavior and attitudes, rather than as true statements of the policy.

Many times statements were made about agencies or workers that clearly did not come from the foster parents' own personal experience, but from the experience of friends, other parents within the agency or neighborhood, rumor or "known fact." I tried to ask if the episode had occurred within their own family whenever it became apparent that the parent was basing an observation on someone else's experience. It is entirely possible that certain occurrences conveyed by foster parents, such as removing a child or a fostering license on the basis of only the word of the child, have been retold so often that they have become part of the foster parent folklore, whether or not they are based in fact.

One foster parent revealed her own feelings about such stories, succinctly saying, "Hearsay is crap." In a sense she is correct that hearsay cannot be counted upon as a bias-free interpretation of the truth; it cannot be submitted as testimony in a court of law. However, as biased an account as hearsay may be, it provides a clear view of the incident or policy as seen from the standpoint of the person relaying the story. That is to say, hearsay accounts provide a window into the speakers' interpretation of how the incident or policy affects their own sense of their relationships.

The above mentioned example of removal of children from foster parents' homes provides a good illustration of the value of hearsay. The folklore surrounding this is that

there are cases where a child has made an accusation that the foster parent has abused him/her and the agency swiftly, simply on the word of a child, removed him/her from the home without corroboration, investigation, or explanation.

Although that may not occur as frequently as the story told by the foster parents implies, or may never have occurred, the telling of that story communicates a sense of the foster parents' relationships with the child placing agencies. It reveals feelings of lack of control over the discipline of the children in their care, loss of control over the household itself, and a lack of trust by the agency.

Although the incident may not be true, the foster parents' sense of their relationships with the children and the agency is true and the foster parents' interpretation of that relationship actually may accurately describe the nature of the relationship. On the other hand, it may only reveal the foster parents' perception of that relationship which could be based on something unrelated to the incident such as personal feelings of inadequacy or paranoia.

The analysis of the interview data reflects a combination of the foster parents' actions, feelings and beliefs as well as my own interpretation of them. My interpretation of the foster parents' statements in no way contradicts their stories, but sorts out what was often a mixture of sentiments. Two questions whose answers reflect a mixture of views are those dealing with the parents' motivations to foster and their relationship to the money

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they receive for the expenses involved in caring for the children (see chapter VII). Although the parents' statements about their motivation to fostering may have indicated a combination of a service ethic as well as self-interest, the mixture does not represent confusion, but displays the complexity of these people's rationale for taking strange children into their homes.

I entered the interviews knowing that the issue of parents receiving money as part of the fostering process was a sensitive one and prefaced my question stating that recognition. The situations of 12 of the 54 foster families revealed that the money was an interest to them. This group included those who specifically said, "I'm in it for the money" and other direct, though generally less blatant, statements. This group of 12 also included those who made no statement about the money being a significant portion of their income stream, but made other statements within the text of the interview that placed them in the group of foster parents for whom the stipend acted as income. A microeconomic marginal analysis of the benefit of the stipend based on the foster parents' report of their income was useful in assessing the value of the foster care expense money.

There were cases where it was clear that the foster parents were putting on their best face regarding the money. In one interview with a couple, the foster father said that the money allowed the family to save a little more while the

foster mother stressed the increased costs of having the extra child and said simply, "We are managing" (Case #18, pp.2-3). Although this was a case of the mixed feelings existing within a couple, a mixture of feelings also occurred within the statements made by individual foster parents. More than one foster parent made the statement that the foster care money did not make any difference to them and then went on to say that the money was a help.

Another example of a mixed statement involved a single parent who emphatically and repeatedly stated that she was displeased with her agency because they did not fill her house with four foster children, as she was licensed for. She never stated directly why it was so important to her to have four children and when I finally tried to pin her down on her reason for wanting four children, she gave what can only be interpreted as a nonsense answer

Yeah, then when we go to amusement parks, see everybody has somebody to ride with. See, you have to get two per ride, you know, right? So, if I have four, then...(Case #20, p.15).

From the entire context of the above interview, it was clear that one of her reasons for entering fostering was for the extra income. This was a case of having to make an interpretation based on the totality of statements regarding money rather than the direct answer to the one question of what the money meant to her.

In spite of the example given above, there was very little posturing on the part of the foster parents and I

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have little reason to believe that the foster parents were not giving a faithful interpretation of their experiences. They generally accepted the purpose of the interview, that is, explaining their position in the fostering system to someone without that knowledge. In one of the first pretest interviews, with a foster parent with whom I had worked while I was employed as a social worker, I did not make it clear that the interview was not connected to the agency. The end of the interview alerted me that she might have been guided by a personal agenda in answering the questions, when she passed along a suggestion about casework, "If you would like to put something down for the workers...." (Case #1, pp.18-19).

That interviewer effect did not occur in the interviews that followed, in which I identified myself as a University student. Most people understood the purpose of the interview, though a few asked at the end of the interview, 'Now what is this for?' These type of statements are perplexing in the light of an introductory letter, telephone solicitation, and a pre-interview statement of purpose. However, they do reflect a lack of agenda on the part of those respondents.

USE OF AN INTERVIEW GUIDE

In open ended interviews of the type done for this dissertation, there is a question over how directive the interview should be (Richardson, et. al., 1965). One could

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go into the interview with broad themes or with only a small handful of general questions as jumping off points in order to follow the agenda set by the respondent. This non-directive approach relies on the respondent to dig into his/her own feelings and memory to give a response. There are advantages to being both directive and non-directive and one can ask both types of questions during the course of one interview.

I made the decision to use a somewhat formal interview guide (See attachment 1) but to construct questions that allowed for elaboration. There were several reasons for this choice. I assumed, correctly, that people would want to know how long the interview would take, and following a question list would allow a better estimate than a completely non-directive approach.

The interview guide also provided some consistency in presentation to reduce interviewer influence, or at least to keep it constant. With few exceptions, the foster parents were not led by my questioning. The largest part of the time they had definite opinions on the subject under discussion.

The drawback in using an interview guide is that it channels the thoughts and ideas of the interview subject and risks not uncovering important analytical categories. In this set of interviews, this was more than compensated for by the positive effect of limiting the conversation to information pertinent to the research project. And, as

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mentioned, these foster parents had definite opinions about the foster care system and the social welfare issues in which it is embedded. In many cases, my presence provided an outlet for expressing these often strong and pent up feelings. Had limits not been placed on the respondents, the result would have been a diffused and probably unusable data set. In the pretest interviews, I tried to let the conversations proceed with less direction and the result of those interviews was very distant from the central themes of the dissertation that arose from the more structured interviews. Under different circumstances and with a different research focus, a lengthy plumbing of the depths of fostering experience might have proved valuable, but it would have made for a different dissertation. It should be added that few foster parents would have had the time or desire to extend the interviews beyond the 50 minutes or so that they averaged.

The interview guide had three segments. The first two questions were constructed with an eye toward gaining rapport with the foster parents. The second question regarding the motivation to foster was the one that actually yielded that rapport by tapping into a retrospective of the parents' history of fostering and serving as a source of mutually engaging conversation. It yielded much more in tapping into the rich variety of reasons for entering fostering than could have been predicted. Question five, asking the foster parents to assess the reasons children

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entered foster care was a failed attempt to tap into beliefs held by the foster parents regarding the differences between the biological parents and their own families. The question generally put foster parents at a loss because it was too broad and was dropped from the schedule after its lack of success became clear.

The second section of the interview guide was aimed at detailing the nature of the relations between the foster parents and the agency and workers. Chapter VII details the meanings that can be drawn from the responses to these questions.

The final section attempts to detail the division of labor in the household. The questions in this section, and in the written questionnaire, about housekeeping and money management were not effective because they were written with a two parent household in mind. Asking a single parent about who handles the household finances is absurd, though asking about housekeeping did elicit discussions of house rules and responsibility. Equally unsuitable questions for single parents, were those (questions 6 through 10 in the written survey) dealing with parental responsibility for household chores such as auto maintenance.

The written questionnaire was handed out after the oral interview was completed. Oftentimes the participants balked at this additional assignment after they had just allowed themselves to feel a sense of completion of the interview process. However, all but one participant completed the

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form. The questions included those, as mentioned, which were attempting to tap into gendered behavior as well as more generalized demographic information. Among the questions seeking gendered behavior were those (questions 12 and 13) that asked for the extracurricular activities of the children in the family. These questions did not yield much useful information either because of the lack of both boys and girls whose activities could be compared, or the lack of children old enough to have extracurricular activities.

INTERVIEW ANALYSIS/CODING

I did not enter the research site with pre-formed analytical categories, but I did go in asking certain questions about the nature of the families and their relations with the agencies.

As I coded my data, twelve categories emerged

(FOSTERING AS) WORK	CARETAKER v PARENT
EXPERT v PRACTICAL KNOWLEDGE	CONTROL
PAY/MONEY	RELATIONS
FLUID FAMILY BOUNDARIES	REPRODUCTION
SERVICE ETHIC	RACISM/BIAS
	TURNOVER
	RANGE OF EXPERIENCE

The code categories on the left are those I utilized and analyzed in chapter VII². They are the categories that relate most directly to social welfare labor as work moving out of the home. These categories also reflect the

²All five of the categories are primarily discussed in chapter VII, except the (Fostering as) Work category, which is elaborated on in chapter V.

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combination of respondent and researcher interpretations mentioned above and, in that sense, are jointly constructed by myself and the foster parents.

The categories of pay/money and service ethic arose directly from the answers to questions two and six of the interview guide. However, the issues within those themes reappeared throughout the interview. The expert v. practical knowledge category arose in part from question nine of the guide which asked about input into casework decisions, but other information pertinent to this category arose in other discussion about caseworker relations. Likewise, the notion of fluid family boundaries was inspired by the foster parents talking about the current members of the household, question one of the guide, but was supported and amplified by other parts of the interview. The category, (fostering as) work, was jointly inspired as I began to define the politics of the welfare state as the socialization of reproduction, but also from some overt statements by the foster parents defining what they did as work.

The categories in the right hand column are either those which had few entries, the bottom three, or did not warrant analysis. These categories did not warrant analysis either because of their lack of direct relevance to the themes developed in the dissertation or because the category served as a catchment containing statements or information which seemed to not fit in any of the other categories.

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Once the pertinent categories are identified, the researcher attempts to saturate (Glaser and Strauss, 1974; 61) them by reaching the point where no new data are being found. In Glaser and Strauss's grounded theory approach, this is an open-ended process which continues as long as necessary. Although this paper is not utilizing the grounded theory method, it is a valid question to ask whether the categories became saturated. The five principal categories contain considerable breadth of information. As the categories developed, additional questions could have been written to further tap into these areas. For instance, specific questions about family expenses, assets and income could have further illuminated the question of whether or not the family benefitted from the foster care stipend. However, that additional, possibly excessive, probing might have yielded more rejection than responsiveness.

Had I begun the interviews with a more focussed notion of foster parenting as work, I probably could have targeted questions and probed with an eye toward expanding the data collected in the four non-money categories. As it stands, the information in these categories relies on indirect references and researcher analysis, but still convincingly illustrate the meaning of the category. More foster parents could have been interviewed, but I do not believe the analytical benefit would have been worth the cost in time and expense.

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All interviews were tape recorded and transcribed into written text by myself and a professional typist. The professionally transcribed tapes were reviewed for accuracy and completeness during the course of coding. This method proved effective in obtaining complete and correct texts in nearly all cases. The limits were incurred through operator error which mostly involved a failure to insist on a seating arrangement that provided optimum sound quality rather than choosing arrangements that made the subject(s) most at ease with the tape recorder. However, this resulted in difficulty in transcription rather than any loss of data. One disaster did occur when the tape recorder batteries failed during an interview when the indicator light was out of view. This was rectified to the extent possible by immediately transcribing the tape and filling in the absent data from memory. What was lost was direct quotations of 20 to 30 percent of the interview, which was not significant.

No foster parent who participated in the interviews had any reservations about being tape recorded. There were two instances in which scheduled interviews were aborted, in part, because of the tape recorder. In both of these cases, the tape recorder was the focal point, though there appeared to be some other reason or reasons for refusing the interview. One of these families was in the process of adopting a foster child and they did not want to put that adoption at risk. For those families who did participate, the tape recorder posed no problem and several used the

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question of the tape recorder to affirm the certainty with which they held to the views they were about to relate.

I used the following technique to code and analyze the data. Each interview was preserved on machine readable computer disk and during the course of rereading the interviews, I flagged each portion of the text which belonged in one of the emerging code categories. At the same time, I wrote the name and page number of the interview in which each entry occurred on a code sheet for that category. At the end of the coding process, I had 12 code sheets which contained all entries for each category.

After coding all of the interviews, I took the code sheets of the five categories I analyzed and reread all entries belonging in the category. The code sheets served as a basis for determining whether or not to work with that category. When rereading the entries, I placed them into subheadings within the category. For each of those subheadings, I cited a few words of the quote for that entry. This process allowed me to coalesce and organize all references in the text that were pertinent to the category and to place particular references in their proper context. It also served as a means of reacquaintance with the nuances of the texts.

SAMPLE/SAMPLING FRAME

I chose to interview families from the Oakland, Wayne, and Macomb county area because of the density and

heterogeneity of the area. The tri-county area provides extremes of wealth and culture which offer the potential for a greater number of combinations of parent and child, worker and agency pairings. It also has a large number of social work agencies which allows for greater comparison. Since a large number of foster parents are licensed within these counties, there is a broad pool from which to draw in order to achieve saturation of the categories. The lists of foster parents are part of the public record and available by request from the Department of Social Services. Foster parent lists are arranged by county, so I obtained three lists of names, each arranged alphabetically. From the three lists, I created four strata: Oakland county, Macomb county, Wayne county/Detroit, and Wayne county/non-Detroit. I systematically sampled proportionate to size in order to arrive at a list of 200 from which to draw my interview subjects. I mailed each foster parent a letter (See attachment 2) informing them of the study and my interest in interviewing them and followed up several days or weeks later with a telephone call in order to arrange the interview.

I asked to interview the primary caregiver within the household on the assumption that that person is most involved with the fostering process, the worker and the agency. Restricting the interview to the primary caregiver also prevented any influence by a spouse not involved in the fostering process who might distort the answers of the

primary caregiver who is closer to nexus of family and fostering activity. In addition, it is much easier to transcribe an interview with one person and one voice than to separate and decipher several voices.

In order to at least discover the general feelings of the spouse toward the agency, I began to ask four questions of the foster fathers³ either following the principal interview or later by telephone. I abandoned this procedure after several interviews because of the difficulty in connecting with the spouses by phone and the lack of information yielded by the interviews. The husbands I did talk to generally claimed little to no relationship with the agency and the caseworker.

I conducted 13 interviews with the spouse present. In only four of them did I have the sense that his presence might have significantly altered the amount or quality of the information received. Nineteen of the sampled foster parents were single mothers. I also had the chance to interview one single father. In these 20 cases, as mentioned, a number of my household questions (11, 12, and 13 on the interview guide) did not apply. Those parents could have been asked questions which would have placed their fostering and single parenthood in perspective. However, this would have added undue time to the interview.

³The three key informant interviewees affirmed that fostering is principally the female's responsibility and all of the spouse interviews were with fathers.

FIGURE 2-1 RESPONSE RATES

This chart depicts my response rate calculations. The target is that number dictated by proportional sampling. The "no phones" are those without listed telephone numbers, those for whom the listed number did not belong to the listed foster parent, and those numbers that were disconnected without further information. Potential interviewees reflect a simple subtraction of the no phones from the number of letters sent.

<u>Oakland County</u>		<u>Macomb County</u>	
Target	= 9	Target	= 4
Interviews	= 9	Interviews	= 5
Letters Sent	= 38	Letters Sent	= 15
No Phones	= -4	No Phones	= -3
-----		-----	
	= 34	Potential Subjects	= 12
(5) Those Not Phoned	= -15	(1) Acceptances	= 6
-----		Rejections	= 3
Potential Subjects	= 19	(4) Try Again Later	= 3
(1) Acceptances	= 12	RESPONSE RATE = 50%	
Rejections	= 3		
Try Again Later	= 4		
RESPONSE RATE = 63%			
-----		-----	
<u>Wayne Co.-not Detroit</u>		<u>Detroit</u>	
Target	= 10	Target	= 27
Interviews	= 11	Interviews	= 27
Letters Sent	= 18	Letters Sent	= 83
No Phones	= -4	(2) No Phones	= -28
-----		-----	
Potential Subjects	= 14	Potential Subjects	= 55
Acceptances	= 11	(3) Acceptances	= 31
Rejections	= 1	Rejections	= 17
Try Again Later	= 2	Try Again Later	= 7
RESPONSE RATE = 79%		RESPONSE RATE = 56%	

1. Includes One Telephone Interview
2. Includes Those Unable to Be Contacted
3. Includes Three who asked to be interviewed by Telephone
4. Try Again Later were those people who neither accepted not outright rejected being interviewed, but asked me to call back at a later time.
5. In Oakland County, I lost track of the number of acceptances I obtained and sent out an excessive number of letters. I did not follow these up with solicitations for interviews.

RESPONSE RATES

My response rate (see figure 2-1, p. 40) for the entire sample was 60 percent. This ranged from a high of 79 percent in non-Detroit Wayne county (the suburbs) to a low of 50 percent in Macomb county, the stratum with the smallest sample size. I believe this is a good response rate given an interview structure which had me entering the parents' homes.

Those who refused to be interviewed did so for a variety of reasons. Many simply could not because of time constraints. One single parent worked full time and was attending school. A smaller number were reticent because they did not want the family privacy invaded by a stranger entering the household. Chapter VII elaborates on the notion of foster families having fluid families boundaries, in part because of the access that strangers have to their households. Refusal on the basis of the privacy issue could be a reaction to the openness of foster parent households. That is, since social workers and biological parents regularly enter their homes, foster parents may be especially guarded about allowing strangers into their homes unnecessarily.

Some of those who were reluctant to be interviewed asked if the interview could be conducted on the telephone and there were several cases where I did ask some questions from the guide over the phone. A few of those who refused said that they did not feel their accounts would be of any

interest to me, some of those because they were licensed in order to adopt and others because they were fostering a relative.

Some people, including those I did interview and those I did not, felt that they should ask their agency for permission to be interviewed. The only instance of which I am aware where permission was denied due to the agency's wishes was by a foster parent licensed through Wayne county DSS. A small percentage of those I interviewed were extremely receptive. They looked forward to our meeting with anticipation, enjoyed talking about their families and their fostering, and looked forward to seeing a summary of my findings. For the most part, the subjects fell in between those who were anxious to talk to me and those who pointedly refused.

It is, of course, impossible to say for certain how this pattern of response affected the answers I received. I talked to a number of people happy with fostering in general as well as with their agency and some who had strong misgivings about their agency. Given the range of feelings received, I believe I tapped the available responses.

KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS

In order to get another perspective on some of the issues contained in the foster parent interviews, I conducted three additional interviews of people with varying backgrounds and many years of experience in the foster care

system. The first of these was with Dawn Royston, a juvenile court referee⁴ who has acted as a foster care caseworker and supervisor of foster care in the juvenile court when that agency was still operating foster care. What I hoped to gain from this interview was a sense of a caseworker's view of the foster parent and her sense of the foster parent's status as a worker.

The second key informant interview was with Sharon Wasson, the executive director of the Home Development Project of the Michigan Foster and Adoptive Parent Association. I also entered this interview with an eye toward obtaining her perspective on foster parents as workers. However, I was also trying to find out more about a proposal that one of the foster parents had mentioned which would make foster parents independent contractors rather than affiliated with one particular agency. Since this so strongly suggested a move on the part of foster parents toward entrepreneurship, it was worthy of pursuing.

The third of these interviews was with Erik Greinke, a social worker with whom I had worked during my time as a social worker. Erik has long experience working in foster care in voluntary agencies and I sought him out to answer a

⁴A referee, often an attorney, acts as a judge in certain circumstances in the juvenile court. In the county in which this particular referee operated, her duties included presiding over preliminary hearings to determine whether there was sufficient evidence of abuse or neglect to warrant the proceedings moving before the judge.

number of questions I had regarding the operation of the voluntary agencies.

These interviews gave me some first-hand information on agency workings applicable to the chapter on foster care. They also gave me the opportunity to cross-check information received from foster parents as well as my own ideas. The key informant interviews both confirmed the nature of foster parenting as work as well as illustrated the distance foster parents need to travel to be accepted as workers.

CHAPTER III THEORY

INTRODUCTION

The primary theoretical orientation of this work comes from Michael Burawoy (1975), whose object is to provide an outline of the historical reproduction of capitalist relations that also explains the contemporary dynamics of capitalism. Burawoy's focus is the industrial working class. My interest is social welfare work, but the concepts he uses and the analysis he develops is applicable to social welfare work. He provides a framework for understanding the larger context of the welfare state in which social welfare work resides. Social welfare activities in capitalist society involve the dynamics of socialization and privatization. Socialization is a process in which social reproduction labor, originally performed in the home, is moved into the larger societal division of labor. Privatization is advocated to push services either back to the home or into the market because of a belief in the greater efficiency and effectiveness of private provision.

The other theoretical strand is that of Marxist Feminism. For Burawoy, the production process is at the center of the analysis because, for him, class oppression shapes gender (and racial) oppression. His work lacks a means to look at the contemporary place of gender and the family in production or the role played by gender in the

production process. Feminist analysis is necessary for an analysis of social welfare work as it exists as reproduction work and as a principally female occupation. A Marxist Feminist analysis of unwaged labor addresses capitalist social reproduction. Foster parenting can be seen, as can parenting done by biological parents, as unwaged work which supports capitalist reproduction.

Joining these theoretical frameworks is logical because each is concerned with the notion of social reproduction, the perpetuation of inequality and the potential for social change. Social welfare and the welfare state, gender and family, the labor process and the state, all involve social reproduction in some fashion and the labor of social welfare work connects with all of these. The issue at hand in this research project is how the structuring of social welfare work acts to perpetuate capitalist social relations. Specifically, how are social reproduction activities transformed into commodities and those performing those tasks transformed into wage laborers.

UNWAGED LABOR AND SOCIAL REPRODUCTION

Social reproduction contains many interconnecting elements that need to be presented in order to use Burawoy's and feminist analyses to place social welfare work and fostering in perspective. Following Marx, Himmelweit (1983) states that "reproduction therefore involves both production and the setting up of conditions whereby production can

continue to take place." But the conditions under which production can take place and their relations to the mode of production are subject to debate.

Capitalist production hinges on the production of surplus value, and it also involves the production of the relationship between the capitalist and the worker, the wage labor relation (Burawoy, 1975:27-8). Both of these need to be replicated for the capitalist system to continue. The debate revolves around the need for extra-economic structures in order for capitalist relations to be reproduced.

Burawoy follows Althusser and Balibar (1970) in seeing the capitalist system made up of economic, political, and ideological elements, all of which must be reproduced in order to sustain the continuation of the mode of production. Burawoy's aim is to analyze how these elements aid the securing and obscuring of surplus value. Burawoy focusses on the re-creation of capitalist production through the structures or apparatuses (such as an internal labor market) that contribute to that re-creation; his concentration is on the industrial working class and its position in the system of production rather than the actions of other classes (or class fractions) in the realm of distribution or consumption, the latter of which has largely been seen as the province of women in the family setting.

For Burawoy, family relations are treated through an examination of the historical role of patriarchy in

supporting the system of production (pp. 91-99) but he does not address patriarchy's contemporary support of capitalism. For Burawoy, the sphere of production is the primary source of exploitation. He recognizes racism and sexism as separate spheres of oppression and believes "racial and gender domination are shaped by the class in which they are embedded more than the forms of class domination are shaped by gender and race" (Burawoy, 1985: 9). By focussing on production, he leaves unexamined important elements necessary to the continuation of the system of production and ways in which previously non-economic services are transformed into commodities.

As mentioned, disagreement exists over the meaning of social reproduction or the reproduction of capitalist social relations. From a strictly Marxist view this process exists within the workplace as the capitalist exchange relation between worker and owner is replicated and surplus is extracted. The feminist critique of this is that capitalist social relations would not be possible without the unpaid household work that reproduces workers from generation to generation and on a day to day basis (McIntosh, 1979). That is, while capitalism perpetuates itself through wage-labor and the process of surplus extraction, that process is not sufficient to reproduce workers to perpetuate the wage-labor system and capital accumulation. The family serves as a "condition whereby production can continue to take place."

Social reproduction occurs as surplus is extracted and the wage labor relation continued, but it also requires labor that sustains the worker in his/her labor. I contend that the extra-economic activities represented by family support and child rearing are social reproduction activities that allow capitalism to continue and that also contribute to the general social welfare. Social welfare work can be seen as part of the social reproduction of capitalism not only because it carries out socially necessary functions such as child rearing and education, but because it too, as will be demonstrated, is being pushed into the realm of exchange relations.

What feminist analysis brings to the discussion of social reproduction is an analysis of "...the process by which people and their labor power are reproduced..." (Himmelweit, 1983). People have to be produced biologically, and they have to be transformed into workers. The rearing, or reproduction, of children must occur on a daily basis as well as through the generations. These processes of worker reproduction occur outside of the production process. However, social reproduction in the sense of the production of workers is connected to the production process because the production process provides the goods on which workers subsist. Social reproduction in the sense of producing the conditions under which surplus is produced, is dependent on the reproduction of workers who produce the surplus. In other words, capitalist social

reproduction requires the production of surplus value, the recreation of the wage labor relation, and the reproduction of human biological units and their transformation into workers. A Marxist Feminist analysis does not ignore the importance of production, but brings into focus the supporting spheres of patriarchy and the family.

Women are at the center of social reproduction in all senses of the word. They make up approximately half of the labor force (U.S. Department of Labor, 1991). They are the principals responsible for reproducing people and their talents, and as the majority of workers in social welfare agencies, they are performing worker reproduction activities for a wage. In their capacities as mothers, teachers, day care providers, and health care workers, women prepare people for work and physically and psychologically keep them on the job. They do this in and outside the home.

This raises the question of when social reproduction activities should be considered as work. Applebaum (1984: 1) states, "Work exists everywhere because people must solve the problems of subsistence in order to meet human needs." And Nash (1984: 45) defines work as "purposive activity directed toward meeting physical and social needs..." Although work is defined as meeting needs, it is the context and conditions under which work is carried out which affects how a society is constituted and will be reconstituted.

Natalie Sokoloff (1980: 203) characterized women's operation paid and unpaid activity as the dialectic of

women's home and market work. "[T]hus, while patriarchy and capital organize the home and market, the fact that the home and market exist is, in turn, essential to the continuation of both patriarchy and capitalism...[and] it becomes abundantly clear that women's careers include both homemaking and working in the labor market." Unlike Burawoy, Sokoloff sees the gender and class systems as intertwined and does not try to grant one primacy or supremacy over the other. The career of a foster parent is, at the same time, one of homemaking and laboring.

Sokoloff's analysis sees the home environment, which is structured by patriarchy and capitalism, affecting women's market activity. Yet she also sees women's position in the market shaped not only by their position in the patriarchal home but by the existence of patriarchy in the market. That is to say, women are in a disadvantaged position in the market because of their responsibilities in the home, yet they are also at a disadvantage because of the gender division of labor which places them in inferior and subordinate occupational positions.

Sokoloff also agrees with those she calls Early Marxist Feminists who argued that capital uses patriarchy to its benefit through the unwaged labor of women in the home. Women are not just providing emotional support to their husband wage-laborers, nor are they disadvantaged only because their inferior non-market work is considered less valuable than paid labor. Women lose out because they are

engaged in necessary labor for which they are unfairly compensated, if compensated at all.

Mary McIntosh (1979) has put forth the concept of the family-household system which combines the family wage mechanism for earning income and a female in the home for providing caretaking services. Michelle Barrett (1980; 211) in trying to synthesize patriarchal and capitalist oppression, states that the family-household system "...constitutes not only the central site of the oppression of women but an important organizing principle of the relations of production of the social formation as a whole." Barrett defines the household, in a family/household system, as a structure in which family members are dependent upon the wages of a few or simply the husband/father breadwinner and that the duties of child care, cleaning and food preparation are performed as unpaid labor by the wife/mother. Barrett and Sokoloff note that this labor would have to be purchased on the market if not provided free by housewives. Household structure differs from and combines with the family or the ideology of familialism in which gender identities are created, specifically, where women are taught that they are to be helpful, caring and dependent.

The combination of household structure and family ideology work to oppress women on a day-to-day basis by undermining their position in the home. Even when women do work outside the home and contribute to the family income,

the ideology of female nurturance contributes to women's continual responsibility for household maintenance. The family/household system also provides the rationale for lower earnings for women in the marketplace, in that women's supposedly nurturing proclivities are structured into the gender division of labor. That is, women's work can be devalued by considering it the natural activity of women rather than an acquired skill. In her discussion of social work, Dressel (1987) notes that even aside from the gender division whereby males fill administrative positions and act as community organizers, women are more likely to fill positions in the more emotive private arena of child and family counselors while males hold the more public or control-oriented positions in corrections, substance abuse and occupational social work.

Sokoloff (p. 220) notes that the ideology of female nurturance has been transposed onto the workplace through a gender division of labor which places women in jobs that Hochschild (1983) has called "emotion work." These mostly female jobs require the active participation of the worker to shape her own feelings to create a particular atmosphere for the client. The stewardesses in Hochschild's study tried to give the airline cabin a living room-like quality in order to ease the passengers' fear of flying. Foster parents house strangers and present themselves as the foster child's family rather than emphasize the work involved in caring for troubled young children.

The domestic labor debate wrestles with the question of how goods and services produced in the home relate to the accumulation of capital (MacKintosh, 1978). Some would argue that domestic labor is productive labor necessary to the reproduction of the capitalist system (Seecombe, 1969; Dalla Costa, 1972) because the home is where labor must be combined with commodities in order to create use values. Yet whether housework or domestic labor creates value, it is still socially necessary for the reproduction of labor (Coulson, Magas, Wainwright, 1975). Nona Glazer (1990) sees the use of dualities such as use value/exchange value, productive/unproductive labor, market/nonmarket work, creating boundaries that obscure the ways in which unwaged labor serves capital and the state. She uses the example of the unpaid involuntary work that women do in retail sales to show that "women as consumers enter into definite social relationships--their labor enters the work process...they are exploited and their labor appropriated without their entering the wage relationship" (Glazer, 1990: 142). The unwaged labor of female consumers in retail consists of the sorting, weighing and measuring that would have to be done by paid employees.

Arlene Daniels (1988) documents the volunteer work of upper middle class women. She notes that the women volunteers she studied had career paths and a devotion similar to those doing paid labor, but the work was looked down upon as trivial or non-essential. The tasks and the

women who performed them were not accorded the respect commensurate with the importance of the work to the community. Limiting social welfare work to that performed outside the home and/or strictly for a wage also obscures the service of such labor to capital and the state. The services of foster parents can be seen as unwaged labor, which, if it had to be purchased by the state, would be intolerably expensive.

One question arising from the domestic labor debate is how reproductive work will be structured, whether or not the family/household system with a male breadwinner earning a family wage and a dependent female at home is a necessary form for the support of capitalist relations. Barrett (1980), among others, argues that it is not the only form that can carry out the reproductive functions performed in the family. Davis (1983: 223-32) for one, sees housework as a precondition for capitalist social reproduction rather than a necessary form. That is, the wage labor relation in the workplace is supported through the unwaged housework performed in the home.

Gimenez (1990) recognizes the benefit to capitalism of unpaid work, but takes the opposite approach. Instead of seeing housework as a precondition for capitalist production, she states that the amount and kind of unpaid labor performed in the home is dependent upon the amount and value of the wage brought in from labor outside the home. This is due to the "near universalization of wage labor" in

the core countries which prevents most people from a securing a subsistence existence when they lose their wage. It is waged labor that sets the limits on the amount of unwaged labor that can be performed in the household.¹ Because more women are working outside of the home, they are less available to perform unpaid labor. This means that those households which can afford them will purchase those services on the market, while in others, "the quantity of waged-labor time required for basic survival increases without providing the monetary basis for the use of unwaged labor to their advantage" (Gimenez, 1990, 35). That is, the high wage household can afford to hire out unpleasant tasks while low income households require more of their available time be spent in wage labor without sufficient pay to purchase such things as lawn service or housekeepers.

What this means, according to Gimenez(1990, 36), "is the physical and social reproduction of social classes on a daily and generational basis." That is, the income and free time yielded by wage labor perpetuates class inequalities by maintaining the ability of some, but not all, to invest in children and physical property. Her distinction between physical and social reproduction is that between the ability to merely keep the physical body alive and intact, in the case of physical reproduction, and, for social reproduction,

¹Gimenez also recognizes that the skill to perform some of the unwaged tasks of domestic labor, such as sewing or household repairs, also limits people's ability to perform domestic labor.

the ability to invest "quality time" into personal expansion and fulfillment, both of which are conditions that allow production to continue and perpetuate inequality. Those with substantial incomes can afford to purchase the most menial of domestic tasks and reserve for themselves the most satisfying, such as household improvements and pleasant interactions with children. Those at the highest income levels can even afford to purchase the latter, social reproduction services, for example, by hiring nannies and tutors for child rearing². At the bottom rung, "welfare systems make it possible for the unemployed, and those unable to participate in the labor force, to survive at a minimum level of subsistence" (Gimenez, 1990, 36). She sees the performance of unwaged domestic labor as a contribution to an improved quality of life and sees the ability to perform unwaged domestic labor distributed to the propertyless class³ according to income.

One of the things Gimenez is trying to demonstrate is that unwaged labor has less importance in the industrialized core countries than it does in the less developed periphery where subsistence production is still a possibility. One of

²I came across the most extreme example of this in hearing of a wealthy couple, about to have a child, who hired a birth support person to be with them in the delivery room to assist and comfort the mother during childbirth. This is a task normally performed by the prospective father.

³She uses this term to represent class in terms of relations to the means of production and to distinguish it from socioeconomic status which serves to differentiate the capability of households to use unwaged domestic labor.

the forms of domestic labor is the production of goods or services in the home for sale on the market. She states that these cottage industries are not available to most working class households because of lack of financing, market conditions and relative lack of skills. However, children's foster care can be seen as a "cottage industry" for a significant proportion of my sample as they used the money they receive for support of the foster children as an income supplement and part of their livelihood.

Sokoloff poses the question, what is the impact of the political economy of motherhood on women in the labor market? This is particularly pertinent to foster mothers. The state authorities who sanction fostering consider it, on the one hand, a service, performed for the children in care, and many of the parents I talked to considered it that way as well. However, fostering is also unwaged labor performed in service to state. Though most foster parents claimed the money they receive as being solely for their foster children, some of the parents in my sample looked upon the money they receive as a wage.

WELFARE STATE AND SOCIAL WELFARE WORK

In The Politics of Production, Michael Burawoy is trying to broaden the notion of politics, to include the politics within the sphere of production and connect the state with the realm of production. He defines politics as the production of social relations and sees those relations

being shaped on the shopfloor as well as in the larger arena of state politics. He provides the tools for analyzing how both waged and unwaged social welfare work connect to the capitalist state, a connection which lies in the welfare state.

The state's historical role in the process of creating workplace relations has been twofold: the institution of social insurance which, among other things, frees workers from the absolute need to rely on wages to exist, and the fostering of workplace legislation circumscribing managerial authority (Burawoy, 1985: 125-6). With worker dependency and management license checked if not broken, new means must be devised to extract surplus. The result, according to Burawoy, is that we are currently in an era of hegemonic despotism where worker coercion is imposed through management's ability to move capital and extract concessions from labor. This compares to an earlier regime of market despotism where capitalists relied on deskilling, the intensification of work, and the power to hire and fire at will without fear of retribution.

Hegemonic despotism has undercut the twin protections provided by the state. And yet in an era of recession, corporate flight, and international competition when the welfare state might be expanded to support a beleaguered labor force, it is under attack. The economics of global production have lessened labor's political influence and the

threat of international competition justifies changes in production relations which favor capital.

Part of what Burawoy is trying to accomplish with his theoretical framework is to illustrate the diversity of workplace control mechanisms that existed in the past. That is, all early capitalist workplaces did not need to resort to the brutality of the "Satanic Mills" to control their labor force. Likewise, today it can be seen that all firms cannot rely on hegemonic despotism and there are a variety of work regimes which control work in different ways. For social welfare work, the notion of capital flight is a non-sequitur because social welfare workplaces have a different relation to the state than do proprietary firms and a different relation to the market than those providing tangible commodities. The provision of social welfare work is influenced by the larger politics, economics and ideology of the welfare state.

Burawoy sees the welfare state, in general, as a buffer for workers, by granting some freedom from wage labor. Offe (1972) does not see the welfare state as any type of structural change in the economic system, nor does he see it benefiting the victims of industrialization as much as it assists corporate business enterprises and, in this sense, the welfare state is a part of the social reproduction of capitalist relations. The welfare state subsidizes labor with activities that can be considered social welfare work such as public health clinics, but the welfare state is not

exclusively defined by labor that can be called social welfare work since it also distributes cash grants that involve only administrative labor and it provides benefits to those not belonging to the working class. At the same time, all social welfare work is not necessarily seen as contained within the welfare state. Day care, which chapter IV covers at some length, is social reproduction work that contributes to the social welfare, but which some would like to exclude from provision as a welfare state entitlement. The consideration of such labor as eligible for welfare state inclusion constitutes one of the political questions surrounding social welfare work.

The actions of the state have created a division of labor within social welfare provision. In analyses of social welfare and the welfare state, there is a notable absence of discussion of the division of social welfare labor and the effects of policies such as privatization on workers. In the arena of social welfare, different social needs combine with different labor processes in carrying out certain welfare tasks. The action of the state in taking on certain welfare functions such as financial assistance to the poor and not taking on others such as health care, makes it possible for profit making firms to enter the market and has made it necessary for voluntary agencies to provide for otherwise unmet needs (Gurin, 1989: 183). This public/private mix of service provision has created a division of labor in which social workers work alongside

others without credentials, such as foster parents, in providing for the general social welfare. All of the work within that division of labor is necessary to maintain the social welfare system and aid social reproduction.

The state clearly defines the terrain on which social work operates by establishing its own programs and eligibility requirements which then define, if only by default, the arenas for private and voluntary action. This is a decided shift from a century ago when social welfare was a family or private concern and charity was a voluntary effort (Gurin, 1989). The push for privatization, or the transfer of activities and services from the state, is a major factor in the politics, economics, and ideology of the welfare state. Advocates of privatization wish to withdraw state responsibility and state funding from programs and shift social welfare provision back to the family, voluntary agencies, and proprietary firms.

PRIVATIZATION

Paul Starr (1989: 16) discusses the many and nuanced meanings of public and private, both social and legal. The terms can be confusing because, on the one hand, public is normally thought to mean open to all and private connotes closed off or restricted. The family is a private institution; a public hearing is open to the community. Yet in another set of opposing meanings, public is equated with government or the state and private refers to the economics

of the market. Paradoxically, when comparing the realm of the family with that of the market, the formerly private market becomes the public sphere.

For terminological purposes in this work, the family will be considered the realm of the private and both the state and the market will be called the public arena. When I speak of social welfare work becoming socialized, I am referring to a movement of activities from the private arena of the home to the public. In speaking of the public, I will include that work which has come to be located in or financed by the state as well as that performed in proprietary firms and voluntary agencies. I do this for linguistic simplicity and consistency, mindful that exchange relations are considered private in the economic sense of the word and that all social reproduction labor formerly performed in the home has not been moved exclusively to the proprietary sphere.

This convention means that the movement of services from the state sphere, privatization, is the movement of activities to the market and/or the family even though I am referring to the private economic market as part of the public sphere. Conversely, socialization as I will speak of it is a movement of activities from the private home either to the state or to the market, both of which are considered public here.

An obvious problem in discussing privatization is the definition of what is public and what is private. Is a non-

profit agency, such as Planned Parenthood, public or private? Starr sees divisions between state, home and market; Burawoy works with a more clear cut division between state and market in that the former is concerned with use values and the latter is concerned with exchange values. So in using the limited state/market dichotomy, moving a service from the state sphere would necessarily commodify it. Yet the nature of the service, once the state abandons it, differs depending on whether it is provided in the proprietary or voluntary (non-profit) regime or pushed back to the realm of the home.

The problematic issue is the location of the service once the state abandons it. One universal in the discussion of the provision of social welfare services is its heterogeneous nature. Seemingly countless factors have been considered in assessing the degree to which the public or private, profit-making or voluntary sectors should provide a service. These include: the nature of the recipient, the historical and fiscal responsibility for providing the service; the ability to assess the outcome; the degree of dependence of the recipient (Gurin, p. 184).

A result of the heterogeneous nature of social welfare services is that privatization and socialization can be going on at the same time. The socialization process, in day care for instance, is one in which the care of children is moving out of the home to a greater division of labor. Children are not cared for solely by their mothers, but

through nursery schools, day care, latch key programs and after school activities. Yet as child care is increasingly being performed by a complex division of labor, it is also subjected to privatization, that is, efforts to move the service back to home/personal responsibility and to the exchange mechanism.

Brodkin and Young (1989: 149) remind us that the decision about privatization is political as well as economic and they call for a political discourse to counter the efficiency arguments of economists in order to insert questions regarding equity, justice and social solidarity. A decision in how to privatize includes whether the government should transfer both the responsibility for service delivery and for financing those services or if they jettison the former and retain the latter (Kammerman and Kahn, 1989: 254). Bendick (1989) suggests that the implementation of privatization through mediating institutions, such as voluntary agencies, with government financing could prompt suppliers to mobilize into effective political coalitions to sustain or even increase funding for social programs. This proved to be true as voluntary agencies and foster parents joined to fight cuts in the foster care budget in Michigan.

The dominant emphasis in discussions of the effects of privatization center on the efficiency and effectiveness of service provision with labor discussed only as an aside. The workplace control structures precipitated by hegemonic

despotism, motivated by the demands of the global marketplace, achieve workplace control through the threat of corporate flight. Privatization of services formerly performed by state workers, governed by collective bargaining agreements, has a suggestive parallel. Social workers are not vulnerable to corporate flight, but they do face the threat from the "fiscal crisis of the state" (O'Connor) and a neo-conservative movement to cut social welfare spending (Block et. al., 1987). Gilbert (1983: 223) makes the point that "the social market [is] undergoing pressure to adopt the values and methods of the economic market...." O'Connor (1973 p.241) also sees the institutionalization of efficiency criteria and "rationalization" of service work in the state as an effort to resolve the fiscal crisis. Yet when efficiency means, among other things, "...the ability of private firms to hire, fire, compensate, and therefore motivate and utilize workers with greater flexibility than can government departments constrained both by civil service rules and strong union" (Bendick, 1989: 107) privatization sounds like a labor control mechanism.

Privatization in the name of efficiency glosses over the equity issues as well as the labor control elements. The privatization discussion also does not seem to discuss the role of unpaid labor, performed in and out of the home, in the social welfare division of labor. The care of children who are state or court wards by private families

qualifies as privatized labor that is part of the social welfare division of labor. The potential coalitions of voluntary agency suppliers uniting to sustain or increase funding for social programs is a struggle against privatization which would lower or remove the wages paid for social welfare work.

POLITICS/ECONOMICS OF SOCIAL WELFARE

Burawoy (1975: 39) has defined politics as the production of social relations and for social welfare work, social relations involves who is going to carry out social reproduction work. Privatization advocates wish to divest the state's interest in the provision of social welfare (Kammerman and Kahn, 1989: 6). Yet this effort is occurring within a context where social reproduction is undergoing a process of moving from the home to the larger society, a socialization of reproduction. Privatization is part of the struggle in this process over the location of social welfare services and the degree they will be subsidized by the state.

Burawoy notes that different states have developed at differing rates along with their developing capitalist economies. The result is a variety of levels of entry of the state into regulation of the workplace and an uneven degree to which the states allow workers to subsist without wage labor. Along with the variety of state interventions, there are differences in the degree of state intervention

within countries "determined by the labor process and market forces" (Burawoy, 1985: 139).

Another notion of uneven development refers to the degree to which production has been brought into the capitalist market from the sphere of subsistence or petty-bourgeoisie production. What this refers to is the degree of socialization of production. Claus Offe (1984: 48) characterizes socialization as "...the increasingly social character of privately controlled production relations, that is, a growing division and differentiation of labour and other functions as well as growing interdependence between the elements of the social system."

Wilensky and Lebeaux (1965) use an entirely different set of assumptions about the nature of society and the rise of social welfare, but they concur that the principle of socialization is occurring in social welfare service because of an increasing need for social welfare provisions outside of the traditional channels of the family and primary group. They also recognize the differentiation in the provision of social welfare services. This differentiation or uneven development of the socialization of reproduction activities brings with it the politics, or the creation of social relations, of social welfare work. Responsibility for education is shifted to the schools, medical care to physicians and hospitals, and elderly care to nursing homes. The burden is shifted and social welfare becomes a complex network of service delivery.

The uneven process of socialization of reproductive functions is brought about, in part, by women's irregular need to enter into the marketplace and the irregular ability of families to purchase socialized reproductive labor. Both the need to enter into wage-labor and the ability to purchase reproduction services on the market are class based, as Gimenez (1990) has noted. What this uneven development means for social welfare work is an uneven degree of responsibility for social welfare between the home, state and market as well as an uneven degree to which workers are compensated for social reproduction activities.

O'Connor (1973) notes the division between social capital and social expenses and sees both of them as being increasingly socialized. Both social capital, which serves to support and enhance accumulation, and social expenses, which support legitimation or social control functions, are increasingly paid for by the entire society through taxes (see also Gough 1980).

Jeffrey Galper (1980) sees social welfare as something being provided strictly by the state in service of capitalist production. Like O'Connor's view of social capital, Galper sees social welfare activity socializing the costs of production by educating children, getting workers back on the job with health and mental services, and subsidizing low wage workers with welfare. Like Galper, Michael Walzer (1988) sees the welfare state mostly in terms of state activity by defining it as the nationalization of

distribution which he characterizes by, among other things, centralized control and bureaucracy. Walzer cites the need for a socialization of the welfare state with expanded participation, by those other than the state, in the actual delivery of services.

I believe Walzer overstates the degree to which the state directly provides welfare services and understates the mix of voluntary agencies and ignores the for-profit and home sectors. Social welfare activities today can be viewed as caught between the pull of socialization and the push toward privatization. Socialization is a shifting of responsibilities for social welfare to the larger society, not simply to the state, from the private sphere of the home to the public sphere of the market and the state. Socialization refers to the shifting of responsibilities to the entire society, no matter how uneven the division of labor between state provided services, and those provided in proprietary or voluntary agencies. That is, socialization does not necessarily mean the movement of a service solely to the state sector. Likewise, privatization could mean the transfer of services from the state to either the proprietary, voluntary or family sector, rather than simply from the state to the market.

Day care is an illustration of the socialized nature of reproduction in the sense that the care of children is no longer the complete responsibility of the household in all cases, but is part of the larger society. Kammerman and

Kahn's (1989) characterization of day care as a mixed economy represents its uneven development. It is performed in profit making near-monopoly corporations such as Kinder-Care, government sponsored programs in local school districts, private non-profit groups, and by licensed and non-licensed in-home workers. Yet these have not replaced the stay-at-home mother or extended family care. The care of children is no longer the sole responsibility of biological mothers or extended families. It has become a service whose provision is ensconced in a division of labor, undifferentiated though the labor process may be. At the same time that child care has become a more socialized service, the state is moving to eliminate its role which in turn increases the size and importance of the proprietary, voluntary and home sectors.

One of the things that the notion of the uneven development of the welfare state brings to this discussion is to see how the degree and form of socialization of reproduction is constituted in a division of social welfare that is accessible to some and not to others. Or, in the cases where services are provided to all, the uneven development of the welfare state provides them on an uneven, class-related, basis. Kahn and Kammerman (1987: 248-9) suggest the possibility of a two-tiered child care system along class lines. Family day care predominates for infants and toddlers, but for the 3, 4, and some 2 year olds, affluent working parents use a preschool program. "If more

advantaged children are exposed to the richer, more professionally led, developmentally oriented programs, while the more deprived children are placed with untrained family day care mothers, the gap between the two will increase even more than now."

Yet this two-tiered system of day care affects the providers as well. If home day care providers are caring for the children of low income families and single mothers, their incomes are limited by the low earnings of their clients. If the "richer, more professionally led" programs are servicing higher income clients, the compensation to the providers is greater. The wages in the monopoly, state, and competitive sectors are each determined through different forces (O'Connor;1973, 18-32). Likewise, the wage setting mechanism differs in the state, voluntary, unaffiliated and proprietary social welfare regimes.

Economics, for Burawoy, is the production of things, which would not seem to apply to social welfare work. However, there is an economic element in social welfare work as people attempt to transform social welfare into commodities. Efforts at privatization attempt to withdraw the state from the provision and/or funding of social welfare work. What this means for some services and has meant for day care, for instance, is that the door has been opened for proprietary provision of these services. There is also an economic element in that some social welfare providers have attempted to commodify their labor as a

service for sale. Social welfare providers packaging their labor for sale is a double representation of social welfare work as social reproduction. That is, the labor or activity itself reproduces workers on a day-to-day and generational basis, while the transformation of the tasks into a commodity recreates the capitalist exchange relationship.

What I have tried to establish up to now is that reproduction activities are undergoing the same process of socialization as production, as activities that were performed in the home move to an increasingly differentiated division of labor either in the state or proprietary sector. Privatization is a policy pursued to move those socialized activities from the state to the private sector in order to preserve the primacy of capitalist economic relations. Moving state functions back to the home shrinks the welfare state, but it also places the responsibility for providing welfare services back to the family and that often means purchasing that service on the market.

Chapter IV will review how socialization and privatization have affected child care and how the process of the commodification of a service has occurred with professional social workers. The analysis of the work of child foster care providers will reveal the difficulty foster parents would face in transforming foster care into a commodity.

THE IDEOLOGY OF THE WELFARE STATE

Although he recognizes ideology as one of the moments of production, Burawoy's analysis mainly emphasizes the material conditions of capitalism's uneven development. O'Connor states, "Conditions of economic and social reproduction...in particular countries are inexplicable outside of the dominant national ideologies in those countries"(1984: 3). Ideology plays a part in the determination of social welfare work regimes and, as mentioned, the arguments revolve around the degree to which social welfare should be socialized and the form it should take.

Offe, like Burawoy, sees an economic and political element to the social system as well as an ideological, or what he calls normative, element. For Offe, there is a tension between the integration and autonomy of the political and ideological spheres to the economic. That is to say, on the one hand the state, or political sphere in Offe's usage, acts to support exchange relations, yet is also apart from those relations and, theoretically, could act to subvert the primacy of exchange relations. For instance, extensive provision of public transportation could conceivably undercut the sales and servicing of private automobiles as well as the idea itself that transportation is a private responsibility. This tension is borne out in what Offe calls the "demarcation" problem in which the spheres of use values must be kept from corrupting the

exchange principle. This is similar to O'Connor's discussion of the twin needs of accumulation and legitimation. The economic system feeds on continued capital accumulation, and all concerned must believe in the necessity of exchange relations. The state acts to support commodity relations even though the contradictory result is to take large sectors of the working population out of the stream of commodity relations and into the realms of administration, education, and social welfare work that rely on revenue taken from the stream of capital. Too much extra-economic production or other activity calls exchange relations into question.

Privatization can be seen as one manifestation of the struggle between the dyads of exchange value/use value, or integration/autonomy of the state and exchange relations. Privatization, or removal of the state from provision of goods and services, serves to reassert the economic segment of the social system (Offe, p. 51). Starr concludes that privatization entails a reordering of claims upon the state and the public provision of goods and services. "In the extreme case, privatization is an instrument of class politics" (p. 43). The ideology of privatization, the idea that the market and the family should be the guiding structures for the provision of social welfare, is just as important as the policies that implement changes in social welfare provision.

Wilensky and Lebeaux recognize a change in ideology that arose with the growth of the welfare state and the socialization of social welfare work. They see the change as a move from a residual conception of the welfare state to a institutional conception. In the former, the provision of social welfare was seen as a leftover, residual, to be provided when other structures failed to provide. The residual view of social welfare, not unlike today's view of welfare as a safety net, has its basis in the English Poor Laws, on which early American charity was based. In this, the distinction was made between the deserving and the non-deserving poor. Universal provision of welfare implies not only greater and more broadly distributed services, but services that are seen as rights of citizenship. Titmuss (1965) sees this as an increase in the number of "states of dependency" which become part of the collective responsibility. He does not tie these changes directly to capitalist development, but does connect his states of dependency to one's capacity to earn a living. For example, we now have a somewhat more expansive view of unemployment that recognizes the existence of economic causes beyond the control of the individual.

Marmor et al (1990) redefine the ideology of social welfare as an insurance/opportunity state rather than a welfare state in that it is not necessarily aimed at meeting people's needs as much as it is to ensure the opportunity to enter the workforce which then entitles one to receive

social insurance akin to private insurance. The assumption in their characterization of the opportunity goal of the welfare state, is that AFDC (etc...) provides a vehicle for people to lift themselves from poverty. Yet the extent of AFDC recidivism calls this into question: since slightly over a third of all persons on AFDC who leave the program end up back on welfare (Bane and Ellwood, as cited in Abramovitz, 1988). At the same time one must question the opportunity in their opportunity state since "work programs create access to existing employment opportunities; they do not create jobs" (Abramovitz, 1988: 365). The social provision of insurance through social security, workers compensation, unemployment insurance, etc., which Marmor et al. see making up the bulk of the welfare state, enforces the need to participate in market work in order to share in welfare state benefits in spite of an increased recognition of the social causes of unemployment.

Offe, unlike Marmor et al. or Wilensky and Lebeaux, defines social welfare activity as supporting the capitalist system of exchange relations, rather than directed only at the individual relief. He defines the welfare state as a socialized entity supporting a socialized system of production and reproduction.

The argument over rights and privileges to welfare state benefit, or "entitlements" is at the center of the debate over welfare ideology. O'Connor (1984), dissecting individualism in the context of capitalism's uneven

development, reminds us that individualism and the economic well being associated with it was based in material reality for white male property owners prior to the concentration and centralization of capital in the late nineteenth century. And the ideology of individual responsibility for particular states of dependency remains virtually unchanged today because it is the essential dogma of capitalism. Yet, there is still an "ambiguity between individual labor and social labor, individual needs and social needs, and individual and social political life" (O'Connor, 1984: 22).

In order to explain the staying power of welfare state programs in the face of neo-conservatives, Piven and Cloward (1985, pp 134-5) demonstrate a fundamental recognition on the part of the twentieth century American public that political rights, are also economic rights but they grant that "...the Reagan administration is [sic] moving on both ideological and structural fronts to resurrect the old doctrine of separation." Moving social welfare services from the state to the market and back to the home reinforces that separation.

Individual responsibility is at the heart of welfare "reform" measures such as workfare or those which connect employment search to the receipt of public assistance or penalize single mothers for having more than two children. Reform measures which, in these cases, ignore shrinking opportunities in an era of economic decline and inadequate day care that hinders single mothers' ability to enter the

workforce, whether or not there were jobs available at a living wage. These reforms pivot on the individual necessity to find work rather than the macroeconomic conditions that would create the work. Social problems become construed as individual psychological problems with individual solutions and welfare state services have delivered income support and services on that individual basis. So in the arena of employment, the ideology of individualism continues to hold sway in not seeing people's need for gainful employment as a collective responsibility.

Nancy Fraser (1990) suggests that our present ideological debate is framed in terms of needs-talk rather than in terms of rights or privileges. "From this perspective, needs-talk appears as a site of struggle where groups with unequal discursive (and nondiscursive) resources compete to establish as hegemonic their respective interpretations of legitimate needs" (p. 203). She goes on to say that a rise in needs-talk correlates with the degree to which an issue is deemed political, defined as subject to public debate and contestation. The less an issue or problem is politicized, the more it can be disregarded and relegated to the private spheres, of family or economics, for solution. This is similar to Offe's demarcation problem, only the critical boundary for Fraser is between political matters open to social debate (and solution) and the private realms of the family or economy. In Fraser's terms the issue of employment has been fairly successfully

canalized within the economic sector with the needs-discourse staying within the purview of expert economists. Family issues are not so delimited because the family is not only such a powerfully emotional subject, but it is something with which nearly all of us have some connection to and stake in (Baca Zinn and Eitzen, 1990: xiii). There is a strong belief in the need to preserve the family especially as it relates to the needs and concerns of children.

One can see the effect of these competing ideologies on the discussions of day care. On the one hand, the ideology of individualism and the right to choose is in the forefront when tax credits and vouchers for families are discussed. And although needs-discourse has begun in a small way to undermine the hegemony of the family-household system in recognizing the economic necessity for women to work in the market sector, women are still considered to have primary responsibility for the care of children. Hutchison (1992) notes that the child welfare literature does not address the welfare of their female caregivers. She concludes that the recent child-saving movement has centered on child protection at the expense of the single-parent female households given inadequate support in fulfilling their child rearing responsibilities.

Foster care, as it is currently conceived as volunteer or unpaid work, is relatively safe because the service is defined as strictly for the benefit of the children. This

ideology of foster care helped save it from recent budget cuts in Michigan. Foster care as paid labor might not be so immune from funding cuts.

In sum, I have posited that the essence of the politics of social welfare and the welfare state revolves around the degree to which reproduction has been socialized or moved from the home to the market sector. The ideology surrounds the sense of whether or not a particular service is a legitimate entitlement deserving to be supported by the collective. Social welfare needs are shaped by these political and ideological struggles and the division of social welfare labor, the regimes, are also shaped by these struggles.

GENDER, IDEOLOGY AND SOCIAL WELFARE

Barbara J. Nelson (1990: 127), like Marmor et al., sees a two-channel welfare state but, like Davis, sees the division in terms of class, race and gender. Using her comparison of the origins of Workmen's Compensation and Mother's Aid legislation, she states that the first channel of welfare policy, "assumes a lifetime of steady work for wages, which has been neither the practice nor the ideal for most women (of all races) nor the possibility for many men of color." She cites in evidence the initial omission in 1930 of domestic workers and farm laborers from the social security program, "fully 60 percent of the black labor force." The second channel was based on the model of

reproductive and domestic labor of white women, the family household system, which only brought "...black women into the motherhood welfare system in the 1950s and 1960s."

A powerful component of gender ideology is contained in the separation of home and market that designates the home as the woman's sphere. Sokoloff, among those who see domestic labor as creating surplus value, contends that women's domestic labor has been mystified by being viewed as their "natural" work. A tension or struggle exists today over the ideology of women's place in society. Material conditions demand that they work outside of the home, but those conditions do not allow for the completion of the necessary reproduction functions. Gender ideology supports the mystification of reproduction work. From the far right there is the espousal of the traditional female role which feminists rightly see as a call for the continued oppression of women. Margaret Nelson (1990) contends that the family/household system maintains its hegemony in needs-talk. It leads those on the far right, and even those more toward the center, to suggest that family policy that advances pluralistic forms of family life "appears to promote nothing less than the anarchy toward which family life seems to be headed" (Gilbert, 1983: 106). In the popular press there is the image of the "supermom" who deftly manages home and market work. And in the background can be heard rational voices that recognize that ideology does not fit today's reality. The uneven development of the

welfare state has been the response to the uneven entry of men and women of all races into the market and the struggle to define the needs of particular groups as part of the collective responsibility.

Abramovitz (1990) sees the welfare state historically fostering a "family ethic" which reinforced rigid gender roles of a male breadwinner and dependent female. The AFDC program developed from an approach to women which recognized their mothering role and in a sense placed the state in the role of the absent father. Her analysis reveals our ideological inconsistency when discussing programs that now push AFDC mothers out of their role as mothers and into the labor market.

Sapiro (1990: 45), speaking about the two-channeled welfare system, illustrates the inconsistency in the American welfare state ideology of individualism by pointing out that, "Most social policy aimed at women has been designed explicitly to benefit them in their capacity as wives and mothers and more particularly, to benefit those who depend on them for nurturance and domestic service." We will see in Chapter VII that a significant number of my sample of foster parents are single parents who are using the foster care system to their benefit, through their positions as caregivers, even though it is not considered a public assistance program.

SUMMARY

The chapter began with the basic question of how the social system replicates itself. The traditional Marxist analysis focuses on the capital-labor relation and the extraction of surplus value. Critics of this approach note the existence of social structures and processes that operate outside the realm of economics, yet support the functioning of the economic system.

Among the critics are Marxist Feminists who illustrate how the family/household system supports wage laborers, and the capitalist system, by providing unwaged labor in the home. Family foster care can be seen as unwaged labor that is part of the social welfare division of labor, performed in the home in service to the state.

Just as production has moved out of the home, social reproduction work has moved from the home, to be performed either in the market, or by the state. Social reproduction has been defined as processes or conditions that are necessary for the reproduction of the capitalist mode of production. Social welfare labor, by virtue of its nature as non-surplus producing service work and its performance in the non-market spheres of the state and home, can be seen as social reproduction labor.

At the same time that social reproduction work is in the process of moving from the home to an interconnected division of labor in the public realm, that is, socialization, the process of privatization is occurring.

Through privatization, politicians are striving to relegate the responsibility for social welfare services to the market and home. The politics of the welfare state involve the struggle to locate these services in either the state, market or home. The role of the state is vital because the degree to which the state enters into social welfare activities defines the market for social welfare commodities and the need for voluntary social welfare activity to fill the gaps.

Accompanying the politics and economics of social welfare is the ideology of the welfare state. In the case of the United States, that ideology is one of individualism. An individualistic notion of social welfare responsibility is perfectly suited to a capitalist system which is supposedly built on individual self-interest. Gender ideology has contained the notion of separate spheres which has identified women's place as the home. The welfare state has contained a gender ideology in which women's benefits have been based upon their role as wives and mothers, though individualism is influencing the gender ideology of the welfare state as well. Foster care unwittingly supports women in their capacity as caregivers of abused and neglected children, though the activity contains aspects which could identify it as social welfare labor.

Given the effort to emphasize the market provision of non-surplus producing services, social welfare work represents social reproduction in two senses of the word.

It is non-economic activity which makes up the conditions necessary for the continuation of the mode of production, but it is also being commodified and pushed to the realm of exchange relations.

Professional social work and day care represent two types of social welfare work that have made and are making, respectively, the move from the home to the market or the state. The following chapter illustrates the particular processes that have governed the transformation of these services. Ensuing chapters will look at the work of family foster care providers in an effort to see the potential for this labor to move from the home.

CHAPTER IV REGIMES AND THE DIVISION OF SOCIAL WELFARE LABOR

INTRODUCTION

Chapter III identified two separate phenomena that influence the shape of the social welfare division of labor: socialization and privatization. Socialization is the process where social reproduction activities are moving from the home to a more detailed division of labor, be it in the state or proprietary sector. Privatization is a drive to withdraw the state from social reproduction and shift responsibility for providing those functions to the family and/or the proprietary sector. The struggle over how these processes shall proceed, combined with the ideological debate over collective versus individual responsibility for welfare, has determined the nature of our current welfare state.

Burawoy (1975: 14-17) uses the concept of regime to illustrate a particular coalescence of capital, labor and the state. A regime represents a means for extracting surplus value as well as a labor control process. This chapter will identify four locations for the performance of social welfare work: the voluntary, state, proprietary, and unaffiliated providers; however, as will be seen, these classifications are not clear cut. Each of these might be able to be defined as a regime, and I will label them as such. However, this analysis will not try to draw explicit

boundaries in order to define the relation of these service providing sectors to the accumulation of capital or control of labor. I use the regime delineation only to illustrate how the politics, economics and ideology of social welfare have affected the location of the service.

Although socialization/privatization and individualism affect the general nature of the welfare state, particular structures or apparatuses determine whether a state, proprietary or other regime will carry out the service and the degree to which the service will operate as a commodity. In the course of reviewing day care and professional social work as social welfare or social reproduction work, this chapter will show how the relation of the firm to the state and market, the labor process, and the reproduction of labor have affected the movement of the tasks from the home to the market and state.

The occupations of day care and professional social work represent social welfare work at two ends of the continuum of moving from the home to the market. One of differences between these two types of service work is the occupational ideology or conception of the work that connects it to the home. Social workers have made this home to market transition completely and in the process have tried to establish their discipline as the source of expertise on social welfare matters, while day care still maintains a strong link to the home work. Day care is beginning to become separated from the home by being seen as

education rather than child tending or babysitting. The nature of these two occupations will provide a context for the analysis of foster care as social welfare labor.

THE DIVISION OF SOCIAL WELFARE

The social welfare division of labor is a product of the historical provision of welfare services. This history has been one of an uneven and sporadic entry of the state and private charity. Although it may be a simplification, it is not entirely off the mark to say that in the beginning, all social welfare work was voluntary. Certainly, in the beginning of this country, government intervention was minimal to nearly nonexistent, in keeping with our individualist ideology.

Voluntary associations arose with the purpose of mutual support and aid of their members, whether the organization was a church or fraternal organization. The voluntary association became the vehicle for dispensing aid and services in the absence of an overarching government presence. The term voluntary association derives from the traditional, but outmoded, definition of an organization with an executive director, secretary, and a staff of volunteers (Tropman and Tropman, 1987).

Yet even before this agency structure arose, in what Tropman and Tropman call the communal period before the civil war, people provided for the social welfare. Edmund Morgan (1944) and John Demos (1970) mention the putting out. /

of children into homes other than their parents occurring in the 17th century. This appears to have occurred in an informal manner based upon the death of one or more parents, parental neglect or the provision of an apprenticeship.

In outlining the history of the early social workers, Lubove (1965) makes the point that the bulk of the friendly visitors of the Charity Organization Societies were volunteers in the period from the end of the Civil War to the turn of the century. "By 1917, their [volunteers] numbers declined to 25 percent of the peak years of voluntary activity" (Wenocur and Reisch, 1989: 36). A typical voluntary organization today still has an executive director, with a citizen governing board to set objectives and oversee policy implementation, though services are provided through a staff of paid workers.

The period following the passage of the Social Security Act of 1935 marks the entry of government into the provision of social welfare and the beginning of our current welfare state. With the general recognition of the existence of a role for government to play in social welfare provision, voluntary agencies assumed the (self-described) role of innovators within the social welfare field. They no longer exclusively serviced their own members, but had opened themselves to the entire community, representing the needs of that particular community.

There is still a belief today that voluntary organizations give voice to the concerns of the community

and contribute to pluralism and democracy (Tropman and Tropman, 1987). However, Rein (1989: 57) notes that the autonomy of non-profit organizations is lost due to their being subject to government oversight. This can certainly be seen in the case of the so-called gag rule against abortion counseling at locations like Planned Parenthood. Yet the absence of a government presence in financing does not ensure pluralism and democracy. Mandell (1973) presents the example of a Boston area United Way that withheld funds from a home for pregnant girls that was planning to institute abortion services.¹ These examples illustrate the uneven nature of the provision of social welfare services.

Groups of people still bind together to voluntarily serve a cause or a group in need of services. Domestic violence advocacy groups and shelters, Parents Without Partners, and Alcoholics Anonymous all serve as example of social welfare services promoted and staffed by volunteer clients helping themselves. These self-help groups should not be confused with voluntary agencies which solicit funds from community chests, utilize government money, and have governing boards and paid employees.

Private practice was shunned at the outset by social work professionals because it went against the grain of

¹On the other hand, it should be said that voluntary organizations can work in a more pluralistic manner as can be seen by the San Francisco bay area United Way which has withheld funds from the Boy Scouts because of their policy of excluding gays.

their philanthropic origins and service orientation. This attitude changed as social work attempted to emulate the professional model of the physician. "Aided by fee payments, the market for private practice began to open for social work in the late 1940s and early 1950s and really took off in the 1970s and 1980s with the success of licensing legislation and third-party vendor payments" (Wenocur and Reisch: 219). Free professionals could be placed into a service regime called unaffiliated providers, though many professionals have incorporated which would place them in the proprietary regime.

Unaffiliated providers would consist of workers not connected with a voluntary agency, the state, or a proprietary firm. Family day care providers would fall into this category because they are independent agents. Nurses who hire out through temporary agencies could also be seen this way since the temporary services are simply placing them and not controlling or supervising their work. Like free professionals in private practice, unaffiliated providers hire out their services and themselves as a commodity for a wage.

One way to conceive of the division of social welfare services is the auspices, or the sanctioning body or authority under which the services are permitted to be performed. For instance, social workers in the state and the courts work under authority granted to them by law and the power of the court to enforce that law. The auspices

under which the social work agency works has become less important as a defining characteristic of service provision since, "a progressive and pervasive mingling of public and private funds and functions...renders obsolete conventional conceptions of governmental and voluntary roles." (Kramer, 1981:3)

Elmer J. Tropman and John E. Tropman add, "there is no comprehensive taxonomy of human service agencies, and it is not likely that the definitional issue will be resolved soon." Earlier I discussed the complexity of the distinctions of home/market and public/private. In a similar vein there is no clear cut division between publicly and privately delivered services. In social work circles, a private agency is generally conceived as one that is not part of the state. The distinction is not made between non-state agencies that are profit oriented and those that are not. The ideology of caring and service provision under which social welfare workers operate may lead them to subordinate or minimize the notion of profitability.

Even the profit motive is an uncertain discriminator of social welfare agencies since some agencies perform services in both ways, sometimes having profit making activities subsidize the non-profit activities. For the purposes of this work, the term voluntary agency will be used to describe a private non-profit agency and I will use the term proprietary for those private agencies, partnerships or corporations that are for-profit.

The confusion over the delineation of the modes of service provision is the result of the mixing of the state and volunteerism, exchange relations and caring work, commodities and private practitioners. Burawoy (1975: 17) presents three elements that determine the nature of the regime. Rather than try to draw concrete boundaries between what is a proprietary or voluntary agency and what is not, I will use the relation of the firm to the state and market, the labor process, and the reproduction of labor to analyze the forces that combine to place a particular service in a particular regime.

RELATION OF FIRM TO STATE AND MARKET

The relation of the firm to the state and market is the most significant determinant contributing to the location of a social welfare service in the state, voluntary, or proprietary regime. Although Burawoy talks about the relation of the "firm" to the state (and I will continue with that convention), in social welfare work, the provider may be the state, a voluntary association, an unincorporated individual, or a proprietary firm. The entry or withdrawal of state activity affects the provision of the entire service.

There are three elements that affect the relations between the social welfare firm and the state: direct provision of services, funding of the service, and regulation. The state can either provide the service

directly, as it does in public health clinics; fund, but not provide the service, in the case of medicaid; or provide a regulatory framework through rule writing and oversight, as the states do in day care. Martin Rein (1989) would describe the first two options for the state as similar to the "make or buy" decision of a business; should it make the product or service in-house or contract out to buy a particular service? In this case, it is a decision on the part of the state to make, buy, or reimburse other providers for service utilized by a member of society (Rein, 1989: 63-67).

The difference between a business and the state is that the state decision is not necessarily only one of cost and benefit and efficiency, but a question of the politics and ideology of the socialization of social welfare. The political and ideological debates over state service provision are occurring at a time when there is a widespread belief that government consistently provides an inferior and overpriced product. Gilbert (1983: 6-10) notes that there has been an expansion of government financing of purchase of service contracts with outside agencies. This is the "fund but not provide" option. He sees an increasing rise in proprietary/for profit social welfare services which has already infiltrated the nursing home and child care "industries."

The entry of major public financing of social welfare programs was shaped by the political and economic conditions

in the 1930s. There has been a role reversal in private and public funding since the passage of the Social Security Act of 1935 with public money now making up the bulk of financing and private philanthropy making up the difference (Levitan, 1985). Funding for public programs is still the result of political struggle (O'Connor, 1973).

Privatization is part of the struggle being waged by those who are trying to reverse the trend and make the funding of social welfare activities a non-state affair. Foster care in Michigan was the source of such a struggle in the spring of 1991 as agencies and providers protested the governor's slashing of foster care funds.

Private funding depends on a strange mix of factors including: the state of the economy, the degree of altruism of the giver, the structures for soliciting donations, and the particular cause at hand. The mix of private funding of welfare can be strange because it is ad hoc and, in some cases dependent upon the impetus of a particular person, as in the celebrity telethon of Jerry Lewis or the Farm Aid concert of Willy Nelson. And although it is not thought of as a social service, one British Broadcasting Service executive expressed much bemusement over the idea of the telethon as a private means of funding public television. These examples illustrate the precarious nature of private funding and the way that voluntary aid has assumed a

residual role as programs have become institutionalized within the welfare state.²

(Kramer, 1981: 12) asks the question, "what difference does it make if a service is financed and provided by a governmental or voluntary agency...? Unfortunately, virtually no research bears on this critical question..." Kramer is concerned with the quality of services that are provided and, on that basis, there were no discernable differences in the state and foster families I observed. However, as will be demonstrated in the next section on day care, the nature of financing of a service can structure the affordability and availability of the service as well as the labor conditions under which they are provided.

The relation of the firm to the market (as opposed to the relation of the firm to the state) is essentially the relation of an agency within the social welfare division of labor and the potential client base. The way in which the client comes to the social welfare agency or decides how to provide for a particular need is governed by the regime in which the work is performed and the mix of state, voluntary, proprietary, and unaffiliated providers available to provide the service. The firm's relation to the market is related to its relation to the state because both the relation to the state and the ability of the client to pay determine the

²However, the example of public television illustrates the state's disengagement from social welfare financing as those telethons have to pick up more and more of public television's funding.

way in which the firm exists within the market. The state essentially creates the market for a service by providing or not providing, funding or not funding the service. The best example of this can be seen in the example of proprietary nursing homes which grew as a result of the receipt of medicaid funding (Gilbert, 1983) in a way it probably would not have without such funding. Medicaid funding for nursing homes altered the market for such services.

Some social welfare services such as nursing homes and adult foster care homes are equal opportunity providers in the sense that they will sell their services to those paying the costs completely out of pocket or through private insurance and those subsidized by medicaid. In this particular case, the fees from private sources are subsidizing the services of those utilizing government funding (Rein, 1989: 60). In other social reproduction services, such as public education, the state is a near-monopoly seller and there is a limited market for the services. Even in the case of education there are proprietary outlets for those who do not wish to use the public good. Private schools and private psychiatric hospitals are available for those who can pay the fees.

What I have done thus far is to give a general overview of the development and financing of social reproduction services. Not all services have followed this path of voluntary service supplanted by government service. Education and health care for instance, have their own

particular histories. Education was a privately funded service before the advent of public education; health care was originally a community and family endeavor before physicians transformed it into a commodity. The next section will review how state policy has affected day care, which is a service which has relatively recently been transformed into a commodity.

RELATION OF DAY CARE TO THE STATE AND MARKET

The following section will look at recent changes in day care to illustrate the effect brought about by changes in federal day care funding. At the same time it will touch on labor process and reproduction of labor issues that will be more fully illustrated in subsequent sections using the example of professional social workers.

Day care provides a useful example of how the politics of the welfare state influence a social welfare service and how a use value has been pushed to the realm of exchange values. Kammerman and Kahn (1989, p. 236) point out

"the child-care industry has always been a 'mixed economy' in that privately funded and operated programs have always coexisted with totally public programs. The Reagan administration set out to change this by: [among other things]...encouraging private-sector providers to produce and deliver services."

These changes make for-profit day care more plentiful and accessible (to those who can afford it) and stem any tide that would conceive of day care as an entitlement.

I have said that the politics of the welfare state structure the way in which social reproduction activities are carried out. This is the struggle over where and how services will be provided and is at the root of the uneven development of the socialization of social welfare. The degree and manner to which a particular service is socialized affects and is affected by the social relations of the recipients. What the recent changes in the funding of day care did was make day care a more profitable option for the proprietary sector by putting more money into the hands of middle income people who are more likely to use proprietary services (Kahn and Kammerman, 1987:23). Privatization here can be seen as an attempt to try to maintain this service in the realm of individual responsibility. This means that parents are on their own not only in securing child care because government funded centers will not be available, but that parents are also responsible for picking up the cost of the care. What the privatization efforts of the Reagan administration appear to have done is to increase the number of proprietary centers and the number of children for whom they care. It has also decreased the amount of state money for direct provision of care, which is related to the increase in for-profit day care. At the same time, in-home providers continue to care for approximately half of the children under school age.

Kammerman and Kahn (1989: 244-9) demonstrate that the changes made by the Reagan administration in day care

funding forced lower income families to shift from formal day care systems to the informal care of in-home providers. Decreasing accessibility to day care forces women out of the workplace (Gallagher, 1992). Nearly half (47%) of Barbara Nelson's (1990: 31) sample of family day care providers were earning their income through doing day care in their homes rather than through wage work because of the high cost and difficulty in finding adequate day care for their own children. In this case, shifting services to the private sector has affected women by making day care less accessible. This makes them more economically vulnerable to dependency by decreasing their employment options.

In privatizing day care, women are given a more limited set of options. Remaining attached in marriage gives them greater child care choices by virtue of generally higher male wages. For single women with children, government support of child care through the mechanism of tax credits does not allow them to purchase child care in the growing for-profit market. The ideology of individual responsibility for child care dominates, but at the expense of women who are economically disadvantaged in the labor market and get little support from estranged fathers.

What the most recent political changes have done is make out-of-home care a more viable option for upper income families and force lower income families and single mothers into using in-home care. The growth in for-profit day care signals a reinforcement of capitalist relations of service

provision. For families who cannot afford for-profit care and for communities which cannot afford to sponsor school-based programs, care of children is pushed back to the family. This solidifies the demarcation between the individual and the social and relegates child care to the private spheres of the family and the economy.

These changes also support Gimenez's contention that waged labor sets the limit on the amount of unpaid labor that can be performed in the home. Women with children who do not work outside the home, and with spouses whose income is adequate, can still utilize day care services which allow them the ability to perform unwaged home or self improvement and/or utilize their time with their children in a more "quality" fashion. Single and working mothers obviously do not have this option.

Social welfare politics not only affects the clients, but also affects the social relations of the providers. The politics of the welfare state altering the service regimes can be seen in the Reagan privatization of day care which removed a federal "presence" from child care (Kahn and Kammerman, 1987: 23).³ The configuration of day care regimes can be roughly divided into in-home and out-of-home provision. In-home providers include relatives and friends who watch children in their own homes for no money,

³Among the significant losses of that federal presence is that of reporting requirements, which means that any comprehensive assessment of the division of child care services is impossible.

relatives and friends who do so for pay with some or no degree of licensure, and those who provide care in the child's own home, what people call nannies. These in-home providers are the unaffiliated providers within child care. Out-of-home providers would include the public nursery schools, prekindergarten and kindergartens, which would classify as the state regime. There is proprietary provision of day care services, which most closely replicates commodity production and employer-sponsored programs, as well as a small segment of voluntary agencies providing day care.

There are no direct comparisons of wages and working conditions of those working in proprietary day care centers, school based programs and in-home care. However, a couple different pieces of information are suggestive. In a state by state comparison of reimbursement rates for family based and center based child care, in no case did the family care have a higher rate than center-based care (Kammerman and Kahn, 1987), although in many cases they were the same or close to the same. Nelson (1990b) calculates that the mean income of her sample of family day care providers works out to \$3.42 per hour for a 50 hour week, well below the average for fulltime female workers in Vermont, the site of her study. Kahn and Kammerman (1987) cite the 1984 example of New York's conversion of its kindergartens into all-day facilities. The concern was that the higher paying public schools would lure qualified day care teachers, which it

did. There is no certainty that all state schools pay more than proprietary day care centers or that the higher reimbursement rates for centers go to the workers.

It is probably safe to say that the state generally pays higher than the private sector and market forces will drive down staff wages to their lowest levels. A profile of Kinder-Care, the largest proprietary day care firm, reveals the latter to be the case (Bellm, 1987). Three quarters of Kinder-Care's providers start out at minimum wage and "'full time' employment is 20 hours or more per week...and with hours variable enough to make a second job hard to schedule"(p. 35). Bellm describes the efforts of the Northern California Kinder-Cares to resist worker organization which eventually led⁷ to charges of four labor law violations against the company. He also profiles the company's efforts to elude regulation by refusing public funds that would bring closer monitoring and avoidance of the high regulation state of New York entirely. In general, he paints a picture of low wage, often unqualified providers caring for children at levels often above state maximum child-staff ratios.

In her comparison of family care providers who had achieved licensure with those who had not, Nelson (1990b) found that the professional caregivers were able to sustain what she calls a market perspective and in the process do a better job of maintaining their autonomy. In practice, this meant they were more able to stand firm on rules such as not

taking in sick children or holding to a firm rate schedule. The downside of this was that they lost the sense of nurturance and affiliation that they had felt as non-professionals. Workers in proprietary day care centers undoubtedly work in a less nurturing atmosphere than do providers who work within their own homes, especially given the frequent turnover suggested by Bellm (1987).

Regulation, in this case, controls the labor process, but it is also a part of the relation of the state and market to the firm. Regulation in and of itself is indirect control by experts in that they are in charge of writing the rules. This differs from direct control by professionals, be they educators or managers, in which they are supervising or controlling the labor process. In the case of day care, regulation of home providers can mean the difference between being able to earn a living and not. And although it can give family providers some sense of autonomy, for proprietary providers, regulation inhibits their ability to exploit workers with excessive staff-child ratios.

The regulation process in social welfare differs depending on the service, with physicians, by virtue of their greater degree of professional control, being the most self-regulating. Stone (1981) illustrates how Reagan effectively used this ideology of the unfettered free market in his 1980 election campaign. Day care was one of the cases where the Reagan administration applied its "get the government off the people's back" philosophy.

"Administration representatives have gone on record as opposing government regulation of any sort at any level for child care" (Kahn and Kammerman, 1987: 22). Regulation affects the labor process through the setting of minimum staffing ratios which is a direct control of the pace of work and, in the case of for-profit care, the degree of exploitation.

In the case of family-based care, as mentioned above, regulation gives the provider a bit more leverage in protecting herself from parents who would take advantage. Yet the downside of regulation for home caregivers is that they are at risk of being penalized in cases where they do wish to care for one child over their limit in an emergency or take in a child with a running nose. These are acts that represent an affiliation of the provider with the working mother who is oftentimes in no better an economic position. However, under a strict regulatory environment, these acts could place the provider's ability to earn a living at risk. So, regulation hinders the for-profit provider from maximizing exploitation and is a mixed blessing for the non-proprietary provider who does not benefit from capitalist wage labor relations.

Changes in regulation also potentially have an impact on the reproduction of labor, or the re-creation of home day care providers. It could force home providers out of work, not only as mentioned above, but by virtue of requiring physical standards within the homes that are too costly for

single mothers or low income couples to comply with. Higher educational requirements for school-based care would put some limit on the ability of women to enter those settings. Free of regulation it is a relatively easy for a mother to transform her home into a home day care business.

An example within social work which illustrates how the relation of the firm to the state affects the reproduction of labor was given by one of my key informants. He noted that Medicaid reimburses an agency at a higher rate if they do what is called case management. In case management the social worker directs or manages the case by assessing the clients' needs, coordinating the services of the other agencies, and monitoring the clients' progress. My informant noted that therapy is not a part of case management and although a social worker with a Baccalaureate degree was suitable to do case management, an MSW would be most capable to do therapy. He concluded that it would be more cost-effective for an agency to be a case management agency which would affect the demand for MSWs. One state social service agency worker I spoke to said the state of Michigan tried to manipulate the number of cases defined by case management in order to affect its amount of federal funding.

The politics of increased socialization have affected day care in that it has been increasingly subjected to a greater division of labor. In an effort to remove the state presence from this service, the Reagan administration

instituted changes which decreased the direct provision of this service by the state and increased the proprietary provision. This served to reinforce the realm of the economic through supporting the commodity provision of day care. The increase in this sector also increased the potential for exploitation in for-profit firms and affected the potential users of day care by making it less financially and geographically⁴ accessible. Yet the politics of socialization of social welfare services does not stand alone, but is accompanied by and, to some extent, driven by ideology as well.

For Burawoy, the power of the welfare state is to give workers a certain amount of freedom from wage labor. And for women, moreso than men, this has been true. In the case of mother's aid and AFDC women have received benefits in return for fulfilling the expectation of child raising. Yet the ideology of individual responsibility and the connection of welfare state benefit to wage labor is now being applied to women in this era of fiscal crisis. In Michigan, a new approach to welfare called the social contract is being applied. The social contract is essentially a commitment to perform 20 hours of community service that is being mandated for all adults receiving public assistance. The aim is to break what is perceived as a cycle of dependency on welfare. This commitment even applies to mothers with infants less

⁴Bellm (1987) notes that Kinder-Care locates its facilities principally in the suburbs.

than one year old, who were formerly exempt from workfare requirements. In this case, the ideology of self-sufficiency dominates that of women's responsibility to care for their children.

The twin ideologies of the familialism of the family/household system, which makes child rearing women's responsibility, and individualism work against women in the provision of child care. Child care has become a significant burden upon women who have had to move into the labor force in record numbers.

Day care could be said to have a set of regimes described as for-profit/commodified, school based/educational, and licensed and unlicensed family care. These correspond to the general categories of proprietary, state, and unaffiliated provider regimes, respectively. Social welfare regimes are created within the context of the larger political and ideological forces shaping the welfare state as well as the particular relations of providers to the state and market. In the case of day care, the recent changes in the relation of day care providers to the state and market appears to have shifted care to the private sector. In moving the care of children out of the home, it has been redefined as either educational labor or a commodity to be purchased. Domestic labor performed in the home by women is mystified as their "natural" work, but shifting the same labor out of the home creates the need of credentialed workers (in the school setting) and subjects

the labor to the control of expert professionals, or cost-conscious managers. Redefining day care as education may pay more in the school-based setting, but adds the need for education on the part of the workers. Making day care a commodity puts the squeeze on workers because the providers in the proprietary regime seek to minimize wages. The earnings of unaffiliated providers are bounded by the limited earnings of the families who utilize their care.

The essential point is that the politics of socialization and privatization are instituted through the relation of the firm or service provider to the state. The relation of the firm to the state and market structures the social relations of the workers and the relations of the clients utilizing the service. The shifting to more privatized/commodified regimes in day care has helped reproduce capitalist relations by moving more of these social welfare services to the private realm of exchange relations. This negates, to an extent, the notion that that service is part of the social well-being and it reaffirms the responsibility of individual parents, mothers in particular, for caregiving. Caring for children becomes less like caring and more like a product.

THE LABOR PROCESS

Along with the relation of the firm to the state and market, the labor process is one of the factors which influences the regimes in which particular services will be

carried out (Burawoy, 1985). The labor process is the notion of the work itself, or the bundle of tasks that comprise the job. This section will present some of the competing notions of social work and social welfare work and show how they represent the move of social welfare work from the home to the market. I will demonstrate how changes in the labor process and conceptions of the labor process affect the structure of the service provision. The labor process within day care is relatively undefined. It is still connected with a notion of child care as babysitting or child tending. It is beginning to be seen more and more as education, but that change of conception is not universal. A look at the evolution of professional social work provides an illustration of an occupation whose practitioners have tried to redefine their work as market labor by attaching to it the mantle of science.

I would like to look at three notions of social service work that are applicable to social work: caring, adaptation, and social change. This review will show how the organization of the caring task has been altered, and the social change has been pushed to the rear, while the adaptation task has taken primacy as social work has moved from home to market. One can see that along the way, the attempts to commodify and professionalize the work have been occurring. That is to say that the above tasks of social welfare work have been turned into commodities as they moved from the household. The professional social workers wanted

to package the work in order to demonstrate their unique command of the tasks and issues of social welfare. In the process, they removed themselves from the caring and social change tasks of social work.

In the methodological appendix, I discuss the conceptual evolution of this dissertation and, among other things, how my focus changed and broadened from social workers to the entirety of social welfare work. A person can be excused from any embarrassment over a failure to distinguish between social work and social welfare work because there is a debate within the social work discipline itself over what social work is and what it should be doing. As Hartman (1981) quotes one social worker, "social work has no domain. Its uniqueness lies in its diversity." Besides being an amusingly tautological statement, it provides an important rationale for reverting to the institutional conditions under which social welfare work is carried out.

Part of professional social work's ongoing process of self-examination and self-definition is the effort to establish a mission statement or set of objectives that serve as an identity not only for the public, but for itself. This process of professional development, of carving out a niche or place for oneself is not unique to social workers (Hughes, 1958, Wilensky, 1964). In 1981 the National Association of Social Workers convened a conference to try to establish a statement of purpose for the profession. What they arrived at was a series of broad

statements that seem to do little to hone the definition of social work and which some critics called fuzzy, too global, and devoid of a sense of social context (see Social Work special issue, 1981, pp 85-93).

In spite of the struggle to define itself, there are two common elements or purposes in most any definition of social work and they not only define, but divide the profession. Those goals are to assist people to adjust to or cope with society and to work for social change (Brieland, 1981). These two apparently antithetical goals of accommodation and change arose, along with the occupation itself, during the Progressive era. One of the problems that arises for the profession with a social work definition of its mission as that of adaptation is that the tasks of accommodating oneself to the world are, in general, the tasks of life itself (Wilensky and Lebeaux, 1965).⁵

One of the early divisions in the budding field of social work was that between the Charity Organization Societies and the Settlement movement. They are worth discussing because their differences display the contradiction between accommodation and social change and illustrate the roots of the professional aspirations of early social work practitioners. The differences between the Charity Organization Societies (COS) and the Settlement

⁵From the professional social worker's perspective, this may not be unlike a sociologist being told that s/he deals with the world of common sense.

movement lay not only in how they organized and practiced, but in their philosophy. The principal assumption of the COS was that upon which the Poor Laws were based, namely, that poverty was the result of moral shortcomings. The settlement movement looked to the social rather than the individual as the source of poverty.

The difference in their practice can be seen not only in the efforts at moral uplift of the COS friendly visitor and the social change efforts of the settlement movement (Trattner, p. 139), but where the friendly visitor merely entered the home periodically, the settlements existed within the poor neighborhoods not only so the workers could experience similar living conditions but to provide a facility which could be of use to those in need. This feature of settlements was a recognition of the importance of merging social welfare work with the home environment in order to avoid alienation from those they were trying to assist.

Trattner (1974) notes that there were similarities between the two groups, including a recognition of the need to research the conditions of poverty before determining the needs or social causes upon which to act. For the COS's this was a matter of trying to uncover fraud and to distinguish the truly needy from the unworthy. For the settlement worker, research was a means to amass empirical data as evidence to be used in their pressure for improved facilities and social services. Gettleman (1985) sees the

research work of the COS's as an effort at social control citing, among other things, their publication and dissemination of the names of those they determined guilty of fraudulent begging. Yet in the end those research efforts were contradictory to the COS philosophy since they demonstrated that the cause of the conditions of the poor did not simply reside in their spiritual deficiencies. Gettleman believes these conflicts were resolved with the professionalization of social work in the early twentieth century as the settlement movement melded with and gave way to the COSs. However, the essential point here is that the research, though it was intended as a means of social control, was also an effort to find a recognizable and saleable commodity for social work. The rationalization of charity through research and registration of prospective recipients served as that commodity.

This history not only echoes the chapter III discussion of the ideological divisions between those who stand on the principal of individualism and those stressing social needs, but it illustrates a movement of social work practice away from home and community and the relegation of the social change component to the background. It also represents the contemporary and historical desire of social work to establish a technology to sell on the market and an identity separate from the world of the home.

Andrew Polsky (1991: 10) contributes to the argument that regards the welfare state as a social control agent by

describing what he calls The Rise of the Therapeutic State which links a "discursive model of normalizing intervention with the power of the state." In this vision, the social control is based on an assumption that social problems are due to the marginality of client groups and the control is implemented by trying to adapt and normalize them. This normalizing element appears to be the same whether the agency is state or voluntary and is due, in part, to the desire of the early social workers to establish their ability to cure the individual manifestation of social problems. Polsky demonstrates how the adaptation goal of social work superseded that of social change as social workers professionalized.

Along with the question of the goals of social work, another equally broad definitional or identity issue is raised when Briar (1981) asks, "What do social workers do"? He believes it is necessary to be able to answer this question, especially to the general public, in order to secure social workers' professional ^{place} niche. In answer to his question he provides two "approximations" provided by others: "social workers provide care" and "social workers provide social supports." A look at how caring is performed in social welfare work and the place of social workers in regards to caring work illustrates how caring has been separated from social work practice in the process of moving it from the home to the market.

Berenice Fisher and Joan Tronto (1990: 39) state that "caring is social because caring efforts speak ultimately to our species rather than isolated individuals." Kari Waerness narrows down caring to the care of dependents and points out its necessity in modern society. Fisher and Tronto dissect the components of caring into three levels: caring about, taking care of, and caregiving. Each subsequent level assumes the existence of the level above, but the converse is not necessarily true. For instance, a person or group could care about another person or impoverished group, but that caring is not sufficient to motivate one to do the work of taking care of. And if someone is taking care of someone, it is safe to say s/he cares about them.

"Taking care of implies the responsibility for initiating and maintaining care activities...that of judgment: the skill involved in choosing one course of action rather than another" (Fisher and Tronto: p. 42). Caregiving is the concrete or hands-on work of "maintaining or repairing our world." Fisher and Tronto (p. 47) note that women are "still ultimately responsible for making the caring process work" and Waerness makes the point that in spite of the socialization of reproduction, it is still women's responsibility to manage the caregiving activities she does not perform. For instance, in the typical home, even though a husband may help with the meal, it is still

the responsibility of the wife to plan the meal and do the shopping.

Fisher and Tronto see conflicts among the levels of caring that reflect some of the conflict within social welfare provision. They describe the separation between caregiving and taking care of and attribute it to large-scale hierarchical bureaucratic organization. They state that responsibility increases as one goes up the bureaucracy and levels of caregiving increase as one goes down the bureaucracy. However, the division between those charged with caring about or taking care of and those who actually do the caregiving can exist without a large-scale bureaucracy, because they are constituent parts of the caring roles as they are defined within the occupational division of labor.

Fisher and Tronto's idea of taking caring of is a good short description of what casework is about. "the influence that the [case]worker has with the client comes largely from her knowledge and expertise about community resources...the worker's effectiveness in helping clients take stock, sort out alternatives, and choose a course of action is critical..." (Taber and Taber in Fink, 1978). Caseworkers are taking care of, or have responsibility for, deciding what the problems and solutions are, in a way that is not necessarily of the clients choosing (Cloward and Epstein, 1965, Polsky, 1991). This claim to be able classify or

diagnose a problem is the hallmark of professional practice (Abbott, 1988:40).

When care is provided in the home, mothers are responsible for deciding what the priorities of care are as well as doing the caregiving. Moving care into the public realm separates these functions. Mastery or creation of a theoretical body of knowledge is inherently removed from the experiential knowledge that comes from hands-on work. "But while professionalization can help to crosscut bureaucratic lines of authority, it also separates human service workers and thus contributes to structuring work and individuals hierarchically" (Waerness, 1984). In foster care, the caseworker is responsible for initiating and maintaining care while the foster mother who is parenting the child is the caregiver. This relationship holds in the large state agency and the small voluntary agency.

Arlie Hochschild (1983) provides a means of seeing the difference between caregiving and taking care of when she speaks of emotion work and the commercialization of feeling. She identifies social work as one of the jobs requiring emotion or feeling management by virtue of its face-to-face nature and the goal of producing a feeling state in the client. What this entails for the worker is "the transmutation of emotional life--the move from the private realm to the public realm...."(p. 160) For the airline flight attendants she studied, attendants internalized the feeling of the cabin as their living room and the irate

customer as a child in order to make passengers truly see stewardesses and stewards as caring for them.

In contrasting the work of the social worker with that of the foster parent, it is actually the latter who is much more engaged in emotion work. It is she who must take the unfamiliar child into her home and nurture him/her as her own and then internalize the emotions that go with loss when the child must leave. This emotion work is integral to foster parenting because of the day-to-day nature of its caregiving work. The social worker is less likely to feel this emotional tug and pull because the work has become the more distant, abstract "taking care of" that is casework.

Social work developed from an attempt to assist people who needed help whether through their own fault, the view of the early COSs, or because of societal factors, the view of the settlements. The rise of professionalization and the primacy of the casework method were sincere efforts to better fulfill the goals of adapting people to society and effecting social change. Yet changes in the organization of the work created a rift between the provider and the client. For social workers, the boundary between themselves and their clients is clear because their work is physically removed from the home into the office and transformed from caregiving to the more abstract responsibility for taking care. In writing about voluntary agencies' disengagement from the poor as public assistance was taken over by the state, Cloward and Epstein (1965: 624) point out that the

voluntary agencies limited practice conceptions to psychological accounts of family problems, psychological normalizing intervention as Polsky would call it, and eschewed the concrete caregiving or hard services (such as in-home care services) that their clients wanted and felt they needed (also see Fraser, 1990). However, social work services in the state agencies follow the same therapeutic model described by Polsky and display the same caregiving/taking care of distinctions.

The common theme running through the dominance of the adaptation goal over social change; the disappearance of the settlements; and the transformation of caring work is the commodification of the social welfare tasks. Wenocur and Reisch (1989: 47) document the attempt on the part of early social workers to rationalize practice along the burgeoning models of the scientific method and corporate organization and cost/benefit accounting. They interpret the actions of those within social work in terms of the emerging capitalist political economic framework. The rationalization of charity work which was at the root of social work origins represented an attempt to package a product that would be saleable and acceptable to the public and other professionals.

In a similar vein, Ehrenreich and English (1978) illustrated the power of the "heroic" medicine of bleeding and calomel to legitimize the position of the early physicians through the powerful and visible effect they

created, in spite of the ineffectiveness of those tools. By connecting the cure with their psuedo-science, early doctors separated themselves from traditional healing, which contained large doses of personal relations with the patient in the home. It was just as important for social workers to separate their work from the home and those practitioners whose early work originated from the home.

"In other words, COS leaders recognized that the problem in establishing satisfactory personal relationships between friendly visitors and clients could be overcome by substituting the goal of professional service for that of personal service, which, in turn, required a highly organized scientifically based technique as a framework for its practice" (Wenocur and Reisch, 1989:59).

Toren (1977) has applied Etzioni's concept of the semi-profession to social work, focusing on how it fits with the ideal-type of a profession. She concludes that social work falls short in the criteria of possession of a theoretical knowledge base. Given social work's lack of a universally recognized unique theoretical knowledge, it is all the more important for it to place as much separation between itself and home labor. In the earlier discussion of public/private, home/market, we saw that there is an overlap in that both things of the home and things of the market are considered private. Since the home is so intimately connected with the private or non-public world and social work has historically evolved from the labor of women working out of their homes, it is important for the profession to distinguish itself from the home sector and

clearly demonstrate the existence of a technique or technology that is marketable as social work rather than simply the good intentions of competent middle class people.

Early charity workers in the COSs sought to systematize the giving of charity. This was the first commodity of use to wealthy donors leery of giving to the unworthy poor (Gettleman, 1975). As Roy Lubove (1965:218) put it, "The community chest and professional fund-raising firm epitomized the changing function and status of the volunteer in an era of professional social work." It did this by placing charity in the hands of specialized managers and institutions and eliminating the haphazard actions of the volunteer. Lubove's work was a review of the transformation of social work from that of volunteer work to professionalization and, though it was not his intent, his history provides several examples of the way in which social workers sought to turn their work into a product.

One of the principal commodities of the social worker is the casework method of differential diagnosis. In differential diagnosis, the social worker reviews the situation of the client and makes an assessment (diagnosis) of what his/her particular problem is from among the myriad (differential) possibilities. Casework "...is utilized in almost every social work program" (Perlman, 1981:438). Toren (1977: 22) states that "The tendency of the social worker to identify his [sic] tasks as 'casework' instead of

'public welfare' is part of the process of professionalization."

Lubove describes the efforts of early medical social workers to establish their professional competence within the hospital setting by distancing themselves from the subservient position of nurses and emulating the physician. Over time they were able to convince the medical establishment to accept their evaluation of the environmental components of disease as important to the health and well being of the patient. Yet in spite of their success, their role was still one of concern with the patients' personal and social, that is home, life as opposed to the physician's scientific role of diagnosis and curing. Abbott (1988) identifies the power to diagnose as a vital part of professional practice. In spite of the early medical social workers' attempt to emulate the physician, they were not able to acquire that vital diagnostic power. In looking at the power of foster parents to make decisions regarding the children in their care, we will see that their input is generally limited to providing information to the social workers and judges who make the recommendations and decisions regarding the children's future.

Early charity workers always had an eye toward the personality problems of the individual, since their view of poverty was one based upon some personal deficit in the poor person. It seemed only natural for them to embrace the emerging science of Freudian psychotherapy. Lubove

(1965:89) cites the establishment of the child guidance clinics of the post World War I period, conceived as "experimental laboratories," as an attempt to, among other things, raise the status of social caseworkers by "demonstrating to social workers the potentialities of psychiatrically oriented casework." The science of psychoanalysis was the kind of tangible product that could stand casework apart and give it credibility. With therapy, it was clear that not just anyone could perform casework, but that it required training and experience. Some foster parents I talked to put little stock in the therapy they have come in contact with for their foster children.

Lubove (1965: 219) saw the whole process of professionalization which included the developing of casework through differential diagnosis, centralization of fund raising, as well as the bureaucratization of the agency as reversing the roles of the paid social worker and the volunteer: "the partnership concept typical of Charity Organization Societies in the nineteenth century was radically modified in the twentieth, when all the institutional pressures worked toward a controlled, frequently marginal, volunteerism." In the nineteenth century the paid worker was the agent at the service of the volunteer friendly visitor, whereas volunteers became marginalized in post-professional social work.

REPRODUCTION OF LABOR

Burawoy (1975: 14) uses this concept, one of the determinants of regimes, to analyze the way workers are drawn or forced into wage labor. I will use it here, in the context of social welfare work, to briefly review some of the supply and demand issues that have arisen in social work. The issues of professionalization and deprofessionalization are pertinent to the situation of public social welfare workers. However, the debate surrounding (de)professionalization reflects assumptions about the basis of social welfare work, that is, how close it is to or apart it is from the home.

In the last section, I spoke of social work's effort to gain professional status and social work's relation to the labor process via the attempt to develop a technique or commodity that would be accepted by the public and other professionals. However, professionalization also represents a structure of control in which professionals attempt to direct the labor process and attempt to regulate entry. The object of those in an occupation as they strive to achieve professional status is to be able to garner a mandate (Hughes, 1958) or become a "dominant profession" (Friedson, 1970) that allows it to not only oversee the labor process, but define what constitutes activities of the profession and its role in society.

Professionalization encompasses issues of the labor process and reproduction of labor. In their capacity to control the labor process, professionals play a part in dictating how social welfare work will be defined and carried out, but the process of professionalization (and deprofessionalization) also affects how laborers are brought into the social welfare division of labor, that is, their reproduction. Professionals, like guild and craft unions, seek to act as gatekeepers to limit and control the supply of practitioners. Acting under the guise of a certifying body that determines who is qualified to perform the job, they also control the labor supply which affects the workers' salaries and ability to find work.

At the time of the origins of social work, early practitioners were female reformers who came from upper middle class households. Dressel et al (1988a:114) cite Becker (1964:59) in stating

In the mid-to-late 1800's the woman who performed charity work--White, Black or Jewish--frequently came from a better off, if not wealthy, family. She was labeled, somewhat pejoratively, a Lady Bountiful, "the charity lady of social wealth and position" whose task was to offer moral guidance to the worthy poor.

The eventual push to create a scientific social work led to exclusion. No longer could a person enter the world armed only with a desire to do good. In speaking of social work's attempt to create a mandate, Stanley Wenocur and Michael Reisch (1989: 213) note, "...[T]heir rigid standards also

preordained small size and an exceedingly slow growth rate for professional social work for many years to come."

Gary R. Lowe (1987), looking at the policies of professional social work from the early part of the century till the 1950s, concurs. He states that the profession pursued status and legitimacy over professional control by choosing university-based training over agency-based training of workers. The dominant feeling was that graduate school was the only place to truly develop professional skill. "By the end of the decade [of the '30s] the two year post-baccalaureate Masters degree was adopted as the only recognized professional credential" (Lowe, 1987: 197).

Some social workers recognized that social work contained many locations and levels of practice and that the MSW-only approach was overly restrictive. The growth of the welfare state in the New Deal era created a large demand for social welfare workers. A movement in the 1940's to sanction a baccalaureate degree as a professional credential failed and it would not be until 1974 that it would be recognized as such. Lowe (1987: 202) states that the recognition of the baccalaureate degree "...continues to be met with resistance and ambivalent comment from established sources inside social work."

Another wave of demand for social welfare workers occurred as a result of the social programs of the 1960's. This has been recognized as playing a part in the origins of a process labeled reclassification or deprofessionalization.

The social programs not only created a demand for more social welfare workers, but many of those programs were also designed to incorporate members of client groups into the welfare state as workers. "In effect, the processes that produced the deprofessionalization of social welfare work in the 1960's were symbolically packaged as maximum feasible participation, new careers, and target group empowerment for the poor" (Dressel et al, 1988a:117).

Deprofessionalization or reclassification is "the reduction in standards of professional education and work-related experience for public social service jobs" (Pecora and Austin, 1983:421). When the social programs of the 1960's were implemented there was a drive to produce paraprofessionals to meet the growing demand. Wenocur and Reisch (1989) note that the deinstitutionalization of mental health patients prompted the training of people with associates degrees. They also cite Siegel (1975) in stating that between 1960 and 1970 the number of non-college educated, social service workers increased from 10 percent to 19 percent of the total.

The specifics of the process of reclassification include the reduction of education requirements for entry level jobs, the interchangeability of baccalaureate and Masters degrees of other social science disciplines for social work education, and the exchangeability of experience for education (Karger, 1983). H. Jacob Karger (1983) states that one impetus for this process was a series

of legal cases of the 1960's. For instance, "the results of Griggs v. Duke [Power Co.] and other key cases have led many civil service systems to alter job entry requirements under the aegis of expanding affirmative action" (Karger, 1983:427). What these did was put the burden of proving the necessity of hiring-qualifications on the employer.

Wenocur and Reisch (1989) and Lowe (1987) make the point that the social work establishment made a tactical error in placing its emphasis on the MSW degree which was realized in its inability to produce the needed personnel in the 1960's. They also argue that had social workers recognized the baccalaureate degree as a professional credential they would have been in a better position to control the social welfare field.

Approaches and strategies for fighting reclassification differ. One approach is that of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW), an organization composed of MSWs. Its position, naturally, revolves around the premise that there is no substitute for social work education and the objective of state licensure. Peter J. Pecora and Michael J. Austin (1983: 423-5) put forth a number of suggestions including: the development of linkages between social work schools, NASW chapters and agency administrators to strengthen the legitimacy of the social work degree; political pressure and lobbying; and development of methods for position validation that would "establish empirically

the validity of requiring a social work degree for job entry."

In a proposition that sounds like a call for public relations work, Charles Green (1988:98) cites studies that "exhort the need for increased clarity about social work's domain in the human services in order to demystify the profession to the public and further legitimize its position in the helping arena." However, the ability of professionals to gain a public mandate lies, in part, in their ability to mystify what they do in order to increase the public's trust and/or dependence.

Karger (1983) believes the NASW strategy is fatally flawed because, among other reasons, its membership is not large enough to apply any political pressure. He states (p. 429) that labeling reclassification as all bad, "ignores the benefits provided to the worker with a BSW...[and] may translate into a more meaningful affirmative action program and may, as the [Michigan Civil Service] Commission maintains, remove artificial barriers to job advancement." Karger suggests a more fruitful approach would be to unite in a "larger movement" under a collective bargaining approach. Collective bargaining suggests a member policy of inclusion rather than exclusion.

Paula Dressel, et al. (1988a) likewise see more promise for unity and progress in the unionization approach. Dressel, et al. (1988b) suggest a model which characterizes social welfare workers as part of a surplus population. In

doing so they recognize the class, race and gender distinctions within social welfare work that NASW licensure proposals do not. They note the predominance of whites and males in administrative positions and the "overwhelming presence of women and disproportionate representation of racial-ethnic groups in paraprofessional jobs.⁶ Their model explains the above-mentioned programs of inclusion of the 1960's as part of the social control effort of the welfare state that worked to legitimize the capitalist economic system for welfare workers and clients alike. Their approach(p.89) "argues that the workers in state-sponsored welfare activities differ from their clients mainly insofar as the former have jobs and the latter do not."

The NASW and collective bargaining approaches to the control of social work reflects an apparent difference in beliefs regarding the place of social work on the home to market continuum. A professional approach designed to set up rigid criteria for entry is premised on the notion that social work is labor distinct from the home, based on scientific principles. A view of social workers as part of a surplus population that includes professionals and paraprofessionals alike, places them and their work closer to the social welfare work of the home.

⁶It is interesting to note that two foster parents within my sample were former paraprofessional social welfare workers whose jobs were lost to funding cuts.

This chapter has looked at some specific mechanisms through which social welfare labor is channeled into a state, voluntary, proprietary, or unaffiliated regimes. It should not be thought that these processes have just happened; they have occurred through political struggle. It was a political struggle for social workers to obtain third party medicaid payments just as it was a struggle for workers to obtain social security provisions. However, the effort to win the struggle and gain legitimacy is not a battle equally fought. Social workers, though to a much lesser extent than physicians, were able to embrace science as a basis of their profession.

The ability of women to transform the house full of children they are babysitting into a home day care center reflects the closeness of the labor to that of the home. Providers are in a position to convert their work from home to market labor, in part, because of their ability to label their work as developmental or educational. However, the attachment to the home setting also detracts from their ability to separate what they do from the everyday unpaid labor performed by other mothers. Chapter VII will illustrate why that transition to market labor is even more problematic for foster parents.

CHAPTER V CHILD FOSTER CARE¹

In order to give a sense of what foster parents do and the context in which they do it, this chapter will provide a brief review of what the foster care program is and how it operates. It will also try to put the child abuse and neglect problem in perspective. After that I will begin to present the data which illustrate foster parenting as unpaid labor belonging in the realm of social welfare work.

We are currently in what has been called the "second child-saving movement" (Hutchison, 1992). The past 30 years have seen a rise in the attention given to family violence, and in particular, violence inflicted upon children. This new attention was fueled by the prominence given to what has been called the battered child syndrome. In 1964, Leontine Young characterized the family of the battered child as one in which punishment was divorced from discipline, violence often had no connection to any misbehavior on the part of the child, and where children were singled out because they were "different" or resembled the other parent (usually the mother). Young presented a powerful narrative in which she described children hurled against walls and floors and

¹In addition to the child foster care program, there is an adult foster care program which provides daily long term non-medical care to adults. When I speak of foster care or family foster care, I will be referring to child foster care only.

burned with cigarettes and lighters, clearly subject to behavior beyond an occasional loss of temper or spanking by the parent.

For the last century the state has maintained a commitment to the housing and rearing of children it has removed from the homes of their biological parents. Throughout this time it has provided money to build institutions (orphanages), directly licensed homes to care for these children, and funded care through voluntary agencies. Foster care, unlike day care, has public support because it is a program whose focus is in support of children rather than also supporting working mothers. This ideology of support for children has helped maintain the program. A key informant from the Michigan Foster and Adoptive Parent Association believes that a foster parent strike sufficiently kindled public support to keep foster care funds from being cut as a response to the state's budgetary crisis.

Child abuse in all of its forms is still an issue of concern today. "It was estimated that, in 1986, more than one million children nationwide (about 1,025,900) met the stringent requirement of having already experienced demonstrable harm as a result of abuse or neglect" (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1988). Demonstrable harm does not necessarily equal the extremes of broken bones, etc., mentioned above, but such moderate injuries/impairments are the equivalent of bruising or

emotional distress that "persist[s] in observable form." The number of cases rises to 1,584,700 if the one includes children who were endangered but not demonstrably harmed. Another way of looking at this latter category is that the children in it have been determined by the protective services worker to be at risk of abuse or neglect. The former, demonstrable harm is an objective determination of an event that has happened. The latter category, endangered, represents a subjective judgement of potential harm.

The figure of a million and a half represents 25.2 children per 1,000 either endangered or harmed by abuse or neglect. Although the Health and Human Services report notes a 64 percent increase in cases of demonstrable harm, the report attributes this change to increases in various professionals' ability to recognize abuse of moderate severity. That is, severe abuse such as broken bones and burns are just as perceptible as they always have been, but those who come in contact with children are becoming better able filter out the accidental fall from the deliberate assault. However, the report still categorized its numbers as a minimum estimate of child abuse and neglect because of the failure of all cases to be reported.

Children who experienced demonstrable harm were equally victimized by abuse and neglect. Of those children subjected to abuse, either actual or potential, about half of the cases were physical abuse, with nearly equal portions

of the rest being victimized by emotional abuse (30 percent) or sexual abuse (24 percent).

There is an interesting shift in the numbers when the more subjective category of "endangered, but not harmed" children was included, along with those who experienced demonstrable harm, in the number of total children affected by abuse and neglect. The ratio of neglected to abused children shifted from about even to a ratio of 3:2. This inclusion of the endangered children differs from the abuse numbers in the paragraph above, which remain the same whether the definition of abuse is harm or potential harm. The Health and Human Services report suggests that some of the disagreement "may stem from reasonable disagreements about the standards of adequate physical care."

A different approach is taken in the book, Heroes of Their Own Lives. Linda Gordon (1988) reviewed the work of Boston child protective agencies from before the turn of the century until 1960. She concludes (p. 3) that "family violence has been historically and politically constructed." That construction, she says, has depended upon the political moods of the times and the forces of certain political movements. For instance, she identifies the escalation and redirection in child welfare activism surrounding World War I as a result of the recognition of the need for a pool of healthy young men. "In their pronouncements, the child-savers shifted their emphasis to national social welfare

issues and de-emphasized intrafamily violence (Gordon, 1988: 137).

Gordon not only asserts that the attention given to child abuse has been politically constructed through time but that violence among family members is political in and of itself "in the sense of that word as having to do with power relations." She notes that this is true in the case of child neglect in which class and family relations come into play in defining and illustrating what was proper and improper care of children. Gordon illustrates the effect of class and family relations on the assessment of child neglect during the Progressive era. In defining child neglect there was a tendency on the part of the child protection workers that Gordon studied to assume a family/household system with a husband earning a family wage and a mother at home doing full time housekeeping. So, when families falling short of this middle-class standard were not able to supervise their children because both parents had to work, or if a child was working or on the street hustling to contribute to the family income stream, that constituted neglect in the eyes of the social workers. "Above all, the concept of child neglect became an expression of fears about changes in family life wrought by women's entrance into the labor force and parental loss of influence over their children" (Gordon, 1988: 118). Gordon's point is that child abuse and neglect occur within a broad and complex social context that cannot be separated

from the state of the economy or class relations and gender relations.

This nation's approach to child welfare has placed the emphasis on women's responsibility because the responsibility of child care has traditionally fallen on them. Elizabeth Hutchison (1992) believes that the current focus on child abuse and neglect is narrowly centered on child protection, divorced from a broader view of child welfare. She believes that child welfare is a woman's issue as well because the care of children is the responsibility of women and women are not given the support they need to fulfill that function. That support does not simply take the form of welfare benefits, but also includes policies such as comparable worth which seek to reduce women's inferior position in the labor market. In looking at the place of foster mothers in the child welfare system, Hutchison notes that the separate spheres ideology has clouded our ability to view what foster mothers do as work.

Looking at child abuse and neglect as a social construction or reframing child protection as a woman's issue does not deny that abuse and neglect occurred in the past or say that they do not occur today. Nor does reframing the issue say that the lack of recognition of the context in which abuse and neglect occurs relieves us from recognizing that abuse and neglect do cause significant harm. Gelles and Straus (1992) note that, "growing up in an abusive house can dramatically compromise the developmental

and personal competence of the children." They also note a increase in juvenile violence and suggest that symptoms of lack of adjustment such as school problems, trouble in making friends, and discipline problems may stem from family violence. And although they dismiss the notion that an abused child inevitably becomes an abusive parent, the numbers they present suggest it certainly may increase the possibility of future abuse.

Not all victims of abuse and neglect are removed from their homes. Children in foster care are the largest segment of a group of children (175,700 out of 251,000) who are said to be in "substitute care," or care provided by those other than the biological parents (Stein, 1987). Substitute care is also provided in residential treatment facilities such as state and voluntary juvenile detention centers, psychiatric hospitals, and group homes. Group homes are large single family dwellings which serve as the childrens' day to day residence. However, they are staffed by professional and para-professional social workers who supervise and monitor the children's behavior and treatment. Group homes, also considered foster care, usually house children whose behavior requires a more rigid structure than a family setting can provide. They will not be considered in this research since group homes provide fostering done as paid labor.

There is more than one instance mentioned in my data of a child who was cared for in a family foster home for a

number of years being moved to a more structured environment. One foster mother was implored by her social worker to keep a particular child because the worker believed this home was the child's only hope of being kept out of an institution. These examples of foster parents housing and supporting those who required more intense or more professional treatment represent foster parents doing more than just providing a family-like setting. And even if the families are not providing the child what they would get in that more formal environment, they are putting up with more or subjecting their families to behavior that may be better suited to treatment by professionals.

Arrangements have always existed in this country for the care of children in homes other than those of their biological parents. Much of the early fostering appears to have taken the form of the "binding out" or indenturing of children in which they would become apprenticed in the home of a craftsman until they reached adulthood (Morgan, 1944; Demos, 1970). "In the mid-1850's, a new and significant pattern of caring for dependent children began..." (Stein, 1987: 146-8) This new pattern was called free foster care and the essential difference from past practices was that the children were not under an indenture contract with the master. In spite of some opposition from several quarters, free foster home care and institutional placement became "firmly established as the principal method of providing care for dependent children" (Stein, 1987: 154).

Today in Michigan, foster care guidelines state that foster families are to provide "care and supervision" of children within their homes and to accept the foster child as a member of the family. There is nothing in this designation that implies that the family is there to provide any sort of treatment or rehabilitation to the child. The family is licensed as a family and not as social welfare workers.

Over three-quarters (79%) of the children in substitute care are there under court order, in situations where the parents retain their parental rights. Another 11 percent of children in care are permanent wards of the state by virtue of the termination of their biological parents' rights; this often follows the temporary removal. This latter group of permanent state wards are either awaiting adoption or are in programs to facilitate their transition to independent adult life. Over half (56%) of the former, temporary court wards, are in care because protective services entered the home and removed the child due to a condition of abuse or neglect.

Child protective services is a quasi-police arm of state social service agencies. Its role is to receive information from mandatory and voluntary reporters in the community regarding potential cases of abuse and neglect². State social workers then decide whether such reports are

²Mandatory reporting sources include certain professionals and officials, such as teachers, attorneys, and health workers, who, by law, must report cases in which they suspect abuse or neglect has occurred.

worthy of investigation. If protective services decides to investigate an allegation of abuse or neglect, they then make a determination as to whether the abuse or neglect actually occurred.

Not all substantiated or "founded" cases of abuse or neglect result in the removal of the child from the home. Currently, there is an effort underway to try to minimize the number of children placed in foster care and institutional settings by providing services to the biological parents which would eliminate the causes of actual or potential abuse or neglect before they occur (Dore, 1991; Kresnack, 1992). Providing services to the family while the child is in the home is thought to be a lower cost option than family foster care which, in turn, is cheaper than institutional care. In cases of in-home, or preventive services, there is not necessarily any supervision of the family by the court.

During the time in foster care, and often beyond, the child remains under the jurisdiction of the juvenile court. The desired outcome of the child's stay in care is laid out in something called the permanency plan, which is devised by the agency social worker and approved by the court. Less than half (47 percent) of the children in care have a permanency plan aimed toward their return to their parental home. Most of the rest have a plan of either adoption, long term foster care, or independent living. The eventual disposition of the child's case, be it return to the

biological parents, termination of the parents's rights, or continuation in care, is ultimately decided by the court.

The foster parents' role in this process is minimal, at best. In most cases, the foster parents are the silent caretakers in the midst of others' decision-making regarding the future of the child. In my interviews, there were occasional instances of foster parent's input being solicited by the court, but for the most part foster parents were either silent observers in court or explicitly told not to attend court hearings.

No, I never had to go to court. They won't allow the foster parents to be in court. Not our agency. Unless they had something that we know about, I guess, I don't know. But I've never heard of anybody going (Case #27, p 5).

So, in spite of their day-to-day care of the children and awareness of their condition and relation to their biological parents, foster parents' input is rarely sought in the courtroom.

Stein (1987) notes that foster parent's rights are being recognized. They are considered the psychological parents of children in their care, which gives them preferred consideration if the children come up for adoption. However, a Michigan adoption official states that this is for the benefit of the child who has formed a bond with the parent rather than for the benefit of the foster parents.

The respective roles of the judge, social worker, and foster parent are a perfect illustration of the division of care of which Fisher and Tronto speak. Foster parents are responsible for the day-to-day care of the children while the social workers are doing the taking care of. That is, social workers are not involved in the daily chores of upbringing or behavior modification, though they may give direction to the foster parents for the implementation of a plan for those tasks. Many foster parents saw the juvenile court judges that preside over the hearings as being in the most distant relation of "caring about." Foster parents complained of judges making decisions divorced from the reality of the childrens lives.

Over three quarters of the children in substitute care are there for reasons of abuse or neglect, as noted, or for reasons labeled "parental condition/absence." This latter category covers cases of abandonment or parental incapacity, such as illness or incarceration. In sum, most children are in foster care because of some deficiency in the biological parents' condition or ability to parent. Most children in care are under the authority of the juvenile court and the supervision, ultimately, of the state social service agency. I say ultimately because although a child may be placed in a foster home by a voluntary agency under contract with the state rather than the state itself, the state social service agency retains final authority over the social work permanency plan submitted by the voluntary agency. The

foster parent is providing the day-to-day care to the child, and for the most part her role, as mentioned, is one of accepting and implementing the case plans devised by the social workers and the judge.

In children's foster care, only the state and voluntary regimes officially operate. The law designates that child placing agencies cannot be proprietary. Gilbert (1983) has noted that the non-profit status of voluntary agencies may be nominal in some cases and that any would-be profits are consumed in high salaries for administrators. One of my key informants confirmed this and made the distinction between "real" governing boards which oversee the director and his/her implementation of the program, and "rubber stamp boards." In the latter, the board is hand picked by the director to do his/her bidding. These agencies are run as "sole proprietorship[s], if you want to know the truth." According to my informant, these agencies with rubber stamp boards are not very widespread.

In the case of children's foster care, the voluntary agencies can essentially be seen as an extension of the state. The largest part of voluntary agencies' money comes from the state or state-funded children, the children themselves are channeled to the private agencies through the state, and both the state and voluntary agencies are regulated by the same administrative regulations and court rules.

Both state and voluntary foster care agencies can be seen as part of the therapeutic state since their aim is normalization of the biological family using the power of the court. In foster care, the state worker is directly linked to the same organization that removed the child in the first place. However, the private agency worker could just as easily recommend a termination of parental rights as could the state worker. One foster parent spoke of the voluntary agency worker trying to get information from her regarding the foster child's alleged victimization in order to provide evidence in court. My voluntary agency informant left his work with abuse/neglect cases, in part, because of the involuntary or coercive aspect to the work.

Since, in the case of children's foster care, voluntary agencies are essentially an extension of the state, the relation to the state and market is identical. For the foster parents this means that the only discernible difference in being licensed by the state or a voluntary agency is the reported possibility of more money in the latter.

Foster parents in my sample consistently stated that there was a difference in the rates of payment foster parents receive for the care of the children according to the agency with whom they are licensed. Scattered comments suggest that the voluntary agencies can spend more money due to their ability to generate donations. My key informants confirmed the lack of uniformity in funding of voluntary

agencies. For foster care, some agencies rely strictly on the "per diem" foster care stipend that is paid by the state, while others qualify for United Way funding, are supported by a parent agency (such as the Lutheran church), or solicit donations through their own agency. This allows the agencies to pay parents different rates of pay for children of the same age and/or the degree of difficulty of care they require.

In the last chapter the question was raised regarding the quality of care based on the funding of an agency. In the case of children's foster care, based on my observations, there appears to be little difference in the quality of care based on the source of funding of the agency. My key informant even vouched for the quality of care of the rubber stamp agency of which he spoke.

Only half (47 percent) of the children that go into foster care return to their biological parents. Thirty-two percent remain in a home other than that of their biological parents until they reach adulthood, either by way of adoption or foster care (Stein, 1987). According to a state adoption official, 50 percent of the approximately 2,000 state wards are adopted by foster parents. Most of these are two, three and four year olds who are less desirable adoptees than newborn infants and are harder to place. Fifty percent of these adopted state wards are over 10 years old. Foster parents serve as a repository for these children who otherwise might remain rootless.

I have used the personal pronoun "her" to describe foster parents. I use the female pronoun because in my sample, women were clearly the caregivers. This was obviously so in the case of the single mothers and nearly as obvious in the cases of two parent families. One of my key informants confirmed that fostering is essentially a female project. There was one single male foster parent in my sample who I will not identify with the male pronoun for reasons of confidentiality. His gender does not alter the substance of my analysis. Within the entire sampling frame of 2800 Detroit area foster parents, there are approximately³ 30 single male foster parents. This is a rate of one tenth of a percent.

Families are licensed to care for foster children either directly by the state or through an agency that is authorized by the state to license foster families. The licensing process includes a police record check, interviews by social workers, an inspection of the house, and training classes to be taken by the prospective parents. Foster parents can house up to four non-related children and have no more than eight children in the home under the age of 17. The number of children a family will be licensed for depends upon the needs of the agency, the wishes of the family, and

³I made this assessment from the first names given in the foster care list. I say the number of males is approximate because it is uncertain to know for sure if certain first names are male or female, e.g., Pat, Chris, Jessie.

a determination by the agency workers of the foster parents' ability to accommodate those children's needs.

Once a child is placed in a foster home, there are periodic visits by the agency social worker to monitor the child's condition in the home. There are also periodic review hearings by the court to examine the progress of the parents and the child in meeting the goals set out in the case plan. It used to be the case that children languished in foster care without real impetus for the court to move their situation to a conclusion. Historically, children would remain in foster care for years without a plan for returning them to their parents or terminating those parents' rights and permanently placing the child in a family. Some states did not even know how many children they actually had in care (Stein, 1987). Changes in the federal law have mandated that children have permanency plans. Recent changes in the Michigan law decree that a dispositional hearing must be held to make a final decision on the family's case after a child has spent a year in care, unless there is a reason to extend the timeframe of the plan.

When the court withdraws from a case, the child may either be returned to the biological parents or the parents' rights may be terminated. In the latter case, the child could either be adopted to another home, adopted by his/her foster family, prepared to move out on his/her own (if old enough), or remain in the foster home under a long term

foster care plan. Long term foster care can be the decision even if the parents' rights are not terminated, if it is considered to be in the best interest of the child to remain in the foster home without adoption.

Foster parents are an integral part of the child foster care system. Without their homes and their labor the children in foster care would have to be placed in institutions staffed by paid workers or left in their homes. The latter would either require a greater degree of monitoring of their parents to ensure their safety or, without such monitoring, would place them at risk of further abuse or neglect.

FOSTER CARE AS PRIVATIZATION

The foster care system can be seen as privatization of out of home care. The care and treatment of children, which would otherwise be through public or voluntary institutions, is provided in the setting of the family. There are proprietary settings such as psychiatric hospitals which treat victims of child abuse and neglect. However, their admission to these facilities is the result of behavioral problems that result from the victimization rather than the abuse or neglect itself. Private families, not formally paid for their services, are sustaining these children at low cost to the state. A Michigan Office of Management and Budget report identifies foster care as a service that it currently considers to be privatized or contracted out.

The separate spheres ideology that contends that the home is the woman's realm supports a rationale of having children in a family setting. The private arena of the family is the place for children to be and mothers are the people in the family best thought to provide care. This is not to take away from the clinical argument in favor of placing children removed from their homes in other homes rather than in institutions. However, it is to say that the tasks that foster parents do would be considered work, if they were performed in a non-family setting. Many of the foster parents I interviewed maintained the ideology that what they were providing to the children in their care was their own family setting rather than their labor as social service workers.

In the spring of 1990, the Michigan department of social services, at the order of the governor, cut the funds allotted for the care of children in foster care. Although it was framed in cost-cutting terms, the move amounted to further privatizing the provision of child foster care. By withdrawing state funds for care of the children, it forced the foster families to pick up more expenses such as food, clothing and transportation. As it stands, according to some of the parents in my sample, the foster care stipend does not cover the true costs of child rearing.

The foster parents, in concert with the voluntary agencies, successfully fought for the reinstatement of the reduction in funds. They did this through political

pressure and a strike, whereby they refused to accept any more foster children into their homes. In some cases, children were returned to the state child placing agency. None of the parents to whom I talked embraced the idea of returning children to the agency and most were reluctant in their backing of the strike because of the harm it posed to the children. They recognized that children whose lives had already been disrupted could only be harmed by the rejection implied by a strike on the part of their current caregivers.⁴ However, those who supported the strike realized that only strong political action could avert an attack from a fiscally conservative Statehouse.

The foster parents were torn by a conflicting sense of themselves as workers contributing a service to the state and families furnishing a haven to abused children. Their service ideal led them to reject the notion of an action that would harm the children in their care, but their sense of the financial costs and benefits of foster care told them that a reduction in the stipend would mean a reduction of their standard of living.⁵ These conflicting feelings result from their status as unwaged social welfare workers.

⁴I thank Paula Wilbur for bringing this point to my attention.

⁵In chapter VII, I will elaborate on both the foster parents' service ethic as well as their cost/benefit evaluation of the stipend.

FOSTERING AS WORK

The foster parents' current status is essentially that of an unpaid volunteer. However, a stipend accompanies the care of the child and, though it is not intended that way, many foster parents interpret it as compensation for their caregiving. Chapter VII will review the waged nature of fostering as well as other features that suggest that it should be considered as a full-fledged part of social welfare work.

Chapter IV used day care as an example of work that is poised in the middle of a home to market transition. Foster care can also be seen in that middle ground, but standing closer to the home sphere since it is performed in the home and is less easily distinguished from simple parenting. Part of fostering is parenting, the parenting that all mothers and fathers do: bathing, feeding, clothing, disciplining. Another part of it is clearly not a part of normal parenting. This includes contacts with social welfare professionals in visits to doctors and dentists for yearly physicals, counseling sessions, appointments with caseworkers, and supervised visitation of children with their biological parents.

The above is not to imply that parenting does contain an element of work in and of itself. Work is defined as the effort required to accomplish something. Anyone who has ever chased after an energized toddler, answered the endless "why?" questions of a 6 year old, or paced the floor waiting

for a teen to return home will testify that all of those tasks require physical and emotional effort. This was reflected in the many references to the work involved in caring for the children

I don't see it, they [other foster parents] see it as a job and with children it's a job...it is a job taking care of people(Case #43 p. 10).

An illustration of the element of work in foster care is presented in the comments of one foster parent (Case #14) who also held a part time job working with the developmentally disabled. At one point she described the frustrations of fostering teenage girls

We all get exasperated when they do things, but you know. How many more times can you tell them or how many other ways can we say this and stuff and to eight different girls pulling off the same kind of nonsense and more. You could say it's a heck of a job (p. 6).

On that same page, she later described her paid labor

Yea, the ones in my apartment are [in their] '20's and '40's. I enjoy that a lot too. I mean they have days where you can get very exasperated or they can get very stubborn. I've got some...when they get stubborn, they get stubborn. I do enjoy it.

Amidst the virtuous motivations that led many of these people into fostering others' children, the work element was evident as they talked about the effort that they must expend to provide for children that, in many instances, have received little or no care in their lifetimes. Several foster parents spoke of the need for a break or a sabbatical. One couple (Case #13, p. 2) described their experiences with five foster children at one time and then

said, "So, after they grew up and was grown, then we closed up and we rested awhile".

Foster parents often expressed an ambiguity in describing their caregiving. That ambiguity reflects the mixed nature of fostering which includes the everyday joys of parenting in addition to the satisfaction of seeing the successful reunion of parent and child; however, it is a job that also sometimes requires extraordinary amounts of patience, restraint and insight. At the same time they maintained their attitude of service to children, these fosters described the effort involved

Because this one has an appointment for psychological, this one has to have therapy, this one has to see the mother. You know, there are all kinds of things that you have to keep running up there for all the time. And it takes chunks out of your day. In addition to running to the agency, I have all the other things that I do with my family (Case #46 p. 10).

At the same time the foster parents expressed the combination of caring and working that goes into fostering, they also relayed their sense of the similar mixed feelings of the caseworkers towards that job

I think they treat it like a job. I also think they care for the children. I think they are concerned, very concerned with the children's well being, welfare. And it is a job (Case #47 p. 6).

This mixture of attitudes stems from the impossibility of completely divorcing one's feelings about the tasks required by the work from the trials and outcomes of the children whose lives both caseworkers and foster parents are shaping.

Aside from having the feeling that caring for these children inside their homes was work, foster parents at times did things that could be seen as being casework responsibilities. One parent made a great effort to get a child under her care into a residential placement facility because she felt that is what she needed at the time and another worked to keep her child in an extra reading program, in each case, against the judgement of the institutional authorities. One parent took it upon herself to go out and retrieve an abandoned baby that had previously been in her care rather than leave this to the authorities and the system. These acts do not represent an abdication on the part of the social worker, or others, involved. Rather, they reflect the degree to which these parents transform their caring and caregiving into an advocacy resembling the tasks of the paid social welfare worker.

Although the extra efforts in the care of foster children required of these parents may establish their tasks as work, that does not necessarily establish fostering as a job. Although all foster parents did not see what they did as work, a few foster parents were explicit about seeing their work with children as a job. One woman, in describing a portion of the monthly stipend as a compensation to the foster parent said,

And I guess that is the reason...because you are providing a service. It really and truly is a job (Case #49 p. 8).

Another parent described fostering as filling a void when she was forced out of her previous employment. In talking about how her husband helps with the children, she said, "I don't burden him down with the children because this is my job..."(Case #47 p. 10). Another parent had formally worked in the social welfare field as a para-professional until her job was eliminated. Her account was one of a move into fostering as a transition from that social welfare job.

This attitude of fostering as a job was not universal. As will be discussed in the service ethic section of the next chapter, many entered fostering to adopt or enlarge their families or to do some sort of service and made no mention of fostering as a job or as work. One area of difference between the group of foster parents who represented a more work-like approach and those taking a more self-service⁶ approach was in regards to the foster parent associations.

A feature of professionalism is the existence of and participation in professional organizations (Wilensky, 1964). I began to see that some foster parents treated their foster parent organizations as professional associations. I constructed the questions regarding foster parent support groups(# 16 and 17 in Appendix 1) in my interview guide on the assumption that each agency had a

⁶Self-service was a part of the code category I developed in the course of coding the interviews. It is described further in chapter VII.

foster parent association or support group of one type or another that was a forum for foster parents to join and share advice and voice complaints. In addition to any agency-specific foster parent group, there is also the statewide Michigan Foster and Adoptive Parent Association (MFAPA). I also asked about this organization. The MFAPA aims, according to the executive director of its home development project, to enhance foster parent skills, provide mutual support, and reach out to recruit others. Given the responses regarding the aims of the various agency groups, it is impossible to give, with any degree of certainty, a picture of the aims of those groups. For instance, many people's responses left uncertain whether the groups to which they referred were anything more than agency training sessions.⁷

I aimed my questions about fostering associations toward getting at the state of relations between the foster parent group and the agency rather than the degree and nature of the involvement of the individual foster parent in that group, so it is difficult to tell whether the parents gave answers based on much or little participation. In spite of there not being a foster parent association in each agency and the slight misdirection of the question, I was nevertheless able to gain some valuable insight in the

⁷Given the point in the interview at which that question was asked, there was little time left to do detailed probing.

participation of foster parents in these extra-curricular activities.

Almost half of the foster parents to whom I talked said that they were not involved in either of the associations. Of these non-participating foster parents, those not "professionally" involved, almost half (over 20 percent of the total families interviewed) were those who were clearly involved in fostering because of some non-service related reason such as fostering a relative or trying to adopt. Those who entered with the notion of adopting stood apart and showed even less desire to engage in the minimum necessary acquaintance with the agency and the other foster parents. This is how one would-be adoptive foster parent answered when I asked about whether she attends the, probably once or twice a month, foster parent association meetings

No, not really, because like I say, mostly I didn't have the time at the time because I was working and I wanted to spend most of the time I could with Sally because I don't believe in dragging a child here and there and because when you put them off on somebody, that is what their parents did and leave them alone and I want to make Sally feels [sic] just as much love as if she were my child" (Case 43, p. 9).

For these adoptive parents, which I will classify as self-service in the next chapter, an association of fellow foster parents was of no interest because they, in a sense, did not consider themselves foster parents. Their involvement in fostering was utilitarian and their concern was with the construction of their own family or assisting a particular

child they had come in contact with, be s/he a family member or of some other acquaintance.

The responses of those who said they were members or participants of the foster parent groups are less suggestive, but noteworthy. Approximately 30 percent expressed some involvement in either the agency support group or the larger MFAPA. These included some of the most verbal, eloquent, experienced and service oriented foster parents, and it also included those who saw fostering as a job. Of the 18 (out of 54) foster parents who gave the strongest indications of fostering resembling work, 14 of them were active in one or both of the associations.

There were several diverse reasons given for participating in a foster parent association. These reasons are inconclusive in confirming that the foster parent associations were seen as a professional group. Many seemed to be involved for the social affairs for adults and children, such as Christmas parties. Others used the meetings for self-help in sharing advice for handling particularly troubling children or situations, such as firebugs. These are not unlike professional conferences for sharing research findings, though in this case foster parents are sharing the results of their practical experiments in human interaction. On the other hand, many saw the groups as a vehicle for voicing complaints and some used the groups as a dispute mediator or advocate as a labor

union member would use a shop steward to protect his/her interest.

The pattern of non-membership in foster parent associations by those whose interests were non-fostering and the more active involvement by those more invested in ongoing fostering of children reflects an active engagement on the part of the latter that is akin to work. It also reflects the potential of foster parent groups to take a bigger role as a professional group or even collective bargaining agent. However, it requires a large leap to consider foster parent associations, as they currently exist, as professional organizations. Not only do foster parents engage in the associations for different reasons,¹ but they have not yet come to collectively see themselves as workers.

The task of commodification of their services will be a difficult one for the foster parents because the ideology of motherhood tells us that there are no special qualifications needed to parent, which is part of what the foster parent is doing. One of the foster parents in my sample took this attitude when she wondered why it was that the mothers of the children in care do not properly parent their children, for even, "Animals know how to care for their children"(Case #44a, p.13). Chapter VII will detail the contrast between

¹Although this can also be said of those true professionals attending their annual conferences.

the foster parents' experienced-based approach to their caregiving versus their workers' reliance on expertise.

The foster parent association official I talked to spoke of a program of training foster parents which would allow them to care for children currently in residential placements. Caring for these "intense children" who may be physically and sexually aggressive will require, "skills way beyond what they ever thought they would have to [have]....[and a] highly structured foster home." This kind of work would be the beginning of a type of care that could be packaged as a commodity.

Foster parents are affiliated with the agencies which license them, though there was a proposal under discussion that would have made foster care providers completely unaffiliated providers. Unlike family day care providers who are unaffiliated providers and can care for any child they are willing to accept, the foster parents are limited to accepting the children from the agency with which they are licensed. One foster parent told of accepting a child from another agency and being asked to change her license from her current agency to the agency that was supervising the child's case.

One foster parent mentioned, with a tone of hope, the possibility that foster parents could become unaffiliated providers. That is, they would become licensed as independent contractors who could open their home to any agency that had a child to be placed. It was a proposal

that was raised several years ago, but not acted upon. Sharon Wasson, the foster parent association official to whom I talked, suggested that it was raised as a result of foster parent complaints of underutilization, or empty beds. The advantage, according to her, was that it would allow foster parents to seek out the agency that paid the highest rate, though from my conversations, they appear to do this anyway by changing agency affiliation.

Ms. Wasson said that the disadvantage of unaffiliated status would be that the foster parents would then be liable to be taxed on the money they receive as if it were a wage, which they currently are not. She also stated that there is a need for agency control, though the foster parent who told me of this proposal was quite confident that she could operate without aid of agency supervision.

Another proposal, one currently under consideration, is that of certification of foster parents. As briefly outlined to me, there would be three levels of certification: beginning, intermediate, and master. The certification would be based on continuing education credits that would be issued. The credits would be granted based on testing that would be conducted on material submitted by guest editors of the Michigan Foster and Adoptive Parent Association newsletter. Ms. Wasson also suggested that there might be some required combination of education and experience. The certification would aid the agencies in matching placements with foster parents, but would also

solidify the importance of training and lend increased legitimacy to the foster parents. Sharon Wasson envisions foster parents using the certification as a springboard for further and broader child advocacy.

By virtue of their unpaid status, lack of credentials and general emphasis on practical over expert knowledge, foster parents are, at best, classified as paraprofessionals. The courts, which decide the fates of foster children, generally do not acknowledge the foster parents' ability to report on the circumstances of the children or their biological families. The social workers who manage the cases do not give full consideration to the assessments of the foster parents and some newer social workers brought in because of large staff turnover are often intimidated by more experienced foster parents. If the politics of exclusion in which foster parents are considered more like caretakers than social welfare workers continue to be practiced, the future of foster parents being recognized as workers is dim.

CHAPTER VI FINDINGS

The original intent of this dissertation was to see if different agencies licensed different types of families¹; specifically, if public and private agencies tended to license families with different household structures. This chapter will give an explanation of why this comparison could not be accomplished and in the process, will give a profile of the sample of foster families, the agencies with whom they are licensed and how they got connected with those agencies. There are two fundamental reasons why the comparison of foster families by the agency with whom they are licensed did not have the validity and meaning originally suspected. First, the irregularity in the way foster parents became connected with their particular agency eliminated any consideration of selectivity by the agencies. This irregularity of recruitment undercuts the presumption that social workers and their agencies systematically reproduce a particular family structure. The second reason the comparison of foster families by agency broke down was the variability between the agencies and workers. The repeated statement by the foster parents that each agency and worker is different reflect their own individual points

¹See the methodological appendix for an account of the evolution of the dissertation and the significance of the question of different agencies licensing different types of families.

of view and do not allow any general conclusions to be drawn regarding the actions of the workers or the agencies.

There was a wide variety of ways that foster parents were connected with the agencies with which they were licensed. In several cases, the agency reached out in some way to the foster parents; in some cases the foster parent sought out or even shopped for an agency. Several foster parents had changed agencies during the course of their fostering and some of the parents who had been fostering for a number of years could not remember how they had selected their agency. In fact, there were three foster parents who did not even know or were not sure the name of the agency with whom they were licensed. For these people, the agency was not as much a matter of concern as the children for whom they were caring.

There are just as many ways that parents become affiliated with fostering agencies as there are ways workers land jobs. Many heard about their agency by word of mouth. Some had parents or other relatives that fostered through that agency and others relied on friends for the referral. A surprising number of people were drawn to fostering and their agency through advertisements on the television. A couple of people responded to solicitations at their church. Still others had known about fostering or had considered it for a time, then later sought an agency through the telephone book.

This means that the process of foster parent licensing is not simply one of agencies going out and seeking and choosing. There were too many cases of the foster parent going to or selecting the agency to give validity to the notion that the agency selected the foster parents. This is not to say that once the prospective foster parent arrives at the agency to fill out an application and undergo the orientation that the agency does not have the option to sift out those they do not think acceptable. However, I did not get enough data to make any kind of authoritative statement on that process.

Contrary to the notion of agencies being selective, statements by two foster parents suggested the screening during the licensing and orientation process was little to non-existent. One of these parents actually changed agencies in the middle of the orientation process because she had discovered that one (possibly more, though it is unclear from our dialogue) parent was getting licensed through that agency after having her license removed by another agency. The case of which she spoke occurred because this other prospective foster parent had left an infant at home alone in a crib while she made a trip to the bank. My interviewee brought this to the attention of the agency, was not satisfied by the way they intended to handle the matter, and left to get licensed by another agency. One foster parent actually revealed to me that she had told the agency what she thought they wanted her to say during the

licensing process and withheld some of the information that they were asking for. She felt justified to do this for privacy reasons.

These statements of lack of agency scrutiny should be taken as anecdotal, but they do suggest that the initial selecting and licensing processes are not a finely meshed sieve. These accounts, and the statements from many parents about the high demand for foster parents, highlight a difference in the reproduction of labor of foster parents and professional social workers. The foster parents come directly from the household to fostering. Many spoke of the need for more foster parents, and though the demand for foster parents does not imply that the agencies will take on anyone as a foster parent, it does suggest a lack of an effort to control or limit the supply. This stands in contrast with the efforts of those in the social work discipline to keep credentials, and the barriers that go with them, high.

In contrast to those who felt a lack of screening of the foster parents, others who reflected on the licensing process felt it was too intrusive, as did the lady described above who concealed information. These differences probably do not reflect variations in the agencies' procedures or concerns for the reliability of their foster parents (though they may) as much as they reveal the differences among the foster parents' sense of what is too much prying and their relative realization of the need for such scrutiny by the

agency. These statements also reflect the second reason for the difficulty of making a blanket comparison of agencies: variability.

Of the 54 foster parents interviewed, nine (16 percent) had been licensed by more than one agency. The first time I encountered one of these multiple agency foster parents I thought I had encountered the perfect informant. However, neither she nor the other eight were able to draw consistent comparisons across the agencies. Their reasons were consistent with the statements of the other foster parents who said that each worker was different. Some foster parents had several children in the household, each with a different caseworker. When I asked one woman (Case #11) whether her agency treated her as a colleague, partner, client, etc., she definitively answered, "As a client." Yet she went on to say, "Now, two [of the three] social workers that I've had, see us as friends and they want input from us. You know, but to most of the superiors and that, we're just hired help."

This not only suggests a lack of universality in the relations between workers and foster parents, but that the attitudes and behaviors of the workers do not necessarily reflect those of the management of the agency. The above statement also brings into question the foster parents' generalizations about the agencies and workers, since she at

one point said she is treated like a client² and then went on to contradict that by saying that her relationship with two out of three of her workers is based on mutuality and friendship. I have tried to place each individual remark in the context of the entire interview of the foster parent and place that perspective with the range of observations presented within the entire sample. It seemed at times that particular foster parents would cite an example or event and generalize from that one event to the entire relationship, whatever the specific comment related to. I believe that people chose the examples that represented their feelings or their assessment of the situation, so those selected anecdotes reflect the foster parents' general feelings.

In spite of the variation among the generalizations of the workers and agencies by the foster parents, specific categories did emerge from the data. Those categories showed some regularity and some differences around that regularity. I will address these categories in chapter VII.

THE FOSTER FAMILIES

As mentioned, nine of the 54 families had been licensed by more than one agency. Using the agency with whom they

²This particular confusion may be the result of the multiple meanings of term client. In some contexts, the client is the superordinate and catered to by the service provider. In the case of a social service agency administering public assistance, the term client can have a more derogatory meaning.

were licensed at the time of the interview, 13 out of 51³ were licensed by the Department of Social Services (DSS).⁴ The remainder were licensed by 17 different private agencies. Some of those agencies were represented as many as four, five, or six times. Ten of the agencies only had one of their families chosen by my sampling procedure. It can be seen from this that enough different agencies were selected to do a comparison based on the type of agency, but other features of the foster parent sample prevented it.

The variability in the agencies and workers mentioned earlier can be seen in the feelings and descriptions given by various foster parents about the same agency. None of the multiple foster parent agencies were given quite the same profile. One agency with six respondents generally received high praise, yet one experienced foster parent who had recently exited foster parenting indicted the agency and the foster parent system in general. Her comments reflected seven and a half years in fostering and ten different placements⁵ as well as some years of work within the agency

³That is the 54 in the total sample minus the three who couldn't remember or were not sure of their agency.

⁴Juvenile courts in Michigan did license foster families, but a recent change got the courts out of the business of licensing families for children removed by reason of neglect or abuse. Presently DSS is the only state agency licensing foster homes for child victims of abuse/neglect.

⁵In my written survey I asked the foster parents to tell me how many placements they had had. I asked this assuming the definition of a placement equalling one child. A later review of the surveys revealed that at least one foster parent defined a placement as one entry of a child or

and social work education. Her comments about the agency were not in line with the other five parents licensed through there, but they were incisive nonetheless.

I devised the interview schedule with a slant toward the nuclear family because I believed that the bulk of the families to whom I would speak would be made up of that form. In fact, a very small number of the foster families had that structure (see Table 6-1, pg. 174). Twenty out of the 54 families I interviewed were single parent families, one of which was male. Nineteen of the families were what I defined as two income families. These included those in which only one of the spouses was working, but the other spouse was not working because of a situation not of their choosing (either disability, plant closing, or layoff).⁶ So, nearly three-quarters of the sample clearly did not conform to the structure of the family/household system.

The remaining 15 might be placed in the category of being in a traditional family/household system since, in these cases, the male worked and the female stayed at home. In spite of the designation in the table of 15 family/household system families, eight of these families could be eliminated from consideration because six of the

children into the house. Thus for her, the entry of two siblings was one placement, whereas for me it would have been two. See chapter 7 for discussion of the implications of this.

⁶I included one woman in this category who had taken an early retirement buyout.

TABLE 6-1. FAMILY STRUCTURE OF FOSTER FAMILIES					
Single Parent		Dual Income		F/H SYSTEM ⁷	
20		19		15(7)	
Private	DSS	Private	DSS	Private	DSS
16	4	13	6	12(4)	3(3)

female spouses did work at the time the family was licensed. These six women could be withdrawn from the family/household system category for two reasons. First, I was concerned about whether a working wife was an issue for the licensing agency; for these six, it obviously was not. Another reason is that these women attempted to continue working after they had received the children in the house, but found that the work load was too great.

For four of these six women who were working at the time of licensure, fostering served as a greater focus on the children. Three of these six specifically mentioned fostering in terms of work. The seventh of the eight women who stayed at home did so to care for physically handicapped foster children, and the eighth performed sufficient volunteer work that, for her, it nearly constituted full time work. In other words, of those 15 couples in which the

⁷See text below for discussion of the meaning of the parenthetical values.

husband was working and the wife stayed home at the time of my interview, over half of them fit this profile because of the demands of fostering or other service work.

The above tally leaves seven out of 54 families fitting the family/household system in which the wife remains at home doing domestic labor while the husband works outside the home. Of those seven that might be considered a traditional nuclear family, three were licensed by the state and four were licensed by voluntary agencies.

Of the 20 single parents, 16 were licensed by voluntary agencies at the time of the interview as opposed to only 4 by DSS. That, in combination with the fact that twice as many dual income families were licensed by voluntary agencies as by the state, seems to indicate that there a preference or bias on the part of the agencies in licensing families. The difference in dual income families seems to be even more striking if you include those families where the women quit work for reasons not of their own choosing. In the latter case, voluntary agencies would seem to have three times the preference for a dual income family as would DSS. However, nothing in the text of the interviews bears out such a preference. The lopsided numbers are more an artifact of having interviewed three times as many voluntary agency foster families than an agency preference or sorting.

From the comments of my respondents, the agencies did not have a problem with foster mothers working. The only concern that was raised was that the agency must know and

approve the caregiver, be it the husband, another family member, or a friend or day care provider. A couple of foster mothers expressed a suspicion that their agency did not approve of their being single, but gave no evidence for their suspicion.

INCOME

Forty-five out of the 54 families reported their income to me. I constructed twelve income brackets from \$4,000 to \$10,000 wide (See Attachment 3, question 14). The mean income was \$38,267. My foster parent sample reflects a nearly even income distribution (see table 6-2).

TABLE 6-2. INCOME DISTRIBUTION OF FOSTER FAMILIES		
\$0 to 29,999	\$30,000 to 50,000	more than \$50,000
16 (36%)	17 (38%)	12 (27%)

However, the frequency distribution (table 6-3, pg. 177) resembles a normal curve except for the four high income families. Twenty-seven percent (12 out of 45) reported income in the highest third, that is, \$50,000 or greater. Four of these families reported income of \$70,000 or greater. The remaining 73 percent were nearly equally split between those reporting incomes from zero to \$29,000 and those reporting income between \$30,000 and \$50,000. Since nearly half of the sample is composed of single females, it

TABLE 6-3. DISTRIBUTION OF FOSTER FAMILY INCOMES						
INCOMES IN DOLLARS	NUMBER OF FAMILIES IN SAMPLE					
0 to 10,000	X	X				
11,000 to 17,999	X	X	X	X		
18,000 to 23,999	X	X	X	X	X	X
24,000 to 29,999	X	X	X	X		
30,000 to 35,999	X	X	X	X	X	
36,000 to 41,999	X	X	X	X	X	
42,000 to 50,999	X	X	X	X	X	X
51,000 to 55,999	X	X	X	X		
56,000 to 60,999	X	X				
61,000 to 65,999	X					
66,000 to 70,999	X					
70,000 or greater	X	X	X	X		

is not surprising that a third of the sample is below \$30,000. Six of the sample reported incomes of \$17,000 or below, and two reported less than \$10,000. That nearly a third reported incomes of above \$50,000 reflects the fact that nine of those 12 were two income households.

What is more meaningful than the simple distribution of foster family incomes is the way their incomes combine with foster child expense money to shape the meaning of the stipend. That is, the family income contributes to the relative worth of the money fostering brings into the household. This will be examined in chapter VII using a microeconomic analysis.

A money-related question that received a surprising, if trivial, response was the question of who handles the family money management. The question was asked as an indicator of male-domination in the family. I expected either the men of the household to manage the finances or a divergence between the money management of those family/household systems and more egalitarian families. What I found was that with three exceptions, the women of the household said that they managed the money. I asked no follow-up questions to uncover whether that meant all of the money or what degree of control is implied by their answers, so it is impossible to derive any deep meaning from the responses. One reasonable explanation could be that the women who are charged with the care of other people's children have more decision making authority within their households than the

norm, or it could simply be that this is the norm. What the pattern of responses does do is give credibility to the women's assessment of the meaning of the foster parent stipend to their quality of life. This will be reviewed in chapter VII.

EXPERIENCE

There was a vast range of experience among the foster families to whom I talked. Strictly in terms of number of years (see table 6-4), the range was from less than a year to twenty-nine years. The average number of years of experience was 7.5 years, but with a standard deviation of 7.2, reflecting the wide range.

TABLE 6-4. FOSTER PARENT RANGE OF EXPERIENCE BY YEARS ¹					
1 to 3	3 to 5	5 to 8	9 to 10	11 to 16	20 plus
16	11	7	8	6	5

Measured by the number of placements (see table 6-5, pg. 180), the range of experience went from zero, by one woman who had a house full of day care children and could not receive any foster children, to 100 reported by one woman

¹Gaps in the table categories here reflect a discontinuous distribution of years of experience.

who had been fostering for 12.5 years.⁹ There were other foster parents who gave especially high numbers of 46, 50, and 60 for the placements they had had. The average number of placements was 11.2, again with a high standard deviation of 17.7. Even eliminating the one hundred children value, the average is still 9.5 placements with a standard deviation of 12.8.

TABLE 6-5. EXPERIENCE BY NUMBER OF PLACEMENTS				
2 or less	3 to 5	6 to 9	10 to 19	20 plus
18	9	8	10	8

What the above numbers indicate is that the foster parents had a wide array of experiences, structured, in large part, by their motivations for entering foster care which I will discuss in chapter VII.

In order to find some point of comparison between foster parents who had such variations in experiences, I calculated the number of placements per year for each foster family (see table 6-6, pg. 181). I consider this a very crude measure of the activity level of the foster parents.

⁹I realize that this number strains credibility. It sounds no less incredible when you consider that it averages out to 8 placements per year versus a mean of 1.8. However, given the context of our entire conversation, I have no reason to believe she was not telling the truth, or what she believed to be the truth. One explanation for the high number, aside from an inflated estimate, is a high number of respite placements of short duration.

The measure is crude because the number of placements reported is an estimate, which for some of the long-term foster parents was an off the cuff accounting rather than a child-by-child recollection. In addition, as mentioned in the footnote, some of the numbers of placements may be higher than average because the home opened itself for respite care, which could include keeping a lost child until the parent is found or holding a child until s/he can be transported to an adoptive family or residential treatment facility. Placements per year is also not a completely constant measure because it does not measure the fact that some children do not leave to be replaced by other foster children. For instance, if a family is licensed for two children and receives two 4 year olds who remain in care until they are 18, that would indicate a low amount of experience according to the placements per year measure, when their 14 years of fostering could be considered a great deal of experience. In spite of the above caveats, it is a helpful tool for looking at the various levels of experience.

TABLE 6-6. EXPERIENCE BY PLACEMENTS PER YEAR			
Less than 1	1 to 2	3 or greater	4 or greater
19	21	11	3

The average level of experience of the foster parents was 1.8 placements per year with a variance of .13. One can see that this removes some of the striking variation among the foster parents using the other two measures of experience. I grouped the data to put placements per year of less than one per year into one frequency and four or greater into another. The cases at either end of the distribution are worth scrutinizing a bit more closely because they explain some of the variation in experience.

At the low end of the distribution were 19 families who had placements of less than one child per year. On average, they had 8.8 years of experience versus 7.5 years of experience for the total sample. These 19 families contained three of the four families in the sample who cared for handicapped or developmentally disabled children. These placements are very often longer than average by nature. Also among this group were six families whose motivations were what I have defined as self-service, as opposed to those who entered foster care in order to help the community or assist abandoned children. (See Chapter VII for elaboration on this topic.) People in this self-service category included, for example, those who entered fostering with the intention of adopting. So, half of those on the low end of the experience range, as measured by placements per year, were in situations which lent themselves to long term placements. Six of the remaining nine had relatively

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little time in fostering, that is, less than half of the average of 7.5 years.

At the high end of the experience range were 11 foster parents who had three or more placements per year, versus the group mean of 1.8. On average these parents fostered more children (24.1 placements versus the average of 11.2) during a shorter period of time (5.0 years of fostering against an average of 7.5). This group also contains the 100 child foster parent. But even removing her values, this group was still fostering more children over a shorter period of time. Among this group of foster parents were some clearly dedicated people and some who expressed an appreciation of foster parenting as work, though the two groups are not mutually exclusive.

In the final two chapters I make the point that although there are several categories by which foster parenting can be judged as work, no foster parent established herself as work-oriented across all of the categories. This lack of an ideal type can be seen in the experience measure of placements per year. One of the highly experienced foster mothers by this measure could be seen as a parent who approached fostering as a job in that she transitioned from a paraprofessional social service job to foster parenting and appeared reliant on the stipend. However, she saw what she did as mothering and she based her unique ability to know the children and their problems on the amount of time she spent with the children rather than

any expertise based on training, schooling, or even experience. Yet another one of these families with high placements per year emphasized the service aspect of fostering and gave no hint of treating it like work.

With one exception, none of the 12 foster parents who appeared to have an income-supplement relation to the fostering stipend had an experience level of greater than 2 placements per year. Likewise, those 12 parents did not have an exceptionally high number of placements, and they even had fewer years of fostering, on average. This not only points out the failure of measures of experience as a scale of foster parenting as work, but illustrates the variation that exists among foster parents based on several criteria.

From a review of the family structures of my systematic sample, there appears to be no pattern between the types of agencies. From the comments I did receive from the foster families, there appears to be a lack of concern on the part of the agencies as to whether a family is single parent or dual income. The principal focus is ensuring that the caregiver selected by the family is acceptable to the agency.

An experienced foster care worker in the state regime with whom I talked did express a preference or bias for a stay at home mother. She used the family meal as an example of the benefits of that family form,

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I wanted people who were family oriented. To sit down for at least one meal, so a kid coming in could see what family really is.

However, from the context of the entire interview, that preference was expressed as a personal belief rather than an active policy that she enforced. "I preferred a non-working mother. That is very old-fashioned and I realize that."

Several foster parents referred to the supply and demand situation of foster parents and they used the word desperate. One woman paraphrased a statement by her worker after she was asked, and refused, to take one more child than she was licensed for, "But we just need them out of the youth home" (Case #23). An official of the Michigan Foster and Adoptive Parent Association confirmed that agencies are desperate for foster parents and also stated that there was a problem retaining those foster parents who are licensed. Under these conditions, it would seem unlikely that agencies, state or voluntary, would be in a position to reject a family solely on the basis of their structure in spite of any personal bias the agency or worker may harbor.

I set out looking for differences in the types of families licensed by different types of agencies in an effort to demonstrate that public agencies reproduced different family structures. Based on the findings presented here, state agencies do not license different types of families. There is too much irregularity in the way that families become attached to their licensing agency and too much variety in the relations between foster parents

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and their agencies and workers to come to any conclusion about agency bias, let alone make a judgement about how agencies and workers act upon, or structure foster families.

The lack of a pattern in the way foster parents are licensed or the type of foster families that are licensed by different types of agencies suggests some other criterion by which foster families are selected. It may be that there is a subtle selection of families based on a perception of their ability to nurture children or tolerate misbehavior. Selection of foster families may also be governed by expediency or the particular needs of the agency at the time it comes in contact with the prospective foster family.

What these findings reveal is the lack of regularity in the differences of families licensed by the state and voluntary agencies. They also reveal variety among the entire sample of foster parents according to how they connected with their agency and felt about the licensing process. Foster parents also displayed differences in their family structures, income, and experience. Yet in spite of the differences, the narratives of the foster parents revealed common themes and consistency around those themes. The continuity in those categories as well as the variation of the foster parents within those themes reflect how foster parenting resembles social welfare labor and how far it has to go to be seen that way.

CHAPTER VII ANALYSIS

During the review of the texts of my interviews with foster parents, five themes emerged that have particular relevance to the notion of foster parenting as social welfare work that is undergoing a transition from home to market labor. Work itself arose as a category, and was discussed in chapter V. The second theme is the notion of pay or money which is, of course, fundamental to wage labor as well as to the establishment of fostering as work. The third is a category called service ethic, which represents the motivations of these parents to foster and, in a small way, can be likened to the service component of the professional. Another category is that which I call expert vs. practical knowledge. This developed around the different bases upon which foster parents and social workers make their judgements about the treatment and outcomes of the children. And finally, I note that the foster families can be thought to have fluid boundaries due to the frequent and basically uncontrolled entry and exit of others into their lives and households. Those fluid boundaries distinguish the foster family as a public entity as opposed to the idea of a private sanctuary the family normally brings to mind. The conception of fostering as work was considered in chapter V, this chapter will review each of the four other themes in order to highlight the place of the work of foster families on the home to market continuum.

Just as the work of foster parenting is undergoing a transition from home to market labor, the foster families I interviewed can be seen along the home to market continuum. I encountered families which were fostering relatives and had done so without connection to the foster care system.¹ One woman fostered non-relatives and relatives alike for nearly 20 years before becoming connected to the state because of her need for financial assistance. Some maintained an intimate connection with social workers, managers, staff and other foster parents within and beyond their agency at the same time that others remained outside the foster care network as they pursued foster care in order to adopt.

It is not unusual for there to be a mix of emotions within the same foster parent. This is as true for the notions of service and self-service as it is in attitudes about the stipend received by the foster parents. Rather than see the foster parents having confused or cross-purposes, it is much more realistic to expect that they will have more than one sense or notion about something as life-transforming as foster care. It is much more reasonable to see a mixture of feelings than to think that foster parents would place themselves in the all or nothing position of, "I

¹All foster parents in my sample were connected to the foster care system by virtue of their presence in my sampling frame of licensed foster parents in metropolitan Detroit. The fact that many of them had informally fostered relatives and friends suggests that there is more of this unrecognized home labor occurring.

am here to help children," or "I am here to adopt." That is, these are continuous rather than dichotomous variables. This mix of motives is a representation of the transition of foster parenting from home to market work. It is service and it is caring, but it is also an opportunity for the foster parents to meet their own needs.

Even though foster parents defy a dichotomous categorization into workers and parents or professionals and volunteers, one could construct the ideal-type of a foster parent worker or foster parent volunteer by combining aspects of each of the categories. However, the foster parents displayed too much diversity in their socio-economic status, attitudes and behaviors to match up with a work or non-work characteristic in each of the categories.² For instance, some foster parents placed great stock in the training they received (an emphasis on expert v. practical knowledge) even though, by virtue of the marginal benefit to their income, the stipend could not be considered a wage. On the other hand, some parents valued the training and relied on the stipend as an income supplement even though their interest in fostering was to adopt.

If one were going to divide foster parents into those whose behaviors and attitudes reflect fostering as work and

²As can be seen, the categories are constructed from the foster parents words and interpretations of their actions as well as my own interpretations. See chapter II for a discussion of the construction of the categories.

those whose behaviors and attitudes do not, the service ethic is the place to begin.

SERVICE ETHIC

A fundamental question that comes to mind when looking at foster parenting is, why? Why would anyone be willing to open up their home, often at all hours, and invite perfect strangers in for unknown periods of time? Fostering brings to mind an opening up, not only of the house, but of the heart. I found a consistent statement of a service ethic throughout my conversations with foster parents. The basic idea contained in this category is centered around the aspect of fostering in which people stated their wish to serve their community, their race, or simply children in general. The service ethic in the work was principally brought out in the question about the family's motivation to foster, though throughout the interviews the foster parents brought up their desire to serve. The degree to which they wished to help others was captured in the statements of many foster parents, but other "self-service" motivations were captured as well.

A service ethic is an integral part of the professional ideology. It is part of what supposedly sets the Professional off from those who are merely doing a job for a paycheck (Hardcastle, 1981:666). Arlene Daniels (1988: 17) reports that the service ethic of the volunteers she studied was defined as noblesse oblige, or a return to those who

have less that is incumbent upon those who have more. The foster parents I talked to generally came from a lower socio-economic standing and did not reflect this class-based attitude. Fostering is caring that is put into practice by parents performing the day-to-day caregiving functions necessary for a child's development. According to Fisher and Tronto (1990), caring is often separated from the labor of caregiving, but foster parents' expression of concern in their motivations reflect the way they bridge a generalized interest in a social problem with the work of implementing solutions.

The service ethic mentioned by the foster parents was not brought up in the context of fulfilling a professional duty, but many who described fostering as work at one point or another, also spoke of the service they saw in fostering. One foster parent stumbled upon fostering while searching for work with a social welfare agency. She expressed what she is able to provide the children

Well, I guess the first thing is to get over their emotional, obviously the trauma and the emotional problems that they obviously have from their background situation....I guess I have been labeled in the past as one of those therapeutic foster parents. That is a real big thing with me....It's something, and I can't even explain how that makes me feel. It's really great (Case #3, p. 3).

Here is the mix of service and self-service as she is meeting the children's needs as well as her own. But she sees what she is doing as more than tending the children until the mother and father are ready to assume their

parenting duties. She is enhancing the children's mental and emotional state and helping them to understand the situation which has placed them in her home.

Another foster mother expressed the service ethic in stating that she would foster without payment

silly, but I really do think that if there was a need, and there is a need, I would do it.

Later in the same interview, she gave her view of foster care in this bit of dialogue by a hypothetical agency worker

And I have gone on the belief that I hired you to come here to take care of this child and I'm paying you x amount of dollars to do the job and it might not be enough, but that's what I'm paying you and that's what you accepted (Case #40, pp 3 and 7).

One can see in this last statement, not only the notion of fostering as a job, but the representation of the relation between agency and foster parent as a labor contract.

The services that the foster parents felt they were providing were many and varied. They included the general desire to "just help kids," but also included the desire to be role models for troubled young males (black and white), and to help those children abandoned by others. Many people simply had a desire to help others without the specific desire to help children. One woman had the idea of taking in senior citizens, but was diverted into fostering children when zoning restrictions prevented it. And another single woman first got the idea to take in the homeless until she came to grips with the personal safety issues. In general

the foster parents were caring people who demonstrated the service ideal which is part of professionalism.

Yet in spite of the service ethic displayed by the foster parents to whom I spoke, there were less altruistic rationales given for some parents' desire to take in children. I came to code these references as "anti-service" or self-service because they stood in opposition to the notion of selflessness or helping. As I will discuss, several foster parents were frank enough as to say that they entered it for the money while others were equally frank in saying they were looking for a companion for a child already in the house. The most frequent of these self-service responses was the non-specific desire to have children. For these parents, fostering served as an avenue to expand their families and add children, often when other means such as adoption or natural birth were blocked.

The notion of possession arose when the foster parents spoke of getting a child or having to return that child. The words of one parent not only express the realization that the children that come into foster home are not theirs, but also illustrates the sense of possession that grows after they receive the (real or imaginary) green light that signals that a biological mother has or may relinquish or lose her parental rights. The particular child below was in the hospital awaiting discharge

Fostering, you have to do basically one day at a time, you have to, because these are not your children, they belong to the state....when I saw her, I, we knew then

that mom didn't want her cause mom said it [the child's physical demands] was too much trouble, just put her up for adoption. And I just knew. I went shopping, until she came home, so I would go and dress her every day real pretty....Her name by her mom was Laquisha and I changed it, her name, to Asheley the day she came home and I knew that she would never leave. There was just that feeling. She's a doll now (Case # 4, p.3).

Early on in the above interview this woman sincerely expressed the noble purpose of taking those children whom nobody else would take. She also revealed that she later took a male child with a similar physical problem when he was not thriving with another foster family. However, the service aspects of these acts do not dissolve the early and strong sense of ownership she developed for Laquisha/Asheley³. From the text of this interview, the foster parent's emotional attachment sprang from a feeling that the child would be hers to adopt, rather than the legal termination of the biological parents' rights, though that appeared to have occurred later.

I want to make it clear that what I am calling possessiveness here can also be called bonding or attachment, which is necessary to a loving and effective parent-child relationship. I am not denigrating that attachment. I am simply pointing out the sense of ownership of other's children that can occur in foster parents and how it fits (or does not fit) with a service ethic. Another example of possessiveness can be seen in a parent who had

³Normal practice in adoption is to change the surname of the child, but to leave the Christian name as given at birth.

had a drug-addicted baby in her home for six months, suspecting and planning that she would adopt him. At that time another foster mother who had kept the baby's older brother came on the scene wanting the baby because, as my interviewee put it, she "...saw that he was normal and healthy and really cute." She defined the conflict in these terms, "She wants our baby to be in the home with his brother" (Case #8, p.13). In this particular incident, a clinical argument can be made for either foster mother, but the point is that the foster mother had made an attachment that went beyond that expected of foster parents. She recalled the words spoken to her by a supervisor, "That I have to look at it in terms that all the kids are going to leave and be surprised that they stay" (Case #8, p.13).

Foster parents can be seen as emotional buffers, giving the love and affection that the child needs at the time and then internalizing the loss when the child is returned to the biological mother or given up for adoption. One foster mother suggested that foster parenting is warehousing the children, but it is the foster parents who are "paying the freight." Foster parents, much more than social workers, are engaged in the emotion work of which Hochschild speaks. They are put in a position of having to turn on and turn off powerful feelings

Some people ask, 'well how do you turn off your emotions?' Well, you don't turn off your emotions. You try to explain, its like when one of our little guys left to be adopted....For your first year its like a death in the family (Case #2, p14).

Here is the result of the foster parents' work being day-to-day caregiving work. There was a mix of responses to my question (Attachment 1, #8) about the degree to which the workers cared about their work, but a common feeling was that the workers are generally too distant to share the same strong feelings as do the foster parents.

The emotion work of fostering is the work of all foster parents whose charges leave their homes. They are required to bond with the children in order to give them the family atmosphere that foster families are intended to give. Then they must break that bond when the children are released. This emotion work is not present in families that accept foster children into their homes without the expectation or the actuality of their exit. That is not to say that bringing foster children into the home and permanently assimilating them into the family is not an emotional experience. It is to say that the emotions of the adoptive families need not be managed like the foster parents. The foster parents, if they are to do it well, must conceal ill feelings toward foster children they do not completely warm up to and, as mentioned, they must deal with the continual forming and breaking of family ties.

Those who entered fostering in order to adopt children expressed a more goal-specific manifestation of the general desire to have children. Many of the families who "just wanted kids" already had children and several spoke of

fostering in order to fulfill their desire to have large families.

Many of the statements of self-service were couched within statements of fostering that reflected a desire to assist others. These sounded like after the fact "accounts" which sought to soften or explain the original, less altruistic, motivation, or as Scott and Lyman (1981: 344) put it, "verbally bridge the gap between action and expectation." In this case, the action is getting a child foster care license with the intention to adopt a child when agencies do not intend to license families with that in mind. One mother, coming from a large family (14 siblings) and wanting more children said

...I didn't have but 2 kids and I wanted some more kids, but I didn't want to have any and then I saw these kids, you know I kept seeing kids and things how they was being mistreated and neglected and things and so I decided I wanted to get in and see if I could help the kids out (Case #16 p.1).

The account does not take away anything from the desire to help or serve children, or the actual service she provides, but rather reflects the complexity of motives of human behavior. It is a complexity not unlike that of the child placing agencies whose organizational imperative is to survive at the same time they are helping children in need. This mixed motive can be seen in those foster parents who had expressed a self-service motivation, but ended up truly furnishing a service. One woman entered fostering in order to find a same gender companion for her 7 year old son, yet

ended up with a 13 year old girl in order to keep her in the same household as the 5 year old girl she had taken in earlier.

What I have tried to show in this section is that a service component is a part of foster care, just as it is a part of the professions. The degree of that service ethic roughly corresponds to extent to which foster parents are engaged in the fostering system as opposed to getting a foster care license to serve their own ends. For some parents their licensing as foster parents is a formality or interim step toward their ultimate goal of adoption. For others, their involvement was the result of a desire to do service work, whether they had children in mind at the outset or not.

MONEY

Money is central to the fostering experience. At the same time it is supporting the children, it helps support some of their foster parents. It is these foster parents' relationships to the stipend that most closely represents the shift of fostering from the home to the market and paid work. Yet even for those foster parents in the position of having to rely on the money, it is an issue that borders on a point of honor for them to state that the money is of no consequence in their lives. The foster parent stipend moved to the forefront of the news in the state when it was

reduced as part of the new governor's cutting of the social service budget.

The reaction of the foster parents and the agencies was to engage in a strike which not only entailed refusing to accept any more foster children, but, in some cases, returning children to the state who were already in care. The foster care funds were reinstated, though it is uncertain the degree to which the strike brought that about. The Michigan Foster and Adoptive Parent Association official to whom I spoke believes the strike did have an effect in the restoration of funds.

The strike focussed on the effect to the children of a nearly 25 percent cut in an already meager allotment of \$11 per day per child under the age of 13. I attended a rally held in march of 1991 at the state capitol in Michigan to protest the cuts. Approximately 250 people stood in front of the capitol making personal and impassioned pleas to the governor to rescind the cuts to monies that failed to provide for the children's needs before they were decreased. One woman issued a challenge to the governor to take her three teenage boys for a month.

I asked some of the foster parents about the strike and got a diversity of opinion. In addition to the comments that were critical of the cuts, there were also those who were critical of the strike, feeling that it would only hurt the children. One woman supported the notion of the strike, yet was critical of some of the strikers who displayed an

interest in the budget cuts not as hurtful to the children, but to their own personal interests

Well, I had a problem, to be honest, with some of these women that were fighting for the funding....[living in] these fancy neighborhoods and they could handle, I think, taking care of the kids without the extra money. These women weren't complaining about the children....They were complaining about how they were going to make their car payments (Case #8, p. 18).

This set of responses to the strike is representative of the diversity of opinions the foster parents have about the stipend as well as the material benefit of that money.

Not relying on the foster care money for personal needs is important to maintaining the conception that the fostering is a action of service. It also reinforces the familial ideology of fostering and removes the contractual or exchange notion. The idea of publicly admitting that the foster care money supported the foster family did not set well with the woman above, even though the money represented a sizeable increase to her family's disposable income.

One of my questions to the foster parents surrounded what the stipend they receive for keeping the children meant to them. The money is intended for the upkeep of the children and most foster parents at some point echoed the "party line." The licensing rules do not specifically say that all the money should go to the child, but state that the family should be financially secure and have a definite income in order to be licensed. The party line put forth by the parents stated that the foster money was for the children and, at best, covered the cost of having them in

the home. However, as in the discussions of their reasons for entering fostering, the parents revealed a mixture of perceptions regarding the purpose and sufficiency of the funds. I would like to use a microeconomic analysis to describe how the stipend has different meanings for different families depending, in part, on the income that they bring to fostering. My intent is to show how the money represents a wage or income supplement for some of the foster parents more so than for others.

In the economics of the firm, one of the ways in which costs are measured is called marginal cost, which is simply the cost to the firm for the production of each additional unit. This is in addition to the fixed costs, such as rent, that must be paid every month whether or not anything is produced. So, an auto company has a certain amount of fixed costs regardless of the amount it produces, but let it produce one car and the total costs then include the variable costs of labor and materials. For a given amount of production there will be a certain amount of variable costs. The marginal cost is the additional variable costs entailed in producing another unit. For instance, the company will have to buy more steel, glass, pay overtime, etc.

On the other side of the ledger there is the output or product. For a given amount of input, there will be X amount of goods produced. Marginal gain refers to the quantity of additional goods that are produced by the

addition of one factor of production, all other things being equal. The textbook example is that of a farmer who gains a particular amount of corn with the addition of more fertilizer. It can be said to be marginal because it is at the margin, or outer edge, of the farmers productivity curve. The standard shape of such a curve begins with a sharp rise in marginal gain as more inputs are added, followed by a leveling off and eventual decline. In the farmer's case the decline occurs because of soil depletion.

This analytical tool is useful because of its parallel to the foster parents' income situation. Each family has certain fixed costs, such as the mortgage. The addition of each child into the family entails increasing marginal costs in food, etc., and that is certainly the same with the addition of a foster child. However, because each foster child brings with him/her a certain amount of money, there is an increase in the marginal gain or benefit for each additional child as well as an increase in marginal costs. My sample families spoke of these costs and benefits for having foster children in their homes. Neither the costs nor the benefits of having foster children are strictly monetary, but all families have a sense of their marginal cost curves and the marginal benefits attained through the cost-benefit analyses of their own lives. The shape of each cost/benefit curve depends, in part, on the income the family has when entering fostering.

My aim in using an economic analysis is not to suggest that foster parents represent the quintessential "economic man," weighing life's choices on the basis of their pocketbooks. I am trying to show that each foster family has a particular ability and willingness to foster neglected children based, in part, on their dispositions and temperaments, but also based upon their material conditions. I will make an assessment of all the families in my sample and end with a focus on the 22 percent of the cases (12 out of 54) where the family was clearly trying make the stipend act as a wage. The stipend is a source of income for all of the foster families, and in several cases the stipend appears to act as a meaningful part of their total income stream, contrary to their espousal of the party line. It is not only necessary to look at the costs of having the children, relative to the additional money they bring in, to be able to see whether it truly acts as a wage. But it is also necessary to look at the relative increase in the income stream that is provided by the foster care money.

In telling me what the foster payment meant to them, two responses repeatedly occurred. One was an expression of the family's income or ability to generate income and the other was that the foster payment either simply covered the costs of child rearing or required that the foster parent supplement the stipend with her own money. Both of these responses indicated that the stipend does not play a part in the family's subsistence, and in some cases that is clearly

so. In others, though, a careful look at the totality of their discussion reveals more dependence on the stipend than they, and probably the agency, would like to reveal.

At least 18 out of the 54 foster parents made the point of stating their income source when asked what the foster money means to them. In spite of whatever benefit they may derive from the money, they wanted to make it clear that they were not dependent on it. Some made general statements of their work location that would vouch for their income generating power, "We both work for G.M. Basically our life, part of, really wouldn't change" (Case #7, p.7). Others were more specific in their demonstration of their self-sufficiency

Actually that check, it meant nothing to us but it was the principle that it was something that was available because my husband and I together, we make, you know, close to \$90,000 (Case #52 p.10).

The above statement is not simply braggadocio, it is an effort to establish income capability and enforce the notion that the fostering that they are doing is for purposes other than money. Foster parents made these statements no matter what their income level. One woman was receiving AFDC, but wanted to make her situation clear

I was injured twice on my job so that kinda like threw me, but all the time I have been in foster care, I have been working off and on plus I was married and until the late '80's, I seeked[sic] a divorce and my life has been not the graviest time, but I've always been able to make a living, so I'm not the kind of person that just sit down on day care money or foster care money (Case #39 p.3).

Not only does each of these statements demonstrate earning power, but they also establish a base income upon which the fostering stipend adds.

Several foster parents who had made statements regarding their earning power went on to speak of the marginal benefits of the money.

Well, we both do pretty well in our jobs so we would do fine without it. Of course, any time you have extra money into the house, it helps....It also helps save you know, you can save a little more (Case #18 p. 2).

In expressing how the money went to the children or that their quality of life would not change without the stipend, several parents made statements that suggested a personal benefit from the money:

Ours [quality of life] wouldn't be any different....I think we come out not very far ahead. In fact I think we spend some of my husband's pay for some things (Case #6, p.6).

Another said:

The money that I receive for foster care for the kids, I usually spend it back on them (Case #16, p.3).

A third said, laughingly, and with some sarcasm:

Ah, I would think, I mean, it's really my quality of life would be the same. It hasn't added greatly to my finances (Case #20, p.2).

These are statements that contain dual messages and give further illustrations of linguistic accounts by the foster parents. On the one hand, 'we spend some of my husband's money,' or 'I spend the money on the kids,' or 'my life would be the same.' On the other hand there are expressions, such as 'coming out ahead,' or only 'usually

spending the money on the kids,' or 'not having added greatly' that all suggest in the final analysis there is some financial reward to these foster parents who said the stipend meant nothing to them.

Another way the notion of marginal gain to the foster parents appeared is when I began to ask if they would continue to foster if they were not receiving a stipend.⁴ This, in a sense, forced them to make a cost/benefit analysis depending upon their own particular financial situation. Nine of the 45 families said that they would not foster without the stipend, seven of those stating that they could not afford to. Those who said they would/could not foster without the money were middle income people who apparently made a judgement that the cost/benefit ratio was not adequate without the money. I would like to elaborate on the stories of those who made the same marginal cost/marginal benefit calculation, but concluded that they would foster without the payment.

Twelve of the 36 who said that they would foster without the payment gave a 'yes, but...' answer. Five of those 12 explicitly said that they would do it, but not with as many children. This is a statement saying that without financial support, each additional child after a certain number of children would incur costs sufficient to be a

⁴I did not start making a point of asking this question until after I had begun the interviews. Therefore, I only have responses from 45 of the families.

burden. In other words, their cost/benefit ratio would shift to the point where they would be taking an unacceptable loss. What this says is that with the support, after that certain break-even child, there is not a loss amounting to an unacceptable burden. It implies that each additional child, after that point, represents a marginal benefit.

The remaining eight 'yes, buts...' showed a variety of reasons for their feelings, all related to an assessment of the cost to them. One person said that she would do it with a smaller child, because the teenager that her family was currently fostering incurred more costs. The idea that teenagers are more costly was a common response. The additional expenses cited included food, shampoo, toilet paper, electricity, and hair spray.

Another person with a feeling that 'yes, I would foster without the money but...' stated that she would do it, but only on a short term basis. For her, anything longer than 3 years would be too much of a burden. Two of the foster parents had older children in their homes on a long term basis and said that they would keep that child presently in their home, but if confronted with the possibility earlier, taking children without the money would have been a questionable proposition. For these people, the child that they had taken in had begun to yield a benefit in being part of the family that outweighed the financial cost.

A third of the remaining 21 who said that they would foster without the payment expressed some statement that there was a cost/benefit calculus involved in their decision, even though it was not as distinctly contingent as the statements of those who said, 'yes, but....' Five said they would do it if they could afford it and two said they had fostered without payment in the past.. One of these women had fostered for many years without payment outside of the system before the burden became too great and she got licensed.

Up to this point I have related the costs to foster parents that accrue simply by virtue of having another average child in the home, yet there are costs that are specific to the fostering of a victim of child neglect that are unlike the expenses of a normal child. Though the fact of being separated from one's natural parents is certainly emotionally disturbing, not all children in foster care are diagnosed as psychologically disturbed. Therefore, the out of the ordinary behaviors of these "special needs" are just that, and not common to all foster children.

I mentioned earlier the increase in the amount of food to be purchased with the inclusion of a foster child. However, this increase is sometimes extraordinary. Several parents mentioned that they had foster children who would eat beyond the normal amount for a child of that age and height, or even adult-like quantities, as well as having children who would hoard food. The foster parents explained

this as a natural reaction to the conditions of deprivation from which the child came. One foster parent told me that three girls she had had, aged six, nine, and 11 year old, collectively out-ate four teenage boys she had had

You know, it's just like, ohh, wait. I'm running to the store every other day with these three and I went to the grocery store once a week with the boys (Case #34 p.13).

Another foster parent told of a four year old they had in care

He was left alone....His mother come in and throw a bag of chips on the floor and leave him for two or three days.⁵ So, he would eat then, anything that was crunchy as far as vegetables, potatoes, something like that. Macaroni and cheese, meat, wouldn't eat that (Case # 7 p.3).

And although this case may not have required extra monetary output for food, it certainly required extra care in meal planning to introduce balance into the child's diet.

Another cost that parents attributed specifically to foster care was breakage. This comes from emotionally disturbed children lashing out as well as from children being excessively hard on clothing or losing coats etc., through lack of familiarity with those items. One foster

⁵Because of the less than optimal recording situation in this interview, and with the voice of the speaker trailing off, it is not completely certain whether the foster parent is saying "days" or "hours." Either one is plausible and either one might produce the described effect. It must also be said that in matters of the reasons for the child's removal, the foster parents accounts can be considered only as hearsay. See chapter II for a discussion of the uses of hearsay.

parent described an event involving a five year old potty-trained girl

We had just repainted the bedroom. Just put new curtains, bedspreads, the whole thing. She was going to be going home, did not want to be going home. She defecated in her bed and wrote all over the walls, got into it and I was so angry (Case #2, p.8).

Another frequent marginal cost is what I would call the start-up costs that are required to outfit a child who is brought to the foster parent's door with little to nothing. For older children this means clothes, and for infants it not only means clothes but diapers and baby food. Many foster parents made the statement that the child came with nothing or that what was brought was either too small or inappropriate either for the weather or to meet the foster parents' standards of propriety. Similarly to their position as emotional buffers, foster parents act as financial buffers to pick up the expenses not covered by the stipend.

There are allowances for these special needs children in the form of a specialized rate of pay that is accorded in relation to the severity of the child's special need. These payments follow much the same dynamic as the regular payment. Foster parents try to maintain an equity or a balance between the additional costs incurred by the child's needs for additional transport to counseling, doctor's appointments, etc., and the increased amount of the stipend. Some foster parents saw the special rate as, in part, a reimbursement to them for their additional stress and others

viewed the extra money as the child's. Foster parents report that different agencies pay different amounts for special needs kids.

One difference between the special rate and the regular rate is that the latter is fixed by state policy, at least it has a floor set by policy. The special rate has a more subjective component because placement of a child at a particular special rate is based on an assessment that is made and compiled by the agency social worker and approved or denied by the DSS office in the capital. This caused certain foster parents I interviewed to be upset that children in their care were not receiving a specialized care rate and others were bothered that children received the higher rate after they left their household. This is another example of a cost-benefit accounting in which the foster parent judges that the demands of the child require a specific compensation.

What I have tried to show up to this point is that there is a varying degree of benefit provided to the family by the stipend and a particular sense of the cost incurred in fostering, depending upon the amount and type of children in the home. For those who could not foster without the stipend, the benefit is clear. With the stipend they may break even or incur out-of-pocket costs that still allow them to subsist at their desired standard of living. Without the foster care money they would fall below their marginal productivity, or cost/benefit, curve and that drop

would not be acceptable for them. For those who say that they would foster if they could afford to do so, the cost of fostering to their income stream is unknown to them. Those who grant that it would be harder, but believe that they would continue and those who simply state unequivocally that they would continue fostering without the payment are either comfortable enough with their income relative to the costs of one or more foster children or simply willing to collectively, as a family, incur the costs in order to meet the children's needs.

I have not mentioned the income level of the families when discussing their willingness to foster without money and that may seem odd, but there is no correlation between the income of the family and their stated willingness to foster without the money. Those willing to do it without the money were from the highest to the lowest income brackets. The lack of correlation relates to the fact that the base income the family carries into foster care does not alone constitute basis for the families cost/benefit calculation. In other words, these foster families exist at a variety of living standards.

There were obvious differences in the standards of living to which these foster children were moved. One of the highest income foster parents was among those who stated that the \$11 per day does not meet the expenses of a child. Anyone who has purchased a case of formula, a load of diapers, or outfitted a child with school clothes in the

fall will attest to the high cost of raising a child.

However, some families incur expenses that might be inconceivable to some of the low income foster parents

We always try to get pictures [of the children while they are in care] for the parents....We invest in a camera for the older child (Case #15, p.23).

I do not intend to demean the sincerity, kindness, or usefulness of this gesture, but I cannot help but envision a low income child returning to her home with an empty camera that will become broken long before any money could ever be budgeted by the biological family for film. So, the extent to which the foster care stipend begins to cover the costs of child rearing is relative and the question brought to mind by those foster parents who said that they could not foster without the stipend becomes 'foster at what standard of living.'

The range of living standards of these foster parents bears out Gimenez's idea that the amount of unpaid labor performed in the home is related to the amount of earned income. A couple of examples from the four families whose incomes were above \$70,000 make the point. One of these families utilized a housekeeper, so that the mother could devote more time to foster care issues. Another family had entered fostering in order to adopt. In fact, this particular family's presence on the list of foster parents was a bit of a formality since, they never had any intention to take in a child temporarily. This particular mother was able to perform the labor of doing a piece of nationwide

personal research in order to discover the states that allow, and are sympathetic to, interstate adoptions. The above examples are cases of families with high wages who are able to invest unpaid labor into the foster children. These high income families are also able to invest material resources into these children in the form of better clothing and housing as well as a greater amount and range of cultural experiences. The state benefits from this greater investment of the family wages and the unpaid family labor. These families stand in contrast to those I will discuss below, who appear to utilize the foster care stipend as an income supplement or have turned fostering into a "cottage industry."

One particular phrase that repeatedly came up bears on this question of the relative benefit of the stipend. Foster parents either said, 'I'm not in it for the money,' speaking of themselves, or when speaking of others said, 'If people are in it for the money, they are crazy.' Being 'in it for the money' evokes two different connotations. The first and perhaps the most common is the idea of getting rich or making a bundle of easy money. This is the perception that the social workers try to dispel in prospective foster parents and that some foster parents would like to dispel, "...people think that being a foster parent you'll get rich. You won't" (Case #37 p.2-3).

Yet a connotation that applies to over a fifth of my foster parent sample (12 out of 54) is that of fostering

providing a subsistence to the foster parents not so much in return or as compensation for caring for the children, but as a result or residual of caring for them. That is, the foster parents enjoy a small residual benefit from the stipend that does not pay them a wage, like the professional social worker, but provides a marginal benefit to their previous income. Another way of putting this is that they are buying themselves another income by taking on foster children. Aside from those who made an effort to clarify their non-dependence on the stipend, several foster parents were open about their entry into fostering with the money in mind and their use of the money for their own support.

I identified 12 foster parents from my sample that either indicated outright, or whose situation or story made it clear, that they were using the stipend as an income supplement or substitute. Several of these people made statements indicating that they did not consider the foster care money part of their income when their situation indicated it did. Only two of the 12 were two parent families and in both cases the husband worked, one earning between \$24,000 and \$29,000 and the other between \$42,000 and \$50,000. Because of these families' incomes, the marginal benefit was not large, yet their narratives indicated that fostering was serving as a substitute to waged labor.

Although the income level of the married foster parent workers was substantially different than the income of the

single foster parent workers, their situation closely resembled that of the single parents in that foster care was serving as a career change of sorts. One of the parents was forced out of her long term job and took on a volunteer job as a teacher's aide for the mentally impaired. From there, she said, she went into fostering. This person did not make the overt statement of interest or dependence on the stipend, but clearly described a situation of fostering as a substitute for her previous out of home work. The other foster parent worked outside of the home for a time while fostering, but the load became too great and she decided that being at home would allow her more time to be with the children.

The 12 foster parents who considered the foster care money as an income substitute had incomes averaging \$20,917 compared with the \$38,000 mean income of the total sample.⁶ The average income of the 10 of these foster parents who were single mothers was \$17,850⁷. Four of the single foster parents worked full time, only one of whom earned beyond the \$18,000 to \$23,000 range. The others were either working part-time, holding a low wage job, or receiving public

⁶I obtained this by taking the mean of the midpoints of the income ranges in which they reported.

⁷Even this figure may be high since two of these foster parents reported in the narrative that they were on public assistance and gave no other source of income, yet claimed substantially higher incomes in the written questionnaire.

assistance.⁸ According to a marginal benefit analysis, each child represents a greater increase in income for these single parents. The addition of two foster children in the home, at approximately 4,000 tax-free dollars each, raises the income of a \$38,500 family about 21 percent. But the income increase to these single parents is 45 percent, over twice that of the average foster family.

Another striking income deviation can be seen by comparing the incomes of those parents who could be placed in the self-service category with those who are treating fostering as work. I identified nine parents whose motivation for fostering was either to adopt or to enlarge their family. Their income averaged \$45,056. This is a sizeable difference from the \$20,917 of the foster parent workers or the \$17,850 of the single foster parent workers. It clearly illustrates the marginal monetary gain of fostering to those who consider fostering as work versus those who do not.

The marginal gain to a single parent foster mother can be summed up by one parent who had four foster children. When I asked if she would foster without the stipend, she said

⁸Aid to Families with Dependent Children is interpreted as being the stable source of income required by the licensing rules. This could be construed as tacit consent to the idea of receiving a stipend for mothering, though that assumption of AFDC is being called into question (See chapter IV on this matter).

I probably would. Not four or five....I would, I know I would, but I probably would only take maybe one, if I could afford to take care of the child. But, I couldn't take four kids and not get any money (Case #49, p.9).

The woman above falls into the category of someone who has more foster children to earn more income. This is the classic (and unfounded) attack of the welfare system put forth by conservatives. That attitude surfaced in one high-income foster parent's critique of some of those with whom she came in contact at the orientation training

And just like as far as moneywise, some of these foster parents, that's all they get the kids for is funding. The more kids they have, the more money they have (Case #52, p.12).

Yet the testimony of the single parent of Case #49 above illustrates that she would foster without the money if she could. What the quote of the low income foster mother in Case #49 above does not indicate is that she opted out of moving from her agency to another one that pays more. This subverts the notion of the foster parent as mercenary. The foster parent who criticized the single parent might herself be criticized for taking money for housing a relative, which she was, when the family income dictated they could manage without. One woman put it this way

First of all, everyone is in it for the money. But that shouldn't be the sole purpose of it. You know because if you wanted to do something free, you would volunteer because they have enough programs for [the] volunteers to do something with the kids. So basically everyone is in it for the money....(Case #48, p.6).

The story of one single parent summarizes the situation of these parents who have tried to transform fostering into

a living. Her entry into foster care represents the mixed motives put forth by nearly all the foster parents

But it really was kind of twofold. I know we aren't supposed to say we need the money, but at the time I was looking at two things: a service that I could do as well as augment my income which was very low at the time and it worked out very well because...I ended up adopting two of my foster kids(Case #40, p.1).

The service component of her fostering is displayed in her taking babies at the request of the agency when they were not her first choice. She was deeply concerned that all her foster children attend school. Her dependence on the stipend appears to have eased since she entered fostering; she has a low paying, but rewarding, job with the school district to which she is highly committed. However, she still feels the need to budget the funds

If you don't manage, they, you are going to go (makes sound and hand gesture of a dive), but I guess that is like anything (Case #40, p.2).

When I asked her if she would foster without the stipend, she said

I think I would. Silly, but I really do think that if there was a need, and there is a need, I would do it (Case #40, p.3).

For many of these low income single women, foster care is the opportunity to raise their living standard at the same time that they are providing a service. Fostering grants them the ability to remain free of the family/household system and give them some degree of freedom from the oppression of the low wage labor for which these women were qualified. At the same time, they feel they have

something to offer society as they are benefitting from the foster care system. It is their work, but they are restrained from feeling invested in it as work because the agencies do not want to sanction fostering as an income substitute.

The stress upon prospective parents not to enter foster parenting for the money reflects the welfare state ideology of individualism as well as that of familialism. The foster families must display self-sufficiency in order to lend their service and their service is based on providing their family rather than their labor. It also reflects the privatization of foster care work by implying that it is unpaid volunteerism on the part of a family that is simply opening itself up to the caring of neglected children. This attitude ignores the financial situation of a large proportion of foster families who depend on the foster care stipend and consider it as labor.

EXPERT vs PRACTICAL KNOWLEDGE

A movement of work to the market or public sphere requires a sense of legitimacy, or license, in the eyes of the potential clientele. The way that professions, or those who aspire to professional status, currently obtain that license is through the process of credentialization. In foster care this sets up a conflict between the workers who would make a claim to knowledge based on expertise and the foster parents who would make that claim on the basis of

practical knowledge. The social worker and her profession have taken great pains to demonstrate to the public their right to license. The foster parent, on the other hand, often relies on accumulated parenting knowledge that, at times, stands in opposition to the wisdom of the expert.

The essence of the foster parents' lack of credence in the credentials of the social workers with whom they dealt is contained in the comments of one particularly experienced and vocal foster parent. I would like to quote extensively from her narrative since she echoes the comments of many other foster parents. She expressed her assessment of the relative value of her knowledge and that of the social workers when she said

How can a 22 year old come in here and tell me about managing a child? When I started, my oldest son was just out of college. And I had reared them 12 years by myself. What could she possibly tell me? (Case #4, p.13).

She cited a specific example of her implementation of a solution to a problem with her eight year old, in opposition to the advice which she had been given

...one of the boys was suffering from enuresis⁹ and I observed and I made an assessment and I didn't go get the [rubber] sheets that she told me to get...I didn't take him to the doctor and get the drug she told me to get. What I did was, I got him up at night, I watched his fluid intake, I didn't berate him. But what I did do, I made it his responsibility. If he did it, he was the one who had to get the sheets off the bed, change his clothes, run his bathwater, go [get] his clean pajamas out, put his sheets on the bed....I did the same thing consistently and it stopped (Case #4, p.13).

⁹Bed wetting.

Several parents scoffed at the therapy their foster children received. The foster mother of Case #4 saw the agencies' therapy as a money making proposition and questioned its usefulness

...and my child doesn't do anything but [get] taken out of school, taken to the agency and paints and tells the therapist about what he was traumatized about, what happened in the biological home, the birth home. [Incredulously] That constitutes therapy? (Case #4, p. 6).

Many parents had a similar lack of confidence in the orientation training that they received

And sit there and I went through the classes, they had six introductory classes....Six, what can you do in six three hour classes over six weeks and then they license you (Case #4, p.7).

The notable exceptions to the above critique of the foster parent training were two sets of foster parents who had had no biological children of their own. They were not in total agreement with the workers as problem solvers, but they did put a great deal of stock in the training.

Two of my key informants expressed the official position about the foster parent training that stands in contrast to the general feeling of skepticism expressed by many foster parents. One said that in her experience as a case manager and foster care supervisor, the most effective foster parents were those that were most engaged in the foster parent association and its training component. The MFAPA official to whom I spoke was invested in foster parent training by virtue of her position as the head of training. However, she expressed that her feeling that foster parents

cannot get enough training is also that of the agencies. The certification plan of which she spoke (see chapter V) was based, in part, on training and testing through the foster parent newsletter.

In addition to their years of parenting and fostering experience, foster parents cite their intimate contact with the children as the basis of their knowledge of what is best for the children. Foster parents frequently stated the difference between their relationship and that of the workers

The difference is that we are with these children every day and every night, so we see things that they don't see, and we can feel things that the workers couldn't possibly feel (Case #26, p.10).

Another aspect of the intimate contact is the responsibility (a little overstated here) that some foster parents feel

Oh, definitely, cause she is in our care and we are responsible for everything that happens to her (Case #11, p. 4).

I tried to tap into the amount that the foster parents were accorded treatment that approached or resembled expert status. I used two questions to make that assessment. I asked the foster parents to what degree they were given input into casework decisions¹⁰ and I asked them to assess the way their worker sees their relationship, be it as a

¹⁰In explanation of casework decision, I defined it as anything ranging from the ultimate decision about whether a child should be returned home to more day-to-day decisions such as whether a child needed counseling.

friend, colleague, partner, part of the team, or a borrowed bed¹¹. Many foster parents did not follow the cue as I had set it up in the latter question and defined a relationship in terms of the degree of cordiality or the frequency of contact. However, the responses are nonetheless revealing.

I asked 46 of my sample of foster families the degree to which they had input into casework decisions. Only 13 of them, or 28 percent, said that they had not enough or no input. Twenty-one out of 46, 46 percent, made comments that indicated that the workers definitely listened to them and five of those indicated that they had something that could best be described as total or near-total input. The remainder expressed having a middling amount of input. On one level these data would seem to indicate a sizeable amount of respect for the foster parents' judgements by the workers. A look at the meaning of the term input and the substantive comments of the foster parents suggest otherwise.

When I asked the question about input, I intended to find out how much the judgements of the foster parents were used by the workers. And there were examples where the social workers did use the foster parents' judgements

¹¹These last two were phrases that I first heard from foster parents, then continued to use in the question.

They give me total input. Total. Because you treat the children as your own (Case 44a¹², p.8).

The example that accompanied this woman's answer revolved around the court mandated weekly visit of the child with the biological parent which she canceled, without question from the agency, because of the child having a cold.

In spite of the examples of foster parents sharing in decision making, upon interpretation of the whole group of answers, it became clear that what the foster parents were focussing on was the input portion of the question rather than the decision making aspect. That is, the foster parents do have input, but input as information givers rather than as clinical assessors or diagnosticians.

Workers rely upon the foster parents to supply information on how the parent-child visits go, when they are in the foster parents' homes. When the visits are at the agency or elsewhere, the foster parent provides information on the child's behavior after the visit to determine whether the visit was beneficial or disruptive. Foster parents have been asked to keep a log or journal to chart progress or lack thereof. This reliance on the foster parent for information reflects the greater degree of contact they have with the child.

¹²I tried to be discreet and not label or number the tapes or surveys in the foster parents' presence. Delaying the labeling resulted in a numbering lapse which required having a 44a and a 44b.

The ultimate example of the need for foster parents' data gathering utility was given to me by a woman who fosters developmentally disabled children, such as those with cerebral palsy, scoliosis, or who are otherwise mentally and physically retarded. She went through two days of her immobile and non-verbal foster child intermittently screaming for no apparent reason. Doctor's visits provided no answer until the foster parents physically repositioned the child and noticed a red line running down her leg and a swollen knee. This led the foster parents and physician to discover that she had had a broken leg that had gone undiagnosed for two days. The doctor later told the foster parent that 80 percent of medicine is based on what the patient tells the physician and in the case of this non-verbal and immobile child, the foster parent must essentially be the child's senses. The examples may not be so vivid in those cases of "normal" foster children, but the workers' reliance on the observations of the foster parents still exists.

The foster parents relegation to the role of information providers as opposed to diagnosticians defines their place in the social welfare division of labor. Foster parents are licensed for the home atmosphere they are providing and are looked to for the familial rather than therapeutic qualities they bring to the foster care system. As mentioned earlier, the conception of parenting as natural contributes to the mystification of the skill required. The

value foster care officials place in the power of the family is illustrated in the requirement for fewer training hours for those foster families caring for family members. The assumption apparent in this is that there is a benefit attributable to the blood family relation which disregards the level of parenting skill of the family member and the degree of behavioral problem or challenge presented by the child.

The question regarding the foster parents' assessment of the relations between them and their social workers generally missed the mark, since the answers were generally terse repetitions of one of the labels I had put forth. The foster parents were more inclined to state the nature of their relationship with the workers, or their assessment of how the workers see the relationship in terms of the cordiality or personality matches they have.

Several people expressed that they were in fact part of the team or recognized in some fashion as a coequal, yet many of these people also noted that they make a point of not being passive in the relationship. One woman put it this way, "I'm pretty much a force to be reckoned with" (Case #46, p.17). Another woman described the need to be vocal this way

I made a fuss. I mean I wasn't nasty about it, or angry, but I made sure somebody said how do you get services, you know. My kid needs this and it is so hard to reach a worker, I said, you don't stop with one.... you tell the worker, you tell the therapist, you get to the supervisor. I mean you tell the

secretary, you tell, you make sure everybody hears about it (Case #33, p.24).

My key informant in the foster parent association envisioned an evolution of the foster parents into true child advocates. The foster parents mentioned above have adopted that position.

Others did not feel so included and the phrase "borrowed bed" arose to express the feeling that the foster home was simply a place to store the child until some social work intervention occurred with the biological parents. One woman felt that her talents were being underutilized

I definitely don't think they considered you part of the team. I don't think that they felt, I don't think that they treated you very intelligently. You know. They acted like you were capable of providing some shelter and I felt we were capable of providing a whole lot more than that (Case #23, p.9).

The responses in this category reflect the variation of which I spoke in the last chapter. Although almost half of the foster parents felt they had a great deal of input, that input was based on the pure observations of behavior they could make based on their intimate contact with the children and parents rather than any clinical assessments. Those that felt they had the most input were those who were most forceful in making their voices heard rather than being accorded status as coequals in the fostering process.

Foster parents see the value they bring to the fostering system in several ways. I already mentioned the weight the foster parents gave to their constant and intimate relationship to the children. In addition, as

expressed in the quote at the beginning of the section, foster parents believe in their accumulated parenting skill. There was not a great deal of elaboration about the basis of this knowledge, yet comments ranged from expressions of the instinctual nature of parenting skill (page 156) to the recognition that parenting is a learned talent.

Foster parents also placed high value on the pooled or collective experience of the foster parents. They not only tapped into this knowledge through the training sessions, but through support groups within the agency and the meetings of the larger MFAPA for those who were involved with such groups. The support groups served as clearinghouses for techniques and approaches to dealing with practical matters such as bed wetting and fire starting, but also more delicate issues such as how to handle and/or support sexual abuse victims. Foster parents also exchanged information informally. Although foster parents did talk of using their caseworkers to problem solve, the dominant expression was one of drawing on the collective experience.

Several foster parents expressed an approach to fostering that highlighted their own personal experiences with abuse or neglect. These foster parents made the claim that they are qualified, some felt uniquely qualified, to understand and provide support and care to the abused, neglected, or sexually abused child. This takes the claim of experience based qualifications for parenting to a higher level in claiming the necessity of experiencing abuse to

truly be able to understand it. These foster parents did not make the leap to deny the ability of therapeutic practitioners or caseworkers to understand the abused child, but did elevate their own capacity for understanding.

One foster parent mentioned with pride her reputation as a therapeutic foster parent (see quote of Case #3, p3). She never really defined this designation, however her narrative describes both child handling skill and a balanced temperament. She told me that caring for children had always been something that she had been drawn to. Others used equally unspecific notions to express confidence in the power of their families to nurture and heal the damaged children in their care. They based their faith in their love and willingness to bond to the children and make them feel they belong. Rather than claim any therapeutic skill, they cited the time they devoted to the children and the physical contact they lavished.

Foster parents generally feel they are in a better position to make judgements about the outcomes of the children for whom they care. They base this on their intimate day-to-day contact with the children, parenting and fostering experience, as well as the atmosphere of caring and love in their families. These stand in contrast to the "book knowledge" possessed by their caseworkers. However, any move by foster parents to gain more recognition and legitimacy for what they do by the public will require proof of some degree of expertise that goes beyond experience or

the subjective nature of their family presence, something provided by a credential such as certification.

FLUID FAMILY BOUNDARIES

One ideal of the family is that it should be a "Haven in a Heartless World," providing emotional support against the rigors of the marketplace. In spite of the degree to which it may or may not fulfill that ideal, the family has historically become an increasingly more private place (Laslett, 1973; Modell and Hareven, 1973). Part of the problem in detecting child abuse often lies in the difficulty of penetrating the barrier surrounding the family. In reading the narratives of the foster families, it became clear that these families have a degree of openness an average family does not have. Describing the foster families as having fluid boundaries reflects the degree to which they lack control of the most private spaces of their homes and the degree to which they relinquish control of the very structure of their family. This represents a shift of the foster family from the realm of the private to that of the public as the home becomes an appendage of the state or agency.

For the foster family, like the family day care provider (Nelson, 1990), family and work occur in the same physical location and social space. This stands in contrast to the caseworker who tries, sometimes successfully and others times unsuccessfully, to maintain the boundary

between work and home. One foster mother felt as though the caseworkers' efforts were driven toward wrapping things up so they could go home at five o'clock while others felt as though caseworkers could not help but emotionally take their work home with them. Both are probably true at various times for various workers. Yet for foster mothers it is not a matter of having only a constant emotional attachment to the work. Since the work is in the home, it is continuously present physically as well.

One personal example illustrates the success and failure of social workers to separate work and home. During my own work at the social agency, I was charged with evaluating the home of a child who was in foster care in another state. The home I was to evaluate was that of a family member and was the only option for this child whose out of state foster care placement had failed. For unknown reasons, the out of state foster home had given their agency a deadline by which they had to have the child out of the home and the agency was appealing to us to approve the home by saying, 'If you don't approve the placement, we will have to take the child home with us.' The out of state agency's response was met with incredulity by the staff in the office who agreed that the other agency had "boundary problems." That is they were unable to separate their work from their home.

Foster parents cannot make this separation because the work they are doing is necessarily home work. The work/home

connection stands in the way of foster parents' ability to see what they do as work. It is not just that their workplace is their home, it is because their work is intimately connected with the family that makes it seem as though it is not work at all.

So, there is a fluidity between the family and the work in the foster home and the breaching of the family barrier begins with the licensing process which includes examination by many strangers. I cited the account of the foster parent of Case #4 to illustrate the lack of belief in the training portion of the licensing process, but in spite of her lack of faith, she sums up the process quite well

By that time they have done a police check, a background investigation, they've come to check your home to see that it meets building and safety codes, there is an adequate escape in case of fire and that you maintain adequate housekeeping standards and on that basis they give you children (Case #4, p.7).

The visits by strangers continue with monthly visits by the caseworker and biennial inspections by the licensing worker.

In addition to the periodic regular visits by agency personnel, foster parents are subject to a scrutiny unlike normal families. This is illustrated by the example of a foster family which was scheduled to receive a new child. That placement was put in jeopardy by rumors of marital instability that had surfaced. The seed of the rumor was planted when the husband went out of town alone to visit relatives. This quite normal event prompted a mini investigation to make sure everything was all right between

the husband and wife before the child could be placed in their home. The result was a feeling by the family that they were living in a fishbowl.

As mentioned earlier, there is a court mandated weekly visit of the foster child by his/her biological parent(s). Though no one specifically stated this, I sense that the trend is that these visits are occurring more and more at the agency office. However, several of the foster parents still open up their homes to the biological parents who are more often strangers than neighbors or acquaintances. The decision to have a family visit in their home does not appear to be forced upon the foster parent and a few foster parents said that they had stopped the home visits because of fear of the parents' behavior. One parent spoke of her fear of the biological father even though visits were conducted in the agency office

Karena's father is very bad. He has threatened to kill us. All of us foster mothers. And see the agency has just a waiting room and everybody goes in and out this one door. So you don't have a chance to take the child and sneak out the back door...the night that it got really hostile he had been drinking and shouldn't even have been there (Case #6, p.17).

In spite of this risk, the advantage of having a visit in one's own home is that it avoids the need to transport the child to the agency which can entail coordination problems if one has several children with different visitation schedules. However, the downside is a violation of the family's privacy.

Aside from the risk of violence, another probably more frequent occurrence is the undermining of the foster parents' discipline by the biological family. The fluid boundaries of the foster family is not only a control issue, but raises a fitness issue in that the state and the agency are telling the biological parents that these foster parents are better able to raise their child than they. This, naturally, can create resentment on the part of the biological parent and it can surface in an attempt to reestablish either their control or fitness to parent. The effect is that the foster parents' authority to discipline is undermined

And so they want to start parenting at the expense of whatever setup you have. Now this did happen to my mother. My mother was a foster parent and one of the parents, she had let this woman start coming to the house and so it was time to come in and eat and bring the bikes in and she said, my mother said, 'Come in and bring the bike.' [Paraphrasing the biological mother:] 'Oh no, you don't come in right now. You can stay out a while longer until it is dark outside. So those kind of things. And that causes confusion with the children (Case #46, p. 1)

Aside from the entry and influence of strangers upon the foster home, there is the essential part of fostering, the entry and exit of strangers, in the form of children, into and out of their daily lives. For the most part, the structure of the family is changed with little consultation with the family. The agency must of course get the approval of the foster parents before bringing a child into their homes, but unless they make arrangements to halt placements into their home for a period, the foster home door is always

open. The foster parents are compelled to welcome any child at any hour not only because they wish to do so for all of the above mentioned reasons of service and self-interest, but to insure that they will continue to get placements.

The entry of the children into the home is not so much a point of contention as the exit. I have already talked about the trauma of loss when a child to whom the parents have bonded returns to the biological home or is adopted out. Many of the foster parents who did not specifically enter fostering with the intention of adopting, did so because they had grown attached to the foster child. In this case the boundaries of the family are fluid inward, but not outward.

Children also leave the foster home for other reasons not of the parents's choosing. Many foster parents expressed a feeling of intimidation caused by the agency and the worker, stemming from the ability of the child to make an accusation against the foster parent, usually of some sort of physical punishment or abuse. These would often lead the agency to remove the child from the home and, possibly, revoke the foster care license. There were many hearsay accounts of this occurring, but less than a handful of reports from my sample of children actually being removed. However, the MFAPA official confirmed the existence of feelings of intimidation on the part of foster parents.

In spite of the lack of actual incidences of removals of this sort occurring in my sample, the foster parents generally had a feeling that they had lost some control of their households. The lack of control not only resulted from connection to the agency and the resulting visits from agency personnel and biological parents, but from the children themselves. A common statement regarding the type of children for whom the foster parents were licensed (Attachment 1, question 4) was that they wanted children who were younger than their oldest child. Many foster parents, not just the foster parents who made this request, feared the influence upon their own children that would be brought by children of dubious backgrounds

I said enough was enough....they would get a temper and just tear the whole house down. And I think I kept them from, I got them in October and I had taken more, really too much because of the effect of my son (Case #10, p.4).

Here is an example of a foster family sacrificing its own stability in an effort to provide some stability to the foster child.

Another result of the breaching of the family boundaries by the entry of a foster child is the child's ability to use the agency rules to his/her advantage. One foster parent described this loss of control as putting a weapon in the child's hand allowing her/him to countermand the household discipline by saying, 'The agency says this or the agency says that.' One particularly strong foster parent handled the situation this way

I told them, I'm not the agency. "I'm Molly and this is 502 Main St. and I say if you can't follow my rules and regulations, and you can't do what everybody else in the house does, then I take you back to the agency...." I don't know if it was right or wrong, but I'm not the agency (Case #34, p.17).

This example illustrates a foster parent explicitly separating herself from the agency in order to protect the rules and integrity of her household. Requesting that the children be removed is one extreme way that foster parents have of exerting control over the structure of their homes. Foster parents do not request removal frivolously because they see the results of the trauma of removal when the child first enters their homes.

Some, but not all, of the self-service families made the most explicit comments that suggested they wished to keep their family boundaries raised. Many of these families wish to adopt, so it is unsettling to have a permeable boundary through which children to whom they have grown attached leave the home, "But in our situation, we wanted a family. It was just too easy to get attached and have to let go (Case #5, p.10). This comment also reflects the difference between the creation of family and the work of fostering. Another family refused to take respite placements because they did not like the idea of children coming into their home for only a night or a weekend.

Most all families strive to protect the boundaries of their household and family. An everyday example of this is the empathy that is elicited when a person expresses

annoyance over an early morning Sunday visit by a religious proselytizer or a dinnertime phone solicitation. Foster families likewise want to maintain their boundaries, but find it impossible because their work occurs in their home and their work is an extension of the state. Although professional social workers may have the burden of taking their work home emotionally, there is a barrier separating home from work. There seems little way for the foster parent to escape this home and work connection and it will stand in the way of any future attempt to professionalize their work or make it a market activity.

SUMMARY

Foster care is work that represents the transition of social welfare labor from the home to the market and the analytical categories reviewed in this chapter reflect that transitional nature. Foster parents displayed several motivations for fostering that ranged from self-interest to a service ethic akin to the professional. They also took a variety of approaches to the foster care stipend and for a sizeable proportion of the families, the money acted as a second income. Equally varied were the bases on which the foster parents attributed their value to the children in their care. While some saw their family and their love as their contribution, others recognized their parenting skill and their skill at fostering that goes beyond normal parenting.

This last component, the knowledge base, will have to undergo a change for the foster parents to see themselves as more than just those who parent others' children. Yet even if foster parents begin to see what they are doing as specialized labor that is different than parenting and convince the public of it, they will still be burdened with the home-based nature of their work. Their boundaries will still be fluid and their work will be subject to review from many sources. Both the difficulty of establishing a knowledge base and solidifying the boundaries around their households will make it difficult for foster parents to establish what they do as work.

VIII CONCLUSION

SUMMARY

Relations between capital, labor and the state are being reconsidered in this post-Cold War, New World Order of global competition. The role of the state is at the center of this debate, as those who would let the market operate unfettered struggle against those who strive for an activist state. The role of the state and market is crucial in any discussion of the system of social welfare and no one has a greater stake in the outcome of the struggle than social welfare workers since the size and form of the welfare state affects the amount and type of social work, and social work positions, available.

The major aim of this dissertation was to employ the theoretical framework of Michael Burawoy's The Politics of Production in an analysis of social welfare work. Burawoy's analysis of industrial production attempts to outline the devices that contribute to the reproduction of the capitalist system of production. The essence of capitalist reproduction for Burawoy is the securing and obscuring of surplus. That is, surplus value must continue to be extracted at the same time an ideology is constructed which defines this surplus extraction in the workers' interests.

Feminists, among others, have challenged the notion that the reproduction of the capitalist system is based

solely on continued surplus extraction through the wage labor process. They have expanded the view of social reproduction to include those activities outside of the sphere of surplus value production that are still necessary for the continuation of capitalism. Although it does not produce surplus value, social welfare work embodies the economic component of Burawoy's schema, the production of things, through the transformation of social welfare and human support activities into commodities.

Social welfare activities represent social reproduction in two senses. The tasks themselves, such as day care, health care, and mental health services, support workers, prepare them for work, and help keep them on the job. These activities are not of production, but they are necessary to production. At the same time these activities represent the social reproduction of capitalism as they are brought into the cash nexus of exchange relations.

Social welfare work is social reproduction labor that must be accomplished in order to ensure the continuation of the capitalist economic system. It includes the production and rearing of children and the maintenance of workers and their homes. These extra-economic activities have historically been located in the private sphere of the home and performed by women within a family context. However, these tasks have undergone a movement out of the home into the public realm, either to be provided within the context of the welfare state or for sale as commodities by

proprietary firms. Day care work serves as a good example of social reproduction in both senses of the word, it is reproducing workers at the same time it is being transformed into work that is governed by the market.

The politics of the welfare state revolve around the location of social reproduction tasks. The process of moving social welfare tasks out of the home is that of socialization. At the same time that the socialization of social welfare tasks is occurring, there is a movement to privatize social welfare services in order to remove the state presence. Some activities such as education and health care have, with some minor exceptions, moved completely out of the home. Others such as child rearing are in the midst of a transition that could move that task largely out of the home. Even though education and medicine have been firmly established in the public and private sectors, respectively, they are currently subject to pressure to move elsewhere: health care to be nationalized and education subjected to parental choice.

A balance must be maintained as social reproduction needs are socialized, a balance between the provision of needs within the public, welfare state, and their provision within the commodified economic sphere. Offe has labeled this the demarcation problem, in which a certain degree of state provision is necessary to the continued functioning of the capitalist system, but an excess of state provision risks undermining the legitimacy of that system. That is,

if the welfare state goes too far in meeting people's needs, commodity relations could be called into question.

Privatization has been presented in the name of efficiency and cost-cutting, but serves to check an increasing welfare state.

Privatization of care work means either purchasing services on the open market or pushing them back into the home. In either case, there is a class-based effect. If services need to be purchased on the market, the quantity and quality of those services are dependent on family income. The family income also determines the amount of unpaid labor that can be supplied within that family. Both the ability to purchase commodified social welfare services and to provide them within the home for oneself affect people's capability to earn a living through waged labor and the quality of the lives of themselves and their families.

Gender relations are critical in this equation because it is women's unpaid and paid labor that is used to provide social reproduction services in the home and in the market. In the home, female labor supports the family when social welfare services cannot afford to be purchased on the market. In the case of commodified social welfare services, women provide low cost labor for proprietary firms, for example in child and elderly care.

Individualism is the ideology of the welfare state as well as Anglo-American capitalism in general. In the development of social programs, the debate over their

continuation, and in the general discussion of the best location of social reproduction activities, the idea of individuality or self-sufficiency dominates. The particularly American variant of this ideology has shaped a welfare state that is relatively small compared to other Western industrialized nations and whose benefits are a compensation for wage labor rather than a right of citizenship.

An individualist ideology also supports the presence of commodified social welfare services. Individuals responsible for their own welfare should be expected to provide those services, whether it means performing the work or buying the service on the open market. It is equally in keeping with an individualist ideology for social welfare providers to endeavor to transform their services into commodities in their entrepreneurial efforts as well as their efforts to professionalize.

Gender ideology is important in the development of social welfare labor and policy in two ways. The characterization of social welfare tasks as naturally female labor aids in the privatization of that labor. That is, attempts to transfer labor back into the home can be more easily justified under the assumption that it is women's work. Social welfare work performed as paid labor in the market can also be devalued, and underpaid, because it is women's work. And in social welfare policy, just as worker's compensation and unemployment benefits have been

based upon men's status as workers, widow's pensions, AFDC, and social security benefits for women have been based upon their status as wives and mothers.

The controversy over the provision of child care contains the essentials of the debates over social welfare provision. At a time when over half of the society's women work outside of the home, child care is still largely seen as the individual responsibility of the parents, meaning mostly mothers, rather than as a social need. Why is child care not seen in the same way as education? That is, why not take the perspective that high quality, universally available provision of the service will help all individuals and sectors of the society? Not only individualist ideology, but family and gender ideology come into play. The latter hold that the family and the mother are the best, and only, place and person to do child raising. And although child care is predominately thought of as the task of women, the need for child care is too great for it to be totally pushed back into the private sphere of the home.

How useful is the analysis laid out in The Politics of Production in explaining the division of labor in social welfare work? The concept of social welfare work regimes illustrates the various locations in which particular services are provided and who is responsible for providing them. Is it valid to see social welfare work as segmented into regimes? The example of child care depicts a service that is provided in the home as both paid and unpaid labor,

for profit in a proprietary sector, by the state and voluntary agencies.

Each of these sectors appears to have a slightly different relation to the state and market and reproduction of labor. Further study would be required to illustrate the exact nature of these differences as well as any differences in the labor processes of state, voluntary, proprietary, and unaffiliated day care providers. It would also require further analysis to determine what effect the determinants of the relation to state and market, reproduction of labor and labor process have on the providers' link to capital accumulation and labor control. It is safe to say that politics, ideology and economics, as defined by Burawoy, contribute to the size of the welfare state which in turn affects the size of the various regimes.

For services other than day care there is a slightly different mix or combination of providers in each regime for each service, but the array of regimes is available for each service. That is, education is a primarily state provided service, but proprietary education is a significant component, home schoolers exist in an unpaid setting, and some special education (such as literacy campaigns) exists in a voluntary setting.

Is there one best regime through which to provide social welfare services? One argument holds that a service should be relegated to a state or private agency based on the nature of the service and the ability of the state to

act as an overseer (Gilbert, 1983). Private agencies should be allowed to provide services that are standardized and have measurable outcomes. This would allow the market to perform the magic of the invisible hand in providing the most efficient services, while allowing the state to perform its role as protector of the public interest by preventing fraud, abuse, and inferior service. According to this view, the state should provide the services for which they hold the public trust and where the possibility exists for coercion of service recipients who are powerless or unable to protect themselves.

This view is based on the assumption that efficiency is the primary consideration in deciding how to provide social welfare services and that the private sector is the best place to achieve that efficiency. However, productivity or efficiency in human services, unlike that in production, is not achieved through an increase in the capital to labor ratio or more sophisticated technology. Social service work, or caregiving, is labor intensive and efficiency is gained at the cost of wages and health, retirement and insurance benefits for the workers. Social welfare viewed strictly from the perspective of the client and not the worker, glosses over an important consideration.

The removal of wages and benefits from the workers by moving services to lower paying proprietary firms not only removes the state presence in the service, but increases the amount of unpaid labor contained in the service.

Efficiency or effectiveness aside, a service is provided by the state, the proprietary sector, a voluntary agency, or an unaffiliated provider based upon the relationship of the firm (or service provider) to the state and market, the labor process, and the reproduction of labor. These factors or processes are political as much as they are based upon a determination of efficiency. Although all four regimes are available for the provision of social welfare services, the struggle over the role of these three components determines the size of each regime. The struggle over the place state provided services, proprietary firms and voluntary agencies is political and ideological.

For social welfare work, three issues come into play in the agency's relation to the state and market: the degree to which a service is directly provided by the state, funded by the state, and/or regulated by the state. These are the major contributors to whether a service will be provided and where it will be located. For foster care, the voluntary agencies that provide these services in supplement to the state can be seen as an extension of the state since they service the same clientele, to a large degree receive the same funds, and are regulated by the same laws and administrative rules.

The federal government has largely removed its presence from day care which has opened the way for proprietary providers. The predominance of tax credits as a mode for assisting families to pay for child care is the method for

shifting the burden of payment to the individual. Removal of state money for child care centers has made home day care the most viable option for low income families.

The development of labor processes in social welfare work has been characterized by attempts to commodify the labor process in order to control the service for the benefit of the sellers. The labor process that has come to dominate professional social work is social casework. The first social workers tried to package social casework as a saleable commodity in order to ensure their continuation and legitimacy. They have been partially successful in this and in the process, have divorced their work from the sphere of the home, though their occupational control remains limited. Day care has begun to gain legitimacy as a commodity as it is being redefined as education, though it is still, especially for home providers, seen as child tending.

The reproduction of labor can be seen as the way workers are brought into the labor process and in social welfare work it can best be seen by looking at the educational requirements for entry into the work. Credentialization, along with the above-discussed commodification of the labor process, provides workers some degree of control over their work. Social work has struggled to keep its certification credentials high, but is facing reclassification programs which undercut the power of the MSW credential. Foster care providers have made some movement toward certification in an effort to enhance their

legitimacy, though they have a long way to go to garner recognition as more than just parents.

I used the examples of day care and professional social work to illustrate the role of the relation of the firm to the state and market, the labor process and the reproduction of labor in the social reproduction of capitalist relations. The politics contained in the socialization and privatization of social reproduction activities have been at work in keeping the state out of this service while maintaining the care of children as an individual responsibility. The result of these processes has been that proprietary child care grows to fill the need for this service.

As child care becomes defined more and more as educational, the reproduction of child care workers will come through training programs that certify their competency. For now, the transition from home to market labor is relatively easy for female child care workers because the labor is still closely connected with the home. Professional social workers have converted their work from volunteer unpaid labor to that of a semi-profession. They have taken advantage of capitalist social relations in making caring and charity work pay through work in the state and voluntary agencies and, increasingly, in private practice.

I have also utilized child foster care as an example of social welfare labor, but is it of any significance in

capitalist social reproduction? What it does is pick up the pieces of capitalism's failures. In the state of Michigan, foster parents adopt some 1500 to 2000 wards of the state each year. These are children whose parents are unwilling, unable or unavailable to raise them, though not all of them have been abused or neglected. And not all of the abuse and neglect can be laid at the feet of the economic system. However, according to some of the foster parents I interviewed, there is a growing number of children born to single women who are alcoholic or addicted to crack. The case can be made that the opportunity structure of the economic system is not providing these women sufficiently inviting or viable alternatives.

Foster parents perform parenting, or social reproduction, functions for those unable by virtue of, among other things, the inability of the capitalist system to support them. They, like day care providers, do so through their rearing of others' children, which reproduces workers both on a day-to-day basis and generationally. Their work of the generational reproduction of workers occurs because so many foster parents adopt the children under their care. Even without considering the adoption of children by foster parents, for a large number of the children, a large portion of their rearing occurs in foster care.

Foster parenting is unpaid labor in service to the state. The state has taken on the responsibility to protect children from abuse and neglect and has invested the labor

and authority of the courts, police, the health care system, state social welfare agencies, and the paid staff of voluntary agencies. The state has assumed this need, in part, because the public discourse, or needs-talk, has defined the protection of children as socially necessary. Yet those with the most direct, and some might say meaningful, connection with the foster children, are considered unpaid volunteers.

According to Gimenez (1990), the ability of a family or individual to benefit from unpaid labor is based upon the household income from waged labor. However, in spite of their unpaid status, a significant portion of my sample of foster parents were able to use the stipend given to them for support of their foster children as an income supplement. This, in effect, has transformed unpaid fostering into a cottage industry. This parallels the efforts of women in the periphery to turn household labor into a source of income, as described by Gimenez. Even if one were to consider the foster care system as an element of the public assistance system, it again is support of women, as most foster parents are, in their role as mothers.

There was a relative balance between the different types of families interviewed in the sample. There was a proportionate number of single parent, dual income, and family/household system families. Likewise, there was relative balance in the incomes of the foster families. What does this say about privatization and the use of unpaid

and paid labor? The lower income families and single mothers derive a marginal benefit to their household income through the stipend they receive housing foster children. Whether the stipend serves as an income or income supplement for the lower income single or working parents, or goes to an upper income family with a stay at home mother, using the unpaid labor of these women privatizes the service.

In the case of dual income and family/household system families, more of the family income or unpaid labor of the mother is spent on the foster child. One could say that this simply means a better standard of living for the children housed in two parent families, and that may be so.

Yet in a sense, foster parenting is a twist upon Gimenez's idea that a family's ability to benefit from unpaid labor is relative to its amount of wages from paid labor. In this case it is the state that obtains a relative benefit from the unpaid labor of foster families based on their incomes. That is, for low income two-earner families and single mothers, the fostering system provides a benefit to the family, as it provides them an income supplement. For higher income families, the relative benefit of the fostering stipend to the family is lower since their income is higher and their standard of living is generally higher. It therefore takes more of the wages of these higher income families to support the foster children in this higher living standard. The higher living standard means a more enriched environment for foster children. This is true by

virtue of the increased material resources that are invested in the children and, in the case of the stay at home mothers, a greater investment of time and personal caregiving labor.

The benefit to the state is clear since paying for foster care labor at all would cost the state tremendously. In the case of low income parents, the state is procuring a higher level of care for children (see below for a glaringly rare exception). In the case of higher income families, the state is getting more benefit for the children for the same amount of stipend money. An equivalent amount of spending by the state to provide that higher standard of living for the foster children would mean that fostering would be an even higher cost service than it already is.

Some suggest that the system of fostering parenting may do no more good than complete non-intervention in cases of abuse and neglect. And although none in my sample of foster parents suggested non-intervention, many did say that the current system of foster care is inadequate and outmoded. The non-foster parent critics say that foster parents are not trained, not professional, and that placing abused children in foster homes provides no relief or therapy and only further disrupts an already troubled child and family situation. Evidence for this might exist in the worst case scenario which occurred last summer in Pennsylvania when a foster mother was arraigned for the murder and mutilation of a 2 year old boy in her care. However, an event of this

severity must be put in perspective. "Deaths of children in foster care are rare nationally and in Pennsylvania....Incidents of abuse of any kind are also rare--184 confirmed instances of mistreatment for 1991 in the nearly 9,000 foster homes statewide" (Woodall, Goldman, and Patel, 1991; 8a).

The alternatives to foster care placements or disregarding child abuse, are more restrictive placements such as group homes or more intensive family intervention by professional social workers. This substitution of paid for unpaid labor could prove prohibitively costly to the state and mean some cutback on the scope of intervention in cases of abuse and neglect.

In rearing children from dysfunctional homes, foster parents are performing social reproduction work, in the sense of contributing to the re-creation of wage laborers. The other sense of reproducing capitalist relations lies in the reproduction of the exchange relation. In this regard, foster parenting does not appear likely to be transformed into a commodity or into paid work any time soon. Foster parents may be trapped by gender ideology. Foster care has a problem similar to day care in that both are considered work that "naturally" belongs in the home, and by default, is devalued by its connection with its traditionally female providers. Foster care is considered, even by some foster parents, to be mere parenting which they believe to be natural and instinctual.

Foster care which is considered home labor and the natural work of women is perfectly amenable to a state that is increasingly trying to privatize what was provided by the state and minimize the incursion of the state into formerly private activities. The care in private homes of children who are wards of the state can be seen as privatization of a state responsibility that would cost far more if those children had to be cared for in a group or institutional setting. This is an example where gender ideology of women's place being in the home sustains the privatization of services.

Exploring the idea of becoming independent contractors and striving for certification illustrates a desire on the part of some foster parents to package their work as something to be sold to the highest bidder and gain legitimacy as more than simply parents. In spite of such attempts, foster parents, have not been able to package their work into a commodity nor gain certification. Foster parents themselves are given a degree of support allowing the poorest of them to earn a subsistence while performing the social reproduction work the biological parents cannot. And in this sense foster parents are supported by the state in their capacities as mothers.

If foster parenting in its current configuration is not considered work, what would a foster parent worker look like? An ideal-type can be constructed using the five theoretical categories developed here. The most fundamental

shift from the current foster parent to the foster parent worker would be a recognition that what they do is truly work. This would begin with a recognition that parenting itself is a learned skill and be built upon to identify the facets of fostering that go beyond normal parenting. Those would include the physical tasks such as transporting children to activities that are strictly a function of their foster child status, but it would also take in the specialized knowledge required of foster parents, such as the medical requirements of a fetal alcohol syndrome baby or how to deal with the results of the psychological trauma of sexual abuse.

A recognition of this specialized knowledge would allow foster mothers to escape the gender ideology that mystifies their work. It could also be the basis of a certification program. Certification could be subdivided into areas of specialty. So, just as an auto mechanic can be certified for brakes or transmissions, a foster parent could be certified for "failure to thrive" babies or victims of authoritarian brutalizing parents. On that basis, foster parents could more freely provide testimony in court and contribute to the formation of the case plans for the children.

Foster parent workers would be able to solve the boundary problems displayed by the social worker in the example given in chapter VII. They would be able to set limits on the entry of strangers into their homes and somehow segment

their working lives from their family lives. To totally accomplish this would be an impossibility and defeat the purpose of placing children in families. However, small things could be done such as preventing placements after a certain period, for example, seven o'clock in the evening, elimination of in-home visits of the biological parents, or unannounced home calls by the social worker.

A foster parent worker would be allotted money that is beyond the money given for the expenses of the child. This pay could be a flat rate for all foster parents or based upon their certification. The more training received, the higher the pay. Or the pay could be based on the difficulty posed by the particular child. This would be similar to the current system of living expense money for the child in which the basic rate is increased if the child has special demands. The difference would be that the increase in pay would not necessarily just be because of special expenses incurred by the child such as frequent transportation to a counselor or physician or a special dietary regimen. Rather than paying for the extra gas or special food, a paid foster parent would receive special compensation for the requirements of time, effort, and training on her part.

The payment to foster parents might be able to be used to enhance or recognize the service aspect of their work and separate them from those foster parents who are attempting to adopt or are taking in children who are family relations. This would not even have to take away any of the living

expense money given to the latter type of parents, those who fall into the self-service category. But not making a payment to self-interested foster parents would recognize or assume that these parents would seek to adopt anyway or might be expected to take in members of their own family without pay.

These descriptions of what a foster parent worker would look like are not proffered as policy initiatives, nor would all foster parents welcome such changes. Such changes would alter the nature of foster care, but would not necessarily negate the benefit of foster care to the children who have been removed from their parents. A strong certification program for foster parents, combined with a renewed self-respect based on their acceptance as workers in their own right, could enhance their investment in and performance of the tasks of fostering.

Chapter V mentioned the existence of group homes staffed with paraprofessional workers who care for the children on a daily basis. In order to further explore and define foster care as labor, future research could compare the work of family foster care providers with those workers in group homes. Beginning with a definition of fostering as work, such a comparative study could further establish the work that is done by mothers in foster families and compare it with that done by the paraprofessionals. It could also look at the parenting, or caring, that is done by those paid

to care for others' children in group homes and other residential facilities.

CONCLUSIONS

The theoretical framework used here provides a device for explaining the different mix of services across sectors or regimes and can be applied to other services. For instance, care for the elderly has a large proprietary component due, in part, to the availability of state funding through medicare and the ability to use uncredentialed caregivers in an indeterminate and undifferentiated type of care. These conditions have opened the door for proprietary providers to dominate the market for these services while there is no voluntary care for the aged and a small segment of unaffiliated providers.

This dissertation is not able to establish the extent to which the different regimes structure the employment of workers. A different and more comprehensive mode of research, focusing on the occupational characteristics of workers in a variety of services across the four regimes might reveal more consistent differences along the lines suggested in day care and foster care provision. Such research could also explore the use of unpaid labor in each of these social welfare regimes.

I have asserted that social reproduction work, extra-economic activity, has been increasingly socialized or moved out of the home and into a division of labor segmented by

social welfare work regimes. What does this mean to the larger question of the social reproduction of the capitalist system? The suggestions of a two-tiered welfare state, in child care and other services, exemplifies the polarization of advantaged and disadvantaged in the country. The provision of day care represents how a need can be segmented in various regimes. Like medicine, it runs the risk of increasing separation between those who can afford the service and those who cannot.

State involvement affects the overall provision of services and the distribution of those services. The state abdicating direct provision or subsidization of medical, day care or other social services will leave a void that can only partially be filled by the other three regimes. Voluntary provision relies on an uncertain means of funding needed social services as it is based on the ability and willingness of the advantaged to dispense charity. Proprietary and unaffiliated provision of services, likewise, is based on the ability of the recipients to pay for the services. The ideology of individualism supports this push toward state withdrawal from social welfare activity and provision through the other regimes. Continuation of state retrenchment will solidify the dominance of the economic sphere, with its commodification of services. State retrenchment means an increase in the use of unpaid labor either through more care provided

through or paid for by the home or unpaid labor exploited through the low wage competitive sector.

Other possible paths include a shift in needs-discourse which would support a more active welfare state. The rise of nationalized health care as a political issue is suggestive, as well as the somewhat smaller recognition of the need for universal day care. In both these cases, the discourse points to the importance of the provision of these services for the overall well being of the entire country as well as the particular interests of business, women, children, and the economically disadvantaged. Although there may be a realization of the need for the provision of social welfare services, it is another, and unlikely, matter to suggest that the dominant ideology could be transformed into a belief that an expanded welfare state would be beneficial to the entire society.

There are those (Piven, 1985) who believe in a version of the romantic model of feminism. The romantic model suggests that "female nurturing" could be infused into the public realm as women enter the workforce. In the case of day care, the hoped for scenario suggests that the entry of a large number of women into the workforce will reach the critical mass necessary to allow a political drive for a truly subsidized child care to be successful. This would occur not simply because of women's "inherent" nurturing capacity, but because the caregiving tasks that women do

must be accomplished in spite of their entry into the workplace.

As of this writing, a new American president has just been elected. Although he is of the more liberal democratic party, his campaign rhetoric regarding the welfare state revolved around personal responsibility and eliminating welfare dependency. These themes suggest adherence to the ideology of individualism and self-sufficiency and portend a continuation of a welfare state with limited "states of dependency" and a continuation of benefits based on employment rather than citizenship. So although there was never an implication that candidate Clinton would in any way undermine the capitalist economic system, there does not appear to be any promise of an expanded welfare state by President Clinton either.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A METHODOLOGICAL APPENDIX

What I will do here is follow a somewhat chronological account of the development of my thesis. Throughout I will insert the assumptions and rationale used to make particular choices. Like much research, this dissertation evolved, or at least my thinking evolved, since the original proposal was finalized. The methodology has developed along with the conceptual evolution and redefinition of the project.

The kernel from which this dissertation grew was planted during my work at the state social service agency. Through interactions with my peers and workers from other agencies, it occurred to me that there were differences among social workers. My first crude observations were that there was a difference in the sensibilities of the workers in my agency and those in other, particularly private, agencies with which I worked. The best way to describe it is to use the state workers' own description of particular workers in the other settings. These other workers, by virtue of their particular attitudes toward clients were dubbed, "Suzy Creamcheeses." It is not so much that the workers in non-state agencies were more empathetic, though that was the case sometimes. It was more that the workers in my agency had a harder, less forgiving, edge than the others I encountered. A foster parent I interviewed put it this way

I think that there's a tendency for them to be very crass....You know, and I find workers have a tendency of being very compassionate, or they are very, very hard. They very rarely are middle of the road people (Case #46, pp.17-18).

I wanted to explore the differences expressed in the statement above.

At the same time I was reading the work of Michael Burawoy and his theoretical framework sounded as if it could be put to use in an analysis of social workers and the organizational contexts in which their work, their attitudes and their political actions are shaped. One of the issues of contention in my office was that of Purchase-of-Service contracts in which private agencies would be utilized to provide services to clients whose cases our agency controlled. For some workers, this was simply considered to be outsourcing of the agency's work and it raised the question for me of how divisions between the agencies were created, not only by privatization, but generally how the division of labor within social work was created. Using Burawoy's concept, I made the preliminary division of social work venues into state, voluntary, and proprietary "regimes."

My goal was to use the concepts of Burawoy's Politics of Production to analyze the operation of social work, but at the same time there appeared that the development of the regimes might create or exploit class differences between the workers in those various regimes. Coming in contact with workers who saw their labor in a collective bargaining

perspective and others who outwardly displayed the service ethic of the professional led me to wonder if the differences between workers in a state regime and workers in a private regime could be described by the theory of the New Middle Class. Two things about this class theory seemed to fit particularly well. The first is Alvin Gouldner's (1979) statement that the welfare state is used by the New Middle Class for its own purposes, which may or may not coincide with the needs of the working class. The notion of a class that uses the welfare state in opposition to the working class is particularly appropriate in the case of social workers, whose activities act to control the working class at the same time as they are providing assistance.

The other aspect of the New Middle Class theory that seemed appropriate was the idea of Barbara and John Ehrenreich (1979) who posited that their Professional Managerial Class functions to reproduce capitalist class relations and culture. This coincides with Burawoy's intention of analyzing the reproduction of class relations in the labor process. Social workers, particularly those who work with families in adoption or foster care (my own social work experience), are reproducing social relations in the family through the process of evaluating the fitness of families to adopt and changing the functioning of families whose children have been removed from the parents.

The notion that private agency workers would be more likely to be New Class members seemed worth pursuing not

only because the state workers I encountered exhibited a trade union mentality. It also seemed an appropriate comparison because the private agency workers seemed more invested in doing social work and appeared to have more social work training. The state social workers, on the other hand, came from a variety of non-social work disciplines and appeared less invested in the social work of their jobs than their more professional appearing counterparts in the private agencies.

With the ideas in place, I put them together in the following manner. My first question was whether social work agencies or venues could be described and analyzed according to Burawoy's notion of work regimes. The second question that arises, once the notion of social work regimes is established, is whether or not the social workers in one regime would be more likely than others to belong to the Professional Managerial Class. The test of their class membership, according to my preliminary hypothesis, would lie in their reproduction activities. That is, the social workers in the voluntary or private regimes would be more likely, by virtue of their greater propensity for New Middle Class membership, to reproduce a particular family structure than those in the state regime.

As I worked with the ideas, several wrinkles developed.

The first shift occurred while trying to apply Burawoy's notion of politics to social welfare work. My original thoughts envisioned politics as the political

choices and activities of social workers as they interacted with clients and coworkers. As important as this is, it took away from the power of Burawoy's analysis which treats politics as the entire realm of activities which shape social relations. From this, I realized that the construction of social welfare regimes shape the possible interactions of workers with clients. For instance, the rise of proprietary day care affects the employment availability of working mothers and the conditions of the care of the children. Effects of this kind are political in and of themselves. The narrower approach to politics and political activity pointed in the direction of a survey to assess attitudes and behaviors. The broader approach required an assessment of the shape of the division of labor of social welfare workers and the politics and ideology that are associated with each regime.

My second shift in thinking followed from that and involved viewing social welfare as implemented not just by those who claim the professional moniker of social worker, but a whole range of people who neither have accreditation nor formal social work training. Politics, as Burawoy uses the term, means the shaping of social relations. The professionalization process is political in the sense of shaping social relations of those who would perform a particular occupation and the inclusion or exclusion of some workers is part of the professionalization process.

The project then changed from one of searching for the occupational positions of accredited social workers to looking at the locations in which social welfare work, broadly defined, is carried out. It became clear that defining what is legitimate social welfare work actually is an essential part of the politics of social welfare. It followed that the placement of an activity in one regime or institution, to be carried out by certain workers, shapes the social relations of the workers and the clients with whom they interact. The shaping of social welfare regimes is part of the politics of social welfare.

I developed my first data gathering plan while I was in the middle of this rethinking of the notion of politics. My original intent was to survey the home study records of the various agencies doing foster care in order to directly assess how social workers evaluate families. I believed that this unobtrusive measure would reveal how workers sought to select families that conformed to particular models of behavior and structure. That is, how social workers license families for foster care would illustrate their social reproduction work. Foster care represents an attempt to reproduce or recreate a particular family life, one that was lacking in the child's biological family. By examining the foster families selected by social workers from various types of agencies, I had hoped to assess family forms they found to be acceptable. This method would also allow me to compare types of social work agencies.

My original intent of analyzing differences between agencies and workers was not only sidetracked by a theoretical reconception of the meaning of politics and the definition of social workers, it was also thwarted by a methodological glitch. The methodological issue that arose was my inability to review the home studies compiled by social work agencies, as I had originally planned. This led me to embrace a sample group that I could have access to: foster families. I decided to assess the differences between the types of families licensed by different types of agencies by direct observation and interview.

When I made the decision to interview foster families, I believed that I could gather the data to make valid comparisons between agencies and workers. However, another theoretical diversion occurred which shifted the direction of the thesis. The theoretical matter that arose was a heightened comprehension on my part of the concept of social reproduction. Applying the idea of social reproduction in all of its meanings drove this dissertation in several directions. I originally applied the idea of reproducing class relations and culture (Ehrenreich and Ehrenreich's purpose for their New Middle Class) to the work done by social workers in reproducing a particular family structure. Yet realizing that reproducing class relations refers to the larger process of recreating the capital/labor relation caused me to reconsider the meaning and application of the concept of social reproduction.

In wrestling with the effect on my project of these issues, I came to see politics as creating social relations and social reproduction as perpetuating the capitalist economic system. From this, I concluded that an analysis of the politics of social welfare work would be served by examining this process of the movement of social reproduction functions out of the home. Day care seemed an ideal occupation for consideration because it still has a strong tie to the home, yet is rapidly becoming a commodity. It would also allow me to assess the efficacy of the notion of social welfare work regimes by seeing the distribution of day care services between state, proprietary, and unaffiliated regimes as it moves out of the home.

As I said, I made the decision to interview foster parents directly because I had been diverted from my original idea of data collection within agencies. At the outset of data collection, I still envisioned using the data to compare social work agencies and workers. I talked to 54 foster parents, covering a range of topics including their relationship with their caseworker and their family structure. However, during the analysis of these interviews, categories emerged which lent themselves to investigating whether foster care can be thought of as a social service work that is moving from the home to the market, or becoming commodified. That is, could foster care be seen as part of the process of social reproduction not only in the sense of reproducing workers in the family

setting, but in the sense of becoming a commodity for sale. Foster parents became potential social welfare workers rather than simply objects being acted upon by their social worker caseworkers.

My original research proposal contained three objectives. The first was to demonstrate the efficacy of Burawoy's schema by demonstrating that social work with families is segmented by regimes. The second objective was to determine whether workers in the state regime were more likely than those in other regimes to reproduce a particular set of social relations, that of the family/household system. From that, followed the third objective, assessing whether workers in any of the regimes are better said to be members of the New Middle Class.

The evolution of this project has led me to an analysis which has not directly addressed the questions originally put forth at the outset of the dissertation research. I have used the concept of the social welfare work regime as a descriptive categorization of social welfare venues. This is a less ambitious use of the concept than determining its usefulness as a device for comparing the different ways social welfare work is structured. Working with the concept of the New Middle Class fell from the research agenda when the soundness of the advice I had received became clear. I was warned of the difficulty in making judgements about the New Middle Class membership of a particular group of people. Even Ehrenreich and Ehrenreich warned against using the

concept to include or exclude particular workers. The full examination of the relationship between social welfare labor and social reproduction and the obligation to fully and adequately utilize my interview data pushed this question to the background. Examining the validity of the concept of social welfare work regimes is still a worthy project. Before such a project could be undertaken, the concept of regime needs to be clarified. Regime, like New Middle Class, may not be a useful or usable research concept. Even if this is the case, it would still be worthwhile to examine the manner in which politics, economics and ideology structure social welfare work in state voluntary, proprietary and unaffiliated settings. However, that analysis will have to wait for another dissertation.

APPENDIX B FOSTER PARENT SOLICITATION LETTER

October 26, 1991

Forrest and Flora Foster
14391 Foster Street
Detroit, Michigan 48235

Dear Mr. and Ms. Foster,

My name is Michael Cushion and I am a sociology graduate student at Michigan State University. I am writing to ask for your participation in my doctoral dissertation research. I chose your name at random from a list of foster parents received from the state. This list is part of the public record. I believe your experience can provide insight into the family environment and caseworker relations of foster families like yours.

The aim of my study is to see if there are differences in the foster families selected by different types of social work agencies. The kinds of comparisons I wish to make involve aspects of the family such as the occupation(s) of the parent(s), type of activities in which families engage, reasons for becoming involved as a foster parent, and the relationship between families and their licensing agencies and caseworkers.

What I hope you can give me is about an hour of your time. I ask this knowing how busy a family can be and how precious your time is. If you can set aside an hour, I would simply like to come to your home and talk about your fostering experiences. Since your participation would be voluntary, you have the right to change your mind and withdraw at any time--even in the middle of the interview. I want to talk to you only if you would like to talk to me. I have enclosed a copy of a letter of approval from the University committee which must approve all interview research done by Michigan State faculty or students.

I understand that the family is a private place and assure you that I will keep it that way. The information you provide will be treated with strictest confidence. My final report will not focus on particular families and your identity will be known only to me. Your name will not appear in my paper. Although I may use selected examples of individual behavior to illustrate a point, any information which might identify you, such as your community or any unique feature of you or your household, will be disguised. If such information cannot be changed to protect your identity, it will not be included.

Since you might have an interest in the paper to which you contribute I will, on request, send you a summary of my results.

It is impossible to answer in this letter all the questions you may have about my research. Expect a telephone call from me in a week or so to answer any questions you might have and arrange a meeting. If you have questions about myself, my standing in the University or the sociology department, feel free to call my academic advisor, Richard Hill, ((517) 353-5012).

Sincerely,

Michael Cushion

APPENDIX C INTERVIEW GUIDE

1. I would like to begin by finding out who is in your family? That is, names and ages.
2. When/How did you first get idea to foster? What was your motivation for getting into fostering?
 PROBE: something to give children
 had large family
 empty nest
 save the children
3. What are you (long/short) term goals for foster children? What obstacles did you encounter in reaching them?
4. Which type of children are you licensed for? NO PROBE
5. Why do you think children come into foster care?
6. What does the monthly payment mean to you?
=====
7. How were you recruited to your agency?
8. Caseworker share goals/concerns? Supportive in budget cuts?
9. To what extent do you think the worker/agency allows you to enter into the casework decisions?
10. (Do you feel) Does your caseworker see you as a colleague, partner, client, friend, other?
=====
11. Do you (and/or husband) work outside of the home?
 What is/are your occupation(s)?
 Do you do any in-home work for pay?
12. How did you come to the decision to work or not?
13. How do you arrange your housekeeping?
 Who does what?
 What portion of the housework is done by each of you?
 What was your method of deciding the division of household labor (choice, fiat, planning, mutual consent)?
14. Who handles the money management in the house? NO PROBE OR SKIP, DEPENDING ON TIME
15. Is your caseworker supportive of your family arrangements?
16. Do you have a foster parent association? What is its role?
17. How are the relations between the association and the worker/agency?
18. If I were to go to the agency and ask to talk with the licensing worker about foster care in general, do you think she would be willing to do that?

APPENDIX D WRITTEN SURVEY

I appreciate being able to sit and share your fostering experiences. In order to have a complete picture of your family situation, could you also answer the following questions? If you are a single parent, please ignore the request for spousal information.

1. When were you married? Mo. _____ Day _____ 19____
2. How much schooling do you and your spouse have? (Please mark all that apply and note any "other" you have.)

Self:

- A. Grades 1 through 8
B. Some High School
C. High School Diploma (GED)
D. Some College
E. College Degree
F. Some Graduate School
G. Graduate Degree
H. Other Schooling
- _____

Spouse:

- A. Grades 1 through 8
B. Some High School
C. High School Diploma (GED)
D. Some College
E. College Degree
F. Some Graduate School
G. Graduate Degree
H. Other Schooling
- _____

3. When were you licensed? Mo. _____ 19 ____
4. How many placements have you had? (If you do not have the exact number at hand, an estimate will be fine.) _____
5. On average, how often do you have professional contact with your caseworker?
- A. Less than once a month
B. Once a month
C. Greater than monthly, but less than weekly
D. Once a week
E. Daily or more often
6. Who makes the doctor/dentist appointments for the children?
- Self _____ Spouse _____ Other _____
7. Who attends the school conferences for the children?
- Self _____ Spouse _____ Both _____ Other _____
8. Who primarily decides when the family car will be serviced?
- Self _____ Spouse _____

9. Who primarily drops off and picks up the car?

Self _____ Spouse _____

10. How often do you use frozen or prepared foods? (e.g. Boxed Macaroni and Cheese, Boiling Bag Vegetables)

Once per meal _____ Once per day _____ Once per week _____ Not at all _____

11. How often do you eat out? _____ times per _____ week _____ month.
(This includes bringing in pizza, burgers, etc.)

12. In what hobbies/activities do you (your spouse) participate?

(Please list the activity and how often you participate.)

Self:	Activity	Times per Month	Attendee
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Spouse:	Activity	Times per Month	Attendee
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

13. Please list the activities in which the girls (and boys) participate and which parent/relative attends, if any?

Girls:	Activity	Times per Month	Attendee
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Boys:	Activity	Times per Month	Attendee
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

14. Within which bracket does your total family income fall?

[] \$ 0,000-\$10,000	[] \$30,000-\$35,000	[] \$56,000-\$60,000
[] \$11,000-\$17,000	[] \$36,000-\$41,000	[] \$61,000-\$65,000
[] \$18,000-\$23,000	[] \$42,000-\$50,000	[] \$66,000-\$70,000
[] \$24,000-\$29,000	[] \$51,000-\$55,000	[] \$70,000 +

Note: Please include all income from wages, in-home activities, interest income, foster payments, adoption subsidies, etc.

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