

ANALYSIS OF THE BEHAVING-VALUING PATTERNS
OF LOW- STATUS AMERICANS AS REVEALED IN
SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH WITH IMPLICATIONS FOR
ADULT BASIC EDUCATION

Thesis for the Degree of Ph. D.
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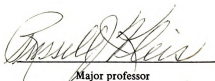
ANALYSIS OF THE BEHAVING-VALUING PATTERNS
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IMPLICATIONS FOR ADULT BASIC EDUCATION

presented by

David Louis Boggs

has been accepted towards fulfillment
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Ph.D. _____ degree in Administration &
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Date May 17, 1972











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ABSTRACT

ANALYSIS OF THE BEHAVING-VALUING PATTERNS
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By

David Louis Boggs

This study begins with an assumption that first, the minimal participation of hard-core illiterate lower-class persons in adult basic education programs, and second, the relational and attitudinal problems surfacing when they participate are both due to different perspectives on the part of such persons and their teachers over what constitutes appropriate behaving and valuing patterns.

The intent of this research has been to extract from scholarly studies of the behaviors of low-status Americans a theory-based perspective for interpreting their behaving-valuing patterns. Valuing is defined as an activity tied to satisfaction of needs and assuagement of desires. Three considerations combine to affect valuing patterns for low-status people.

First, lower-class people have been acculturated to the behaviors and values of the middle class as

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acceptable means for the resolution of basic and commonly held human needs. Needs have been viewed in terms of Maslow's categories on a continuum from survival to self-actualization. Means for their resolution have been assumed in terms of traditional roles: parent, spouse, breadwinner, citizen, employee, neighbor, and friend.

Second, lower-class people have generally not been assimilated into society's institutions to the extent that they provide adequate resources necessary for bringing about a proportionate relationship between one's needs and the traditional means for resolving them.

Third, given this deprivation of resources lower-class people do not abandon conventional behaviors and values as undesirable. Rather they come to tolerate and value adaptive strategies developed in the face of stratum-shared oppressive circumstances. These strategies are valued for their capacity to provide more satisfaction of needs than any available and known alternative strategies. The point of view adopted for this study then, is that of the valuing subject whose behaving-valuing patterns are situationally anchored. Ethnic or cultural conditioning is viewed as secondary to, and often derivative of, the influence of external circumstances on behaving-valuing patterns.

Kreisberg's hypothesis that all behaviors and values can be modified to the extent that they are (1)

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serially independent, (2) non-central to self-concept, (3) monitored by peers, and (4) dependent upon external circumstances was found to be particularly useful in accounting for the malleability of conventional behaviors and values and the formation of new adaptive ones among low-status people.

Adult basic education attempts to equip poor people with the knowledge, skills, and values to function adequately in society. Its purpose is to correct functional deficiencies by changing behaving-valuing patterns to conform to those of conventional society. The structure of the encounter in basic education is one of superior to inferior, of subject to object. From this perspective lower-class adaptive strategies are indicative of decadence, waste, and crass disregard for middle-class norms.

Low-status persons, on the contrary perceive their survival strategies to be reasonable and appropriate in view of their circumstances. Indeed research testifies to the self-enterprising, opportunistic, and creative character of lower-class behaving-valuing patterns. They generally attribute their poverty more to oppressive structures and only secondarily, if at all, to personal inadequacies.

The perspective of low-status persons with respect to basic education's purposes and structures is summarized

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in ten propositions. These in turn elicit five recommendations and several instrumental requirements for their implementation.

- A. THE PRINCIPAL FORM OF ENCOUNTER IN ADULT BASIC EDUCATION SHOULD BE ESSENTIALLY DIALOGIC IN CHARACTER.
- B. ADULT BASIC EDUCATION SHOULD FOCUS UPON THE CIRCUMSTANCES CONFRONTING LOWER-CLASS PEOPLE, UPON PATTERNS OF RESPONSE WHICH MIGHT BE FACILITATED THROUGH APPROPRIATELY DESIGNED CONTENT AND STYLE OF INSTRUCTION, AND THEN UPON SUCH INSTRUCTION.
- C. A MAJOR PORTION OF THE TRAINING PROVIDED FOR PROFESSIONAL ADULT BASIC EDUCATION PERSONNEL SHOULD CONSIST OF FIELD EXPERIENCE TO BOTH ORIENT, FAMILIARIZE, AND SENSITIZE THEM TO THE BEHAVING AND VALUING OF POTENTIAL CLIENTS AND EQUIP THEM TO FUNCTION IN THE DIALOGICAL ENCOUNTER.
- D. ADULT BASIC EDUCATION SHOULD HAVE CLOSE WORKING RELATIONSHIPS WITH ANTI-POVERTY PROGRAMS ATTEMPTING TO ALTER THE STRUCTURES PERPETUATING POVERTY, ESPECIALLY THOSE WITH CAREER OPPORTUNITY COMPONENTS.
- E. PARAPROFESSIONALS SHOULD BE MUCH MORE EXTENSIVELY UTILIZED IN ADULT BASIC EDUCATION.

David Louis Fogel

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David Louis Boggs

A THESIS

Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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1972

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DEDICATION

To my wife, Lucy, whose love, prayers, and encouragement have been the foundation for this study; and to my parents, Rita and John, whose expectations have always been worth fulfilling.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

From 1970-1972 the author served as a staff associate intern in an Adult Basic Education teacher-training project known as ENABEL (Extern Network of Adult Basic Education Leaders). In addition to its training mission the Project provided learning and livelihood to many graduate student interns. Several research studies, of which this is one, have been generated by ENABEL and are related in varying degrees to its training mission.

From his Chairman and ENABEL's Director, Professor Russell J. Kleis, the author received initial freedom to proceed with this investigation, confidence that it warranted the intensity of doctoral research, extensive interaction with respect to its implications for adult basic education, thorough editorial assistance, and example in dedication and personal sacrifice.

To Dr. J. Bruce Burke the author is indebted for scholarly guidance in the form of thoughtful and patient analysis of the issues and options raised in the course of this investigation. Generous portions of this committee member's time was the mortar holding both the study and its author together.

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Committee members Dr. Duane Gibson and Mr. Edmond Alchin contributed their respective experience, knowledge, and norms of scholarship. The author is grateful for their suggestions and personal interest.

Credit and thanks are due to Sandra Loiselle for prompt and accurate typing of the manuscript in its many stages of development. Her diligence and willingness to work overtime has greatly facilitated the progress of this study.

Chapter

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CHAPTER I

VALUING IN THE ADULT BASIC EDUCATION SETTING

Introduction

It has been observed that the kinds of solutions seen as appropriate to any problem bear a critical relation to the way in which the problem is defined in the first place. For example, Nazi Germany's "final solution to the Jewish problem" was essentially pre-determined by the way the "problem" was defined. In general an enterprise that is not closely regulated by a specific ideology is more likely to entertain a range of differing diagnoses and procedures.

The legislation formulating policy for adult basic education, as for other "war on poverty" programs, has been affected by two contending ideologies concerning the nature of the problem of poverty. There are those for whom the structural nature of the problem is paramount, that is, the opportunity structure in the society which arbitrarily locks out and admits individuals on the basis of criteria over which they have no control and which

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they are powerless to meet or effect. Changes in broad social policy, such as Civil Rights legislation, are the prescriptions implied in the structural diagnosis.

On the other hand there are those who feel that anti-poverty efforts should be concentrated on the functional disabilities of the individual person who is poor. Poverty according to the functional school is attributed to personal inadequacy. Its solutions lie in equipping the individual to function more effectively by removing his deficiencies. These are usually interpreted in terms of knowledge, skills, and values. It is the individual who is the object of functionally oriented programs. This rehabilitation or improvement of the individual has constituted the more traditional American answer to poverty.

Eliminating the functional disabilities of the poor seems to be at least one of the objectives of the Adult Education Act of 1966. This law calls for adult basic education

. . . with a view to making them (poor adults) less likely to become dependent on others, to improving their ability to benefit from occupational training and otherwise increasing their opportunities for more productive and profitable employment and to making them better able to meet their adult responsibilities.¹

¹P.L. 91-230, Title III, Amendments to the Adult Education Act of 1966, sec. 303, Definitions, Part C.

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Formulations such as the above law, that formally establish national policy cannot, and should not, be free of major value premises. On the contrary they incorporate very specific values which presumably reflect the mind of the electorate. Accordingly, engaging in productive and profitable employment, being relatively independent of others for one's personal livelihood, and meeting and accepting one's adult responsibilities are viewed as desirable, praiseworthy objectives, worthy of promotion by the provision of basic education supported by public funds.

The fundamental problem which surfaces in adult basic education and is indicative of the need for understanding the valuing processes of low-status persons is the apparent difference between the value premises of adult basic education teachers and those of their low-status students. The issue of discrepancy in values is broached, lamented, and described by several authors who address the problems involved in preparing teachers to work with disadvantaged adults. The reports of some recent adult basic education teacher-training institutes make reference to the problems arising in the instructional setting when the participants have different and conflicting cultural and value orientations from their middle-class mentors.

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For example, the proceedings of a Reading Institute in Arizona state:

An individual's cultural environment influences greatly his social values, attitudes, and goals. Undereducated adults, more likely than not, have a value system widely different from that of adults of the upper and middle classes. They frequently show indifference or even hostility toward social institutions, as for example, education.¹

After providing several caveats regarding classroom implications the report concludes this section:

Ways of behaving that are acceptable--even praiseworthy--in the home or neighborhoods of undereducated adults, are often unacceptable to middle class teachers. Offensive language, "immoral" ways of life, "acting out" behavior (breaking the law, violence) often make teachers critical--either openly or silently. This criticism sets up a serious barrier between teacher and student.²

An Ohio State University workshop report expressed the same concern:

The illiterate adult has other characteristics which will affect his ability to learn. His social values and goals differ widely from the upper and middle class values of his teachers and other school personnel. The undereducated adult will have a different value structure. . . .³

Co-authors, Freeman and Kassebaum, find different evidence for the existence of the same value-gap:

¹Adult Basic Education, Summer Reading Institute, Arizona State University (June 8 - July 10, 1970), p. 134. (Emphasis added.)

²Ibid., p. 142.

³Workshop in Adult Basic Education, Ohio State University, July, 1967, p. 32.

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The existence of a different value system among these persons is evidenced by the commonality of behavior which occurs when illiterates interact among themselves. Not only do they change from unexpressive and confused individuals, as they frequently appear in larger society, to expressive and understanding persons within their own group, but moreover they express themselves in institutionalized terms. Among themselves they have a universe of response. They form and recognize symbols of prestige and disgrace; evaluate relevant situations in terms of their own norms and in their own idiom; and in their inter-relations with one another, the mask of accommodative adjustment drops.¹

In a study which attempts to answer the question, "What kind of person should the teacher of adult illiterates be?", Pearce attests to the same general problem while providing a very positive model:

The effective teacher treats the student like an adult. . . . He does not condemn a point of view or a sense of values that are different than his own. Instead he tries to understand his adult students by recognizing the merits of their way of life, and he may be surprised to find that there are many.²

Reacting to the fact that many undereducated adults are drop-outs from or rejects of the traditional school system, other authors stress the need for an educational system that starts with and takes account of the adult as he is and the subcultural norms and

¹Howard Freeman and Gene G. Kassebaum, "The Illiterate in American Society: Some General Hypotheses," in Basic Education for the Disadvantaged (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin Company, 1966), p. 139.

²Frank C. Pearce, "Basic Education Teachers, Seven Needed Qualities," Adult Division, Modesto Junior College, Modesto, California (September, 1966), p. 8.

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values which he possesses. This approach, advocated by Ulmer, also in effect calls attention to the same general problem.

Whether he has grown tired of trying to meet the expectations of middle class America or has never been given the opportunity to learn about them, the uneducated person tends to move in a cultural subgroup which condones his standards of behavior and achievement. . . . He lives in his own world with its own set of values and attitudes. The main aspect of middle class life he aspires to is the acquisition of material comforts and conveniences.

Because the traditional school system casts out those who could not conform to it, it is the task of the new school to create an educational system for the adult--one that conforms to the student, his level of ability, his needs and his desires. Such a program must start where the student is, and it must help move him where he wants to be.¹

Similarly, Kaplan attests to class-value differences by endorsing the following position:

The claim that school personnel in general and programs for the disadvantaged specifically minimize potential non-middle class contributions and meritorious qualities in probably a fair appraisal.²

Both authors are ultimately interested in the task of preparing teachers to work effectively with this population. They contend that most of the social and cultural characteristics of the adult basic education student will make communication difficult in the classroom. In Ulmer's words:

¹Curtis Ulmer, Teaching the Disadvantaged Adult (Washington, D.C.: National Association for Public School Adult Education, 1969), p. 20.

²Bernard A. Kaplan, "Issues in Educating the Culturally Disadvantaged," Phi Delta Kappan, XLV (November, 1963), 75.

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The teacher will be called upon to remember and act upon everything he knows about the values and attitudes of the uneducated, in addition to everything he knows about his particular students. Only with this kind of background will he be equipped to understand otherwise inexplicable or even unacceptable behavior.¹

Unfortunately, much of the social science literature, presenting descriptions of the conditions and life-styles of the poor from the perspective of the non-ghetto resident, places responsibility for the schools' failure upon the students themselves. Annie Stein summarizes what she calls "this bucketful of insults" and cites relevant sources.² While these studies primarily

¹ Curtis Ulmer, op. cit., p. 26.

² Taken from Annie Stein, "Strategies for Failure," Harvard Educational Review, XLI, No. 2 (May, 1971), 187; Low Socio-economic, Low Educational Level, Lower-class: R. L. Green, et al., "Some Effects of Deprivation on Intelligence, Achievement, and Cognitive Growth," in Early Childhood Education Rediscovered, ed. by Joe L. Frost (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1968). (Summarizes five studies from 1922 to 1962 which show intelligence to increase with increasing socioeconomic status of the individual or his family.); Low Motivation for Educational Achievement, Passivity and Dullness: Clay V. Brittain, "Some Early Findings of Research on Preschool Programs for Culturally Deprived Children," Children, 13 (July-August, 1966), 130-34. (Children's Bureau, Welfare Administration, U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare.); Weak Self-Concepts, No Gratification Deferment: J. L. Frost and T. Rowland, "Cognitive Development and Literacy in Disadvantaged Children: A Structure-Process Approach," in Early Childhood Education Rediscovered, pp. 379; Overemphasis on Neatness, Cleanliness, and Obedience: N. E. Freeberg and D. T. Payne, "Parental Influence on Cognitive Development in Early Childhood: A Review," in Early Childhood Education Rediscovered, p. 253; Messy Homes, Breakfast Not Eaten Together: Ivor Kraft, "Learning How to Learn: Myth of Reality?" Journal of Negro Education, XXXIII (Fall, 1964), 390-95; Richard

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focus upon children they are illustrative of the ideological baggage with which middle-class teachers are encumbered concerning the poor.

Their families and they have low motivation for educational achievement, weak self-concepts, cannot defer gratification or plan for the future, have too many children, are unmarried, emphasize neatness, cleanliness, and obedience too much, have messy homes, do not eat breakfast together, are without hope, are passive and dull, lack curiosity, have no heritage of learning.

Their environment has a "certain grayness" and prevents the development of self-help, leadership, and community organization.

They are culturally deprived, disadvantaged, and education may rightly be considered as intervention for remedial purposes.¹

Bloom, et al., "Race and Social Class as Separate Factors Related to Social Environment," American Journal of Sociology, LXX (January, 1965), 471-76; Lack of Hope: Lee Rainwater, Behind Ghetto Walls (Chicago: Aldine Publishing Co., 1970). (This statement on pp. 409-10 contradicts Dr. Rainwater's own finding on p. 219 that the children are eager and highly motivated.); Insufficient Communicative Interaction, Repetitious, Dull, Colorless Language: J. L. Frost and T. Rowland, "Cognitive Development and Literacy in Disadvantaged Children: A Structure-Process Approach," in Early Childhood Education Rediscovered, pp. 376, 379; No Visual Stimulation Through "Artifacts," No Auditory Stimulation: Martin W. Deutsch, "Some Elements in Compensatory Education (unpublished manuscript, Institute for Development Study, Department of Psychiatry, N.Y. Medical College), p. 6; Environment "Noisy but Essentially Speechless": J. H. Martin, "A Model Program for Educationally Deprived Children," p. 2; Also Frost and Rowland, "Cognitive Development and Literacy in Disadvantaged Children: A Structure-Process Approach," p. 379; R. D. Hess and V. C. Shipman, "Early Experience and the Socialization of Cognitive Modes in Children," Child Development, XXXVI (December, 1965), 869-86.

¹Ibid., p. 182.

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Concern for the necessity of equipping teachers of disadvantaged adults with an understanding of the impoverished and their life-styles is evident in the syllabus of a teacher-training course designed for this very purpose.¹ The author is concerned with the labeling and stereotyping that conditions both society's and the individual's perception of himself. The adult basic educator, in Arkava's view, may be attempting the impossible:

To the extent that his role as a deviant is non-reversible in terms of other persons' definitions of his position in the culture, education may be ineffective in producing the desired changes, because although the changes may be effectively produced in the individual, his potential participation in the total parent culture in a non-deviant role may be restricted because of the pre-existent stereotyped views about his deviant position.²

For the most part the authors cited thus far have approached the problems posed by differences in lower and middle class valuing from the teachers' side of the chasm. If, however, as one authority maintains, "Adult Basic Education is concerned with what adults know, what they feel, what they believe, what they value, whom they trust, what they can do, and what they freely choose to do or

¹Morton L. Arkava, A Sociology of Impoverished Life Styles (Boulder, Colorado, June, 1970), 70 pp.

²Ibid., p. 58.

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not to do,"¹ then it would be well to approach the valuing process and its implications from the educationally handicapped adults' side as well.

Haggstrom offers this perspective:

That minority of persons from low income areas who do become better educated leave their friends and neighbors and families in order to enter someone else's life patterns. The object is wealth, autonomy, status in the larger society, better housing, and the price reluctantly paid is adoption of ways of behaving, patterns of interaction, styles of relationship, which are foreign and unattractive to those to whom the education is being extended.²

Haggstrom puts the problem in the context of senders and receivers of messages. He is particularly concerned with the unconscious messages which convey an assumption of dependence and powerlessness. In effect he fears that what the receiver, the unschooled adult, hears can be paraphrased as follows:

You are ignorant. You are stupid. You are inferior. You are worthless. Come to us. We are superior. We are educated. We are valuable. We will help you to become important and valuable and good and educated like us. Imitate us. Do not be like your friends. Do not be like your neighbors. They are ignorant and stupid too. Leave them and quit being like them. Come and be like us.³

¹Russell J. Kleis, "Extern Network of Adult Basic Education Leaders" (unpublished Federal proposal, April 9, 1971), p. 14.

²Warren C. Haggstrom, "Poverty and Adult Education," Adult Education, XV, No. 3 (Spring, 1965), 150.

³Ibid., 151.

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If the poor could reply and be heard their message would be to protest such assumptions about their inferiority. Mostly however they do not reply; they only withdraw.

Social class categories identified according to status levels of low, middle, and upper are based on several other factors besides education. Income and occupation are two additional and commonly considered factors which differentiate social classes in American life. Similarly differences over what people or groups of people consider important and to be valued can be discovered among the differentiated categories. The educational sphere, particularly adult basic education, seems to be one arena in which these differences not only surface, but have significant impact on the outcome of the whole enterprise.

Relationships Between Culture,
Values, and Basic Education

The books, journals, and workshop proceedings we have presented which focus on adult basic education have, to greater or lesser degree, addressed the problem of value differences. In doing so the authors appear to have made several assumptions concerning low-status persons which can be summarized as follows:

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- I. Valuing and behaving are directly related.
- II. Adults usually designated "low-status" on the basis of the commonly accepted indicants of income, occupation and education have, as a group, a different set of values from those not so designated.
- III. The valuing process originates in and is profoundly affected by the cultural setting in which it occurs.
- IV. Low-status people live and move within their own unique cultural setting.

In addition to the above four there are two further assumptions which relate the problem of valuing to the task confronting adult basic education, namely:

- V. Adult basic education has as its over-all objective to facilitate the growth and development of low-status persons.
- VI. The valuing processes of low-status persons have direct implications for professional practice in adult basic education.

An unresolved policy issue at all levels of decision-making in adult basic education (ABE) calls further for better understanding of the valuing processes of the culturally alienated lower-class who have proven

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least susceptible to ABE programs. The literature generally draws no distinctions between those whom ABE will include and those it will exclude. Yet the issue, given limited resources for ABE, is to distinguish the types of clientele that ABE programs should be allocating their resources and training their personnel to serve. One of two positions, as outlined by Mezirow,¹ is usually taken:

- (a) "Reaching the poorest": The basic premise of this position is that most adult basic education funds should be aimed at the poorest and least literate to help them become constructive members of society.
- (b) "Maximizing Services": Supporters of this position maintain that resources should be concentrated on those most likely to benefit from them, that is, those who are interested and readily participate in ABE programs.

Implicit in the debate and in the two categories of potential ABE clientele is the assumption, reinforced in practice as well as stated in theory, that the poorest and most alienated members of society pose very much

¹Jack Mezirow, Analysis and Interpretation of A.B.E. Experience in the Inner City: Toward a Theory of Practice in the Public Schools (New York: Teacher's College, Columbia University, Center for Adult Education, Annual Report, 1969, Section II), pp. 27-29.

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more difficult problems for professional ABE personnel than the upwardly mobile, middle-class-oriented clientele now being served.

As Mezirow's study of ABE concluded:

In a very real sense ABE programs are "creaming" operations. The very poorest are most likely to be excluded. Exclusion of persons less socialized to middle-class styles and school practices has advantages and disadvantages. The program is more likely to enjoy "success," teachers can handle students more easily, adult educational institutions will be able to avoid large scale change. But ABE cannot pretend to have developed an organization, administrative practices, or methods and materials relevant for any but a limited segment of its target population. To reach the hard core illiterate and the disillusioned high school dropout will require radical program innovations. . . .¹

In practice, as Mezirow attests, the issue is resolved, given intense pressures to maintain enrollments and continued funding, in favor of "maximizing services." ABE serves those who are most interested, easiest to reach and retain, and easiest to work with. These are not the low-status persons who have long ago concluded that conventional norms and rewards are hopelessly out of reach, leaving only creative adaptation in "deviant" behavior as an avenue for satisfying their needs. Needless to say, those middle-class agencies, especially schools, which emphasize the observance of their norms and attainment of their rewards, encounter both skepticism

¹ Ibid.

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and resistance from low-status persons and "reaching the poorest" is dramatically uncharacteristic of their ABE programs.

Therefore, the general adaptation of ABE methods, materials, and practices called for by Mezirow to reach and retain the socially most alienated adults requires a theoretical basis for solving the relational and attitudinal problems that surface in the educational setting. As has been asserted by others concerned with training for teachers and counselors of adults: "Training should proceed from the assumption that each ABE worker must be concerned with the knowing, feeling and doing of the adult students with whom he works."¹ This is to say that to be clear about what adults value and to see the implications for this valuing is of immense importance to adult basic education and increasingly so as the most easily socialized students are creamed off.

Statement of the Problem

The intent of and justification for this research is to extract from scholarly studies of the behaviors of low-status Americans a theoretical perspective for interpreting the behaving-valuing patterns of hard core illiterate adults. It is intended that the perspective will assist adult basic education professionals and those

¹Russell J. Kleis, op. cit., p. 14.

and the first of the two main groups of people who are considered to be the most important in the study of the social sciences are the people who are considered to be the most important in the study of the social sciences.

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who conduct pre-service and in-service training for them in adapting their programs and their behaviors to facilitating effective work with the low-status people not now being served.

The research on the life-styles of low-status people in American society has produced a near avalanche of data. Many significant studies have been conducted by teams comprised of sociologists, anthropologists, educators, and political scientists. Their work has generally been concentrated in public housing projects in major urban centers and in centers of job training for the hard core unemployed. Extending in some cases for as much as three to six years these studies have concentrated upon explaining the behavioral strategies devised by poor people for coping with their economic and social marginality in the face of a continuing drain on their personal, family, and interpersonal resources.

Our assumption is that a careful analysis of this research, focusing as it does upon the behaviors of poor Americans in the roles of parent, spouse, breadwinner, citizen, employee, neighbor, and friend, will yield significant insights into the valuing processes latent within and sometimes openly acknowledged in support of these behaviors.

From this "study of studies" it is expected that a theoretical perspective can be constructed to account

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for valuing among all social classes in general and the relationship between low status behaving and valuing in particular.

Where there is significant difference in interpretation on the part of researchers our task will be to present the evidence from contending schools of thought and to assess the relative support for each position. Those few studies which include not only a narration of data but also theoretical considerations underlying the data will be of particular significance to this investigation.

While our intention is to assess behaving and valuing in relation to basic education's purposes and the structure of encounters to further those purposes, the results of the study may also be applicable, it is hoped, to several forms of community development and community action in which valuing differences significantly affect both the processes and the outcomes.

The importance of attempting to formulate what is essentially a humanistic perspective is most eloquently phrased by Fantini and Weinstein:

Education in a free society should have a broad human focus, which is best served by educational objectives resting on a personal and interpersonal base and dealing with students' concerns. This belief rests on philosophical and moral grounds, but it also has plainly practical implications in

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terms of the price a society pays for negative social behavior--crime, discrimination, tensions and, ultimately, widespread pathology.¹

Doubtless, many components go into providing for successful interaction between adult students and professional educators in the choice and pursuit of educational objectives. From one standpoint the valuing dimension is only one segment affecting this interaction. Factors such as self-concept, motivation, mental health, professional competence, curriculum, instructional materials, family attitudes, peer-group influence, and others interrelate to affect the character of the ABE program. But from another standpoint, valuing as an activity engaged in by all participants impinges upon and influences to greater or lesser degree all other components. The valuing component gains in importance in direct proportion to the increased differences between potential ABE students and ABE mentors.

Conceptual Bases for the Study

The introductory statement outlining the general contour of the cultural and valuing dimension in adult basic education makes more precise formulation of these concepts imperative. Hence among our several purposes in the remainder of Chapter I are: (A) to explore the

¹Mario Fantini and Gerald Weinstein, Toward Humanistic Education: A Curriculum of Affect (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1970), p. 18.

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general concepts of "culture" and "value" and their interrelationships; (B) to explore fundamental concepts of the major schools of value theory; (C) to consider the origin, function, and attributes of the valuing process; and (D) to formulate operational definitions of key concepts.

Culture and Values

At the outset let it be acknowledged that there is no way of expressing the concept "culture" to everyone's satisfaction. The term is too widely employed and too broadly inclusive to be readily captured for thorough analysis. It is one of the most important concepts in contemporary social science and the humanities. It is a central concept in the disciplines on which we will rely most for interpretation, anthropology, and sociology.

Ultimately, most scholars of these two sciences concur with the humanist A. Lawrence Lowell's remarks about the problem:

I have been entrusted with the difficult task of speaking about culture. But there is nothing in the world more elusive. One cannot analyze it, for its components are infinite. One cannot describe it, for it is Protean in shape. An effort to encompass its meaning in words is like trying to seize the air in the hand, when one finds that it is everywhere except within one's grasp.¹

¹A. Lawrence Lowell, At War With Academic Traditions in America, quoted in A. L. Kroeber and Clyde Kluckhohn, Culture: A Critical Review of Concepts and Definitions, Papers of the Peabody Museum of American Archeology and Ethnology, XLVII, No. 1 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1952), 7.

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Precisely because of its extensive diffusion in the literature of so many disciplines, anthropologists Kroeber and Kluckhohn composed a definitive work on the culture concept, in which they attempted:

. . . to make available in one place for purposes of reference a collection of definitions by anthropologists, sociologists, psychologists, philosophers, and others. The collection is not exhaustive, but it perhaps approaches exhaustiveness for English and American social scientists of the past generation.¹

Interestingly enough for purposes of this research, the authors regard the meaning given the concept to be a matter of considerable practical importance in the handling of minority problems and dependent peoples, as well as in international relations.

These and other authors provide several categories of definitions of culture as well as several common synonyms which stress various aspects of its meaning. For example, definitions may be categorized as:

Group A: Descriptive.--Broad definitions with emphasis on enumeration of the content of culture.

Group B: Historical.--Emphasis on social heritage or tradition.

Group C: Normative.--Emphasis on rules, norms, ideals, or values, plus behavior.

¹A. L. Kroeber and Clyde Kluckhohn, Culture: A Critical Review of Concepts and Definitions, Papers of the Peabody Museum of American Archeology and Ethnology, XLVII, No. 1 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1952), 6.

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Group D: Psychological.--Emphasis on adjustment, on culture as a problem-solving device, on learning and habits.

Group E: Structural.--Emphasis on patterning or organization of culture.

Group F: Genetic.--Emphasis on culture-producing ideas, symbols, and artifacts.

And yet, what gives significance to any definition, or group of them, of culture is that which makes culture intelligible, namely, values, since the actual organization of all cultures is primarily in terms of their values. As Kroeber and Kluckhohn observe:

This becomes apparent as soon as one attempts to present the picture of a culture without reference to its values. The account becomes an unstructured, meaningless assemblage of items having relation to one another only through co-existence in locality and moment--an assemblage that might as profitably be arranged alphabetically as in any other order; a mere laundry list.¹

Not only their structure but also their relativity or variability is best understood in terms of values. This means that cultures are differently weighted in terms of their values so that true understanding of cultures involves true recognition of their particular value systems. This interpretive characteristic of values takes on possible added significance in light of increased

¹Ibid., p. 341.

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recognition among social scientists and the popular media of various minority cultures within our society. Michael Harrington's focus on The Other America brought to everyone's attention what anthropologists, as represented by Keesing, have consistently maintained over time:

Anthropologists do recognize a distinctive American culture, with numbers of basic elements of action and value which are shared by all persons trained to this tradition. But even when we talk of an American culture as a whole it is also clear that it encompasses many varying traditions (for example, New England, Deep South, rural Midwest, Pennsylvania Dutch, etc.). . . . The system that is American culture has within it numerous more specific cultural systems which may become significant for study according to the problems under investigation.¹

It is clear that social scientists have recently been giving increased importance to values as a key and tool for investigating the inner meaning and pattern behind cultural behavior. In Keesing's words:

Since about 1941, special emphasis has been shown in social anthropology in the study of the value dimensions of cultural behavior. "Values" are affectively (emotionally) charged tendencies to action which involve preferences, and often conscious choices among alternatives. . . . Lines of study, in which anthropologists have been joining forces notably with philosophers, include the location of "basic" or "focal" values which provide central and powerful motivations of behavior; the role of values in shaping choices under dynamic conditions, leading to persistence or change in culture.²

¹Felix M. Keesing, Cultural Anthropology (New York: Rinehart and Company, 1960), p. 26.

²Ibid., p. 161.

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As will be seen later the poverty literature specifically addresses the question of the dynamic conditions affecting poor people and the role of values in the face of these conditions.

For the time being we have limited ourselves to illustrating the symbiotic relationship which scholars see existing between culture and the integrating premises or values which give it unity and allow us to interpret its form or structure. However, besides this all-embracing interpretive function, values have their own unique place and character as a separate component within the structure of any culture.

Culture as a personal attribute is defined in one of the earliest and most often quoted formulations by the English anthropologist, E. B. Taylor in 1871 as, "That complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society."¹

Specifically, Bierstedt sees values, or what he calls ideologies, as occupying a niche and forming a link between what men think and what they do and serving as a motivator and evaluator of both.

When we are presented with an idea, we are likely to ask whether it is true or false. When we are presented with a norm, a way of doing things, we are

¹E. B. Taylor, Primitive Culture, as quoted in Robert Bierstedt, The Social Order (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1957), p. 105.

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likely to inquire whether it is "right" or "wrong," or "good" or "bad," or "efficient" or "inefficient." In some cases, however, we raise these questions about ideas too. We want to know not only are they true or false, but also whether they are good or bad. Ideas that are evaluated in this way are what we should call ideologies. More precisely, an ideology is an idea supported by a norm. We are encouraged to believe it, not because it is true, but because such belief is regarded as right and proper in our society.¹

What Bierstedt represents as a conscious reflective process may, and often probably does, occur subconsciously, routinely, with little or no reflection. A cautionary note needs to be made. While it is apparent that all societies exert pressure upon their members to adhere to certain tenets, certain value positions, or at the very minimum to comply with them while inwardly dissenting, the relationship posed by Bierstedt and others between values or "ideologies" and behavior is not a smoothly flowing and fully predictable sequence of cause and effect. Any one person can, and usually does, hold a bundle of conflicting values whose presence is evident from observing behaviors and whose unique combinations may be variously expressed. Nevertheless, the strong influence of certain value preferences in our society cannot be denied. The basis for such influence may itself be buried in unchallenged assertions, historically formed and culturally sustained.

¹Robert Bierstedt, The Social Order, p. 149.

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Whether they are the result of timeless pacific possession or of the most recent anguished formulation such value preferences are integral and essential elements in every culture, the mortar which gives society its character. In effect, the social scientists quoted here, representing high levels of consensus within their disciplines, have confirmed a fundamental assumption in adult basic education teacher preparation, namely, that a close relationship exists between a culture and its values. Whether or not, or to what extent, low-status populations evidence unique valuing patterns, and whether or not their valuing is the result of distinct cultural origins are questions to be considered in analyzing the literature that focuses on the poverty problem. Antecedent to these questions however, it is essential to this investigation that the major philosophies of value theory and their primary conceptual problems be considered. Our review of the literature proceeds with this objective as a fundamental prerequisite to an understanding of the valuing process.

Fundamental Tenets of Value Theories

Current literature in the behavioral sciences and philosophy bears witness to the variety of ways in which the subject of values can be approached. The

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In Albert's terms:

By some accounts, values are virtually coextensive with all of culture, if not all of human behavior; to study values is then to study everything. By others, the vagueness and ambiguity of the notion signify its utter meaninglessness; to study values is then to study emotive nonsense.¹

Little wonder then that treatises which take valuing as a basis for theoretical formulations to explain human behavior seem to push or goad their advocates into the polar positions of skepticism or dogmatism. John Dewey summarizes the tenets of the two extremes:

A skeptically inclined person viewing the present state of discussion of valuing and values might find reason for concluding that a great ado is being made about very little, possibly about nothing at all. For the existing state of discussion shows not only that there is a great difference of opinion about the proper theoretical interpretation to be put upon facts, which might be a healthy sign of progress, but also that there is great disagreement as to what the facts are to which theory applies, and indeed whether there are any facts to which a theory of values can apply. For a survey of the current literature of the subject discloses that views on the subject range from the belief, at one extreme, that so-called "values" are but emotional epithets or mere ejaculations, to the belief, at the other extreme, that a priori necessary standardized, rational values are the principles upon which art, science, and morals depend for their validity. And between these two conceptions lie a number of intermediate views.²

¹ Ethel M. Albert, "The Classification of Values: A Method and Illustration," American Anthropologist, LVIII (April, 1956), 243.

² John Dewey, Theory of Valuation (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1939), p. 1.

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The problems and controversies have not diminished interest in and anxiety over the subject of values. There are several reasons for heightened inquiry into the value dimension of human existence. Among them are: (1) a reaction against the 19th century objectivism of science, which virtually eliminated the subject and recognized no value but empirically established "truth" (or the "verifiable"); (2) the tragic character of contemporary history which calls in question, very peremptorily, the meaning and value of existence; (3) the strong influence of Nietzsche, with his fierce criticism of accepted values; (4) renewed interest in minority peoples, cultural heterogeneity and the concomitant phenomenon of value differences.

While we can outline the tenets of the various principal types among the philosophies of values it is important and germane to the research problem we are addressing to remember the existential or the "what is" character of values. That is, we are primarily interested in the valuing processes from the point of view of the evaluating subject. This concern for the dynamics of valuing is aptly expressed by Castell:

We need to recognize that valuing or coming to value is an activity which persons perform. It is something to do, not something that happens to you. Hence as an activity it is a verb with derivatives: to value, valuing, valuer, and valuable. This way of speaking postpones using "value" as a noun or an adjective.

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It also avoids the problems of skepticism and dogmatism. "I value" is a Cartesian-like beginning; and like the cogito, it invites an ergo.¹

If we begin by recognizing that valuing is an activity which all persons perform, we can go on from there to pose several propositions that may be useful to consider: They value this and that. They value this more than that. They value this for itself, but that as a means to something else. At one time they valued this, but now they value that. You can get them to value this more readily than that. More people value this than that. Why do you value this and not that? How can you value this if you value that?

None of the above statements implies any skepticism or dogmatism. In this vein Paul Tillich takes issue with those philosophers who desire the luxury of an absolutist or "what ought-to-be" starting point in the matter of values. He finds the subjective and relative character of values to be a fact of life. His contention is that values are not discovered; rather they are invented in the day-to-day business of living. Concerning others' objections he states:

They are unaware of the fact that the concept of value in its original meaning is related to a valuating subject, and it becomes impossible to escape the conclusion that a theory of values cannot be

¹Alburey Castell, "Response to Harry S. Broudy," in Educational Administration--Philosophy in Action, ed. by R. E. Olm and W. C. Monahan (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1965), p. 55.

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more than a theory of actual valuation. In order to escape this consequence, they speak of basic values, or they speak of a priori and the absolute character of the ultimate values. They interpret the psychological and sociological conditions of valuating as mere channels through which the objective values enforce our acknowledgement. By this interpretation, values are not invented but discovered.¹

While we are first and foremost interested in the actual day-in and day-out value preferences, the "what is" or present dimension of values among low-status populations, our ultimate concern lies with practice and policy in adult basic education. That is, ultimately, for us the "what is" character of lower class valuing must be related to the design and conduct of adult basic education.

Every treatise concerned with determining standards or norms to which human behavior ought to conform, the values human beings ought to cherish and strive to attain, is ultimately based, first, on some specific conception of what man is, some form of philosophical anthropology, and secondly, on some method of acquiring knowledge about reality.

Summarizing a symposium of scholars whose primary interest is in human values Walter Weisskopf identified three different approaches to values, based on three

¹Paul Tillich, "Is a Science of Human Values Possible?" in New Knowledge in Human Values, ed. by Abraham Maslow (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1959), p. 191.

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different models of thought or images of man. They are: the naturalist, the humanist, and the ontological approach:

The Naturalist image of man emerges from the application of the natural sciences, especially physics, to the study of man. Its implicit concept of reality is limited to the facts of the world as presented to us by the five senses. . . . Values are considered as a lower type of reality and require factual verification by the senses to be real.¹

In this view survival is the chief standard according to which human behavior should be judged or evaluated. Values are derived from life, from nature, from human existence.

The naturalists, among whom can be numbered G. E. Moore, Robert S. Hartman, and Henry Margenau, while limiting their consideration of values to scientific empirical observation also make a distinction between factual and normative values. Margenau expresses the difference this way:

Factual values are observable preferences, appraisals, and desires of concrete people at a given time; normative values are the ratings . . . which people ought to give to value objects. . . . In a vague way, a normative value is like a law of nature--idealized, lofty, and universal. A factual value is like an observation--primary, ubiquitous, and particular.²

¹Walter A. Weisskopf, "Comment," in New Knowledge in Human Values, ed. by Abraham Maslow, p. 199.

²Henry Margenau, "The Scientific Basis of Value Theory," in New Knowledge in Human Values, ed. by Abraham Maslow, p. 39.

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Establishing unity between the two forms of values, factual and normative, is a difficult enough task without the added restriction of admitting only evidence drawn from observations of physical phenomena.

The humanist on the other hand, transcends the sensory based, biological facts of human existence, and finds norms for human behavior in the unifying and normative principles in the human self.

The Humanist image is based on a different method of acquiring knowledge, which can be called a holistic one. It takes into account the totality of human experience, including not only the facts of the sensory order but the inner experiences, the results of imagination, fantasy, and thought.¹

Maslow's concept of self-actualization is perhaps the best example of this school. Values, for Maslow, are based on an innate tendency of an organ system to express itself, to function in a harmonious, integrated, satisfying manner that is psychologically healthy.

The problem with the humanists is how to establish a normative criterion for what is healthy. A criterion of a higher logical order seems to be needed to discriminate between good and bad tendencies.

The Ontologists find this more ultimate norm within the essence of human nature itself. They contend:

Values are derived from the essential structure of being. In human existence the essence of being is found in its distorted form; but being itself

¹Weisskopf, *op. cit.*, p. 200.

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contains the eidos, the essence of things and persons. This eidos is more than a mere logical concept. The ideatic element of being cannot be grasped merely through factual observation, nor through logical conceptualization, but only through intuition of the essence.¹

Paul Tillich is an outstanding representative of this school. For Tillich, the eidos is part of the essential nature of being; it is rooted in being itself; it has an objective, unconditioned existence. It can be grasped, not by logic and factual observation alone, but by intuition, by ontological reason which grasps being itself. He writes:

Values are autonomous (normative) because they are rooted in man's essential being. They have a command and imperative character because the moral law is man's . . . essential nature appearing as commanding authority.²

He contends that the imperative, command nature of values stems from the estranged state of existence in which man finds himself. If man were united with himself and his essential being, there would be no command; but man is estranged from himself, and the values he experiences appear as laws, natural and positive laws, demanding, threatening, promising.³

Weisskopf contends that it may not be too far-fetched to identify essence as used by the ontologists with the self-actualization of the psychological humanists.

¹Ibid., p. 217.

²Tillich, op. cit., p. 195.

³Ibid.

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What is being actualized is not certain isolated trends of the human organism but a well-rounded entity, a Gestalt, an essence. This entity does not include any and every drive and tendency present in human beings. It encompasses only those traits that are essentially human. Human existence and human essence are not identical, but human existence is related to human essence in being, and not only in the form of the hypothetical connection of an "ought to." Human essence forms a holistic Gestalt in which the totality of what is human is included, but without its distortion in actual existence. It has the character of a Platonic idea and is related to existence in the same way in which the eidos is related to its specific realizations--e.g., the eidos of a circle to actually drawn circles. The striving for self-realization can be interpreted as the striving for the realization of human essence.¹

It is important, however, for our perspective to review and to emphasize that the individual himself decides how to value, that valuing is an activity originating in an individual who views some behaviors and some guiding principles of behavior as contributing more, in Maslow's terms, to some levels of human need, than others. It might yield added insight to examine the characteristic attributes of valuing as found in low-status populations for what seems to contribute to the meeting of needs at each of the various levels from survival to self-actualization.

The thrust of this research, however, clearly is not to formulate theoretical notions of the meaning of human essence or the relationship between valuing and the realization of man's essential nature. These concerns constitute yet another perspective on values, namely,

¹Weisskopf, op. cit., p. 221.

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their nature and their relation to being. Rather, it is the particular concern of this study to closely examine the actual valuing activity of low-status persons as this activity is affected by the circumstances of poverty.

The Valuing Process: Its
Origin and Attributes

The contemporary range of philosophies of valuing encompasses consideration of various problems among which there are degrees of relevance to the focus of this research. A complete system of value theory would include discussion of:

. . . their nature, their relation to being, their priority or dependence with regard to the value-judgement, to the tendencies or feelings of the subject, individual or social, their classification, their hierarchy (hierarchy of different classes of values and hierarchy within each class); the various relationships between them, their combinations and reciprocal influences; their origin in conscience and in history; their evolution, their decline and the laws of such processes.¹

The questions of hierarchy, of relationships, combinations, and reciprocal influences are of particular import since these relate to the issues of central versus peripheral values, and the possibility of value change which directly concerns the educational system. Implicit in the hierarchy problem is the whole question of the relationship between values and behavior. Our consideration

¹Joseph de Finance, "Value," *Sacramentum Mundi: An Encyclopedia of Theology*, VI, ed. by Karl Rahner (New York: Herder and Herder, 1970), p. 331.

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of these issues presupposes some precision with regard to our understanding of the essential nature of values. Hence we begin with the search for a generic definition which is applicable to every species of value, whether moral or aesthetic, relative or universal. The problem in arriving at such a generic understanding is attributable not only to the multiplicity of values that are held, but also to the fact that many of them are held in opposition. How can there be a common nature between that which for a particular man is good and what, from the same man's point of view, is no good?

Some fundamental insights into the problem of meaning for all species of value are offered by Dewitt Parker who limits the concern to intrinsic value, not with value as a means or an instrument. For example, we are not concerned with the value attributed to a flute as a thing but with the value of playing or listening to it. He writes:

Now the primary insight into intrinsic values is that they belong to activities or experiences. These alone, are properly speaking, values. Things may be called "good," but only because they contribute something to experiences. They are valuables, not values. For example, a diamond may be called good or beautiful and may be said to have great value, but it possesses its value only in the seeing and enjoying of it. When not seen or enjoyed its beauty or value (in Aristotelian language) is merely potential, not actual.¹

¹Dewitt H. Parker, The Philosophy of Value (New York: Greenwood Press, 1968), p. 6.

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In addition, however, to being an activity or experience, there must be a value factor, something determining the experience as good or bad, positive or negative. Hence the following definition of value leaves specificity regarding this qualifier to be desired.

In contemporary philosophy value is defined as: that which is or makes something desirable, attractive, worthy of approval, admiration, etc.; that which inspires feelings, judgements, or attitudes of esteem, commendation; that which is useful in view of common ends.¹

What this "something" is, this quality which inspires esteem or makes an experience desirable, is not specified. This factor or quality would seem to be something of many names: satisfaction, (a neutral term) and pleasure or joy (colorful terms). Common to all valuing is the notion of satisfaction. Satisfactions however, most frequently, perhaps always, occur as assuagements of desire, as fulfilling of need, or as realization of desirable goals or plans. Therefore, satisfaction and desire are closely related and should both be included in any definition of value. Parker offers this caution:

However, when value is defined as the objective of desire, we mean the satisfying activity that realizes the goal idea or objective. A careful scrutiny may show that the objective of desire is always a satisfying activity or passivity. It certainly is not a thing. For example, a man wants

¹ Joseph de Finance, "Values," Sacramentum Mundi: An Encyclopedia of Theology, p. 331.

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a house to live in it or to sell it. If by "object" we mean either a thing which is a mere means to the assuagement of desire, or even a thing so intimately related to desire that it participates in its assuagement, as a house when we live in it, then an object is neither the goal or objective of desire nor value itself.¹

We can further clarify value by distinguishing between the objective of desire as what we have in mind as its goal, and the realization of the goal so conceived. Not the goal itself, but the realization is what constitutes value.

The subjectivity of values, the fact that what is good, what assuages desire is completely individual, is the most common basis for objection to assuming the existence of a generic definition for value. Yet even though there is a certain individuality belonging to the values of each person, they all still are satisfactions of desire and hence have the same generic substance.

Rokeach has presented his formulations of the concept of value in the context of a comparison of values and attitudes. He concedes that the study of social attitudes has occupied a dominant place in the theory and research of social psychology. Several considerations, however, have led Rokeach to place the value concept ahead of the attitude concept in central importance. These reasons are significant in the light of this research effort:

¹Parker, *op. cit.*, p. 10.

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First, value seems to be a more dynamic concept since it has a strong motivational component as well as cognitive, affective, and behavioral components. Second, while attitude and value are both widely assumed to be determinants of social behavior, value is a determinant of attitude as well as of behavior. Third, if we further assume that a person possesses considerably fewer values than attitudes, then the value concept provides us with a more economical analytic tool for describing and explaining similarities and differences between persons, groups, nations, and cultures.¹

In addition, the author adds that several disciplines share a common concern with the antecedents and consequents of value organization and value change. He draws an interesting conclusion regarding one consequence of preferring the attitude over the value variable in past studies:

Bypassing the problem of values and their relation to attitudes, we settled perhaps a bit too hastily for studies that I shall call problems of persuasion to the neglect of what I shall call problems of education and re-education. We emphasized the persuasive effects of group pressure, prestige, order of communication, role-playing, and forced compliance on attitudes, but we neglected the more difficult study of the more enduring effects of socialization, educational innovation, psychotherapy, and cultural change on values.²

What specifically is the difference between the two concepts? Rokeach reviews the literature. For some,

¹Milton Rokeach, Beliefs, Attitudes, and Values (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, Inc., 1968), p. 157.

²Ibid., p. 158.

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such as Campbell¹ and Jones and Gerard² they are synonymous because both attitude and value have valence, both constitute an agenda for action. To many others, a value is seen to be a disposition of a person just like an attitude, but more basic than an attitude, often underlying it.

Rokeach defines an attitude as:

. . . an organization of several beliefs focused on a specific object (physical or social, concrete or abstract) or situation, predisposing one to respond in some preferential manner. Some of these beliefs about an object or situation concern matters of fact and others concern matters of evaluation. An attitude is thus a package of beliefs consisting of interconnected assertions to the effect that certain things about a specific object or situation are true or false and other things about it are desirable or undesirable.³

In distinguishing between object and situation a significant insight has been added, one to be followed out more thoroughly as we proceed. The point is made that a preferential response toward an object cannot occur in a vacuum. It must necessarily be elicited within the context of some social situation about which we also have attitudes. For instance, an attitude that is favorable to education can be significantly altered in

¹D. T. Campbell, "Social Attitudes and Other Acquired Behavioral Dispositions," in Psychology: A Study of Science, ed. by S. Koch (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1963), pp. 94-172.

²E. E. Jones and H. B. Gerard, Foundation of Social Psychology (New York: Wiley, 1967).

³Milton Rokeach, Beliefs, Attitudes, and Values, p. 159.

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the context of higher school taxes. A person's social behavior is always mediated by at least two types of attitudes--one type of attitude activated by the object, the other type of attitude activated by the situation. Behavior becomes a function of the interaction between the two types of "galaxies" of attitudes. This will become more significant as we consider the circumstances or situations encountered by low-status populations.

Values, on the other hand, are the underlying determinants of both attitudes and behavior. Rather than being tied to any specific situation or object, Rokeach, building on the work of Lovejoy,¹ sees values as abstract ideals representing a person's beliefs about ideal modes of conduct and ideal end-states of existence.

Rokeach and Parker are not so different in their conception of value as might at first seem to be the case. Both stress the element of satisfaction or what is personally and socially preferable as essential to the nature of value. Rokeach observes that:

To say that a person "has a value" is to say that he has an enduring belief that a specific mode of conduct or end-state of existence is personally and socially preferable to alternate modes of conduct or end-states of existence. Once a value is internalized it becomes, consciously or unconsciously, a standard or criterion for guiding action, for developing and maintaining attitudes toward relevant objects and situations, for justifying one's own and

¹A. O. Lovejoy, "Terminal and Adjectival Values," Journal of Philosophy, XLVII (1950), 593-608.

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others' actions and attitudes, for morally judging self and others, and for comparing self with others. Finally, a value is a standard employed to influence the values, attitudes, and actions of at least some others--our children's, for example.¹

This conception is also in substance highly compatible with those advanced by social scientists such as Kluckhohn,² Brewster Smith,³ and Williams.⁴

Briefly, the differences between attitudes and values can be paraphrased from Rokeach as follows: while an attitude represents several beliefs focused on a specific object or situation, a value is a single belief that transcendentally guides actions and judgments and attitudes across specific objects and situations, ultimately toward some preferred end-state of existence; also, a value, unlike an attitude, is an imperative to action, that is, it consists of not only a belief but also a motivation to seek the preferable, finally, a

¹ Milton Rokeach, Beliefs, Attitudes, and Values, p. 160.

² Clyde Kluckhohn, "Values and Value Orientations in the Theory of Action," in Toward a General Theory of Action, ed. by T. Parsons and E. A. Shils (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1951).

³ M. Brewster Smith, "Personal Values in the Study of Lives," in The Study of Lives, ed. by R. W. White (New York: Atherton Press, 1963).

⁴ Robin Williams, "Values," in International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences (New York: Macmillan, 1968).

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value, unlike an attitude, is a standard or yardstick to guide action, attitudes, comparisons, evaluations, and justifications of self and others.

With the exception of a few scholars, such as sociologists Blake and Davis¹ who reject positing a close relationship between values and behavior, most students of value tend to substantiate the implicit assumption previously extracted from adult basic education literature that the two activities are closely related. The familiar distinction in the philosophical literature on values, cast by Rokeach and others in the terminology of instrumental and terminal values which indicate preferable modes of conduct and end-states of existence, certainly lends support to the notion of a close relationship between valuing and behaving.

In fact the very definition of value as the assuagement of desire presupposes some satisfying activity or behavior that realizes the goal or objective. As was stated previously, not the goal itself, but the realization is what constitutes value. There must however, be some form of behavior for realization to take place. Hence values have a valence or vector factor which is most clearly evident in expressions of value or value

¹Judith Blake and Kingsley Davis, "Norms, Values, and Sanctions," in Handbook of Modern Sociology, ed. by Robert E. L. Faris (Chicago: Rand McNally and Company, 1964), pp. 456-84.

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judgments. In this respect Parker states that, "Expressions of value are directed (vectorial) currents of feeling, forces tending toward goals, which overflow into expressive media."¹ The vectorial currents of feelings and their media of expression as found among low-status populations will be of particular significance for this research effort.

One final concept for which some definition is desirable is that of a "value system" or "value orientation." The necessity for such a concept arises from real-life situations which confront a person and in which he cannot behave in a manner congruent with all of his values. The situation may activate two or more values in conflict with one another. Examples are plentiful: a person may have to choose between behaving passionately or behaving competently, but not both; between behaving in his own best self-interest or that of another, but not both; between a comfortable life and a life of dedication without the luxury of comfort. Operationally speaking, since the concept of a value system suggests a rank ordering of values along a continuum of importance, a person's value system represents . . . "A learned organization of rules for making choices and for resolving conflicts--between two or more modes

¹Dewitt Parker, The Philosophy of Value, p. 203.

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of behavior or between two or more end-states of existence."¹ Our interest will be with those learned patterns of behavior for resolving conflicts that are characteristic of low-status persons and the valuing process underlying those behaviors.

Summary, Forecast, and Definitions of Key Concepts

The literature reviewed thus far has consisted of philosophical and anthropological sources from which we have drawn an appreciation for the symbiotic relationship between culture and values, an overview of various value theories, and definitions for the meaning of values and the valuing process.

Most significantly it has demonstrated that valuing is an experience shared universally; it has as its end the realization of some goal in terms of satisfaction of some need or assuagement of some desire. Valuing then is a generic concept representing a process that is rooted in fundamental human needs or desires. The process has the same general character even among very dissimilar persons. The introductory statement, however, illustrating differences in value orientation between lower- and middle-class persons as they are manifested in the adult basic education setting, implies

¹Milton Rokeach, Beliefs, Attitudes, and Values, p. 161.

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products of the valuing process that are not universal but rather unique to individuals and generally discriminated by social strata.

Chapter II will explore the literature which examines the relationship between behaviors and values and socio-economic status. Particular attention will be given to those sources which apply theoretical principles to such issues as: (1) the significance of conventional norms among low-status persons, (2) cultural and situational explanations for differences in values and behaviors by socio-economic status, and (3) the impact on the valuing process of anomic behaviors and the search for valued self-identity among low-status persons. The precise dimensions of the problem to which this study addresses itself emerge from a fuller understanding of those forces which influence the behaving and valuing patterns of the poor.

For purposes of clarity and consistency the pivotal concepts and terms to be employed in this study are defined as follows:

Adult Basic Education.--originally intended for adults or out-of-school youth with less than five years of schooling, then extended twice to include such persons with less than twelve years of schooling, it is education to correct functional deficiencies in terms of knowledge, skills, and values in order to make adults less dependent

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on others, to improve their ability to benefit from occupational training, to increase their opportunities for more productive and profitable employment, and to equip them to better meet their adult responsibilities.

Acculturation.--the process of learning and adopting the behaviors and values of the dominant society as the socially acceptable means for the resolution of human needs.

Assimilation.--the process of gaining access to and participating in the institutions of society from which resources necessary for practicing behaviors and observing norms are obtained.

Values.--judgments of worth intimately related to the experience of satisfaction of needs or assuagement of desires. An experience of satisfaction based upon realization of an objective and, for purposes of this study, best expressed in verb form--valuing, valued.

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CHAPTER II

BEHAVING AND VALUING AMONG LOW-

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Distinguishing Characteristics

The term "low-status populations" has been carefully chosen for this study because of its relative freedom from the value-charged ideological overtones that pervade so many attempts to designate those who are poor. These attempts most commonly use terms that fall into one of four categories. Walter Miller supplies the contents:

The first category selects one out of the many related characteristics of low-skilled laboring class life, couches it in evaluative terms, and uses it to represent the totality. For example: the Impoverished (low income), the Underclass, (subordinancy), the Dependent (income supplementation). The second characterizes the population with reference to a valued characteristic of an unspecified comparison population. For example: the Underprivileged (fewer privileges than ?), the Disadvantaged (fewer advantages than ?), the Deprived (of ?). The third is predicated on a judgment that low-status people are "outsiders" with reference to a postulated "inside" society. For example: the Dispossessed, the Rejects, the Disowned, the Disenfranchised. The fourth category

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represents simple expressions of value centering around worthlessness, lack of merit, contemptibility. For example: riff-raff, trash, the lumpenproletariat.¹

"Low-status populations" serves as a more neutral and concise descriptive term to designate those who occupy the lowest level of the social pyramid, as measured by education, by occupational rank, and by command over economic resources. A larger macrosociological question to be addressed by all of those concerned with this population is the height and permeability of the barrier that sets them off from the rest of society.

"Low status" and "lower class" will be used interchangeably in this study because of their identical connotations in the literature. These terms, however, are not universally accepted by all scholars as sufficiently free of pejorative connotations. For instance, S. M. Miller has another preference.

The poor are frequently referred to, following the lead of sociologists, as "lower class." For a variety of reasons, I am avoiding this designation. First, it has a negative connotation which an analytic term, at least, should avoid. Second, it is not a term that people use to designate themselves.²

¹Walter Miller, "The Elimination of the American Lower Class as National Policy: A Critique of the Ideology of the Poverty Movement of the 1960's," in On Understanding Poverty, ed. by Daniel Moynihan (New York: Basic Books, Inc., Publishers, 1968), p. 269.

²S. M. Miller, "The 'New' Working Class," in Blue-Collar World, ed. by Arthur B. Shostak and William Gomberg (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1964), p. 5.

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Miller refers here to a study of social class identification in which Centers¹ made an important discovery by offering people four choices for designating their social class (upper, middle, working, and lower class) rather than three (upper, middle, and lower). In Center's investigation, a slight majority of the total American population called themselves "working class" and an overwhelming proportion of the manual workers chose this term.

Hence, Miller prefers to refer to the poor as the "new" working class. However, by and large, the population under discussion, regardless of a given author's designation, is made up of people who are unskilled, who, with disproportionate frequency are members of a minority group, in low-wage service and nonunionized industries in the marginal economy of present-day United States.

As far as the definition of poverty is concerned, the anthropologist Charles Valentine, offers a generic formulation when he says, "poverty is a condition of being in want of something that is needed, desired, or generally recognized as having value."²

¹Richard Centers, The Psychology of Social Classes (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1949).

²Charles A. Valentine, Culture and Poverty (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968), p. 12.

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The idea of poverty is, above all, a comparative concept in relation to a variety of quantitative and qualitative criteria which change as societies and cultures change. The central significance or essence of poverty is inequality or relative deprivation. In the contemporary United States this inequality is not merely a lack of material wealth. Other objects of need or desire, and hence agreed to be of value, and with respect to which there is relative deprivation, include jobs, education, and political power.

More specific definitions of poverty and the impoverished point to what is still an unresolved issue in current literature and policy discussions. There is as yet no agreement as to what constitutes minimum adequacy of goods, services, and resources, nor as to how many Americans can be considered poor. Blum and Rossi contend that the disagreement can be expected to continue indefinitely for two reasons:

- (1) Because no index and no cutting point will do everything that every party to the dispute would desire, and (2) because social change will not acquiesce in the preservation of any index.¹

There is general agreement in much of contemporary research on the lower class. In general, almost all studies of life among this social stratum find that

¹Zahava D. Blum and Peter H. Rossi, "Social Class Research and Images of the Poor," in On Understanding Poverty, ed. by Daniel Moynihan, p. 349.

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aspirations toward the norms and values of the dominant group is a universal phenomenon, though poverty and other barriers interfere with achieving them.

M. G. Smith classifies societies into three basic types, depending on their degree of institutional diversity: (1) the homogeneous society, the members of which share a single system of institutions; (2) the heterogeneous society, in which members practice differing styles of alternatives to one basic institutional system; and (3) the plural society, the segments of which constitute distinct cultural groups practicing radically different institutional systems and held together only through the dominant power of one of the groups in the society.¹ If we accept Smith's classification then the United States is a good example of a heterogeneous society. Insofar as their values and behavior patterns differ from those of the dominant middle-class majority, low-status groups in the United States generally may be said to practice a stylistic variation on a basic institutional system common to the entire society rather than to represent a separate cultural section.

¹M. G. Smith, The Plural Society in the British West Indies (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1965), pp. 80-88; Helen Icken Safa, Profiles in Poverty: An Analysis of Social Mobility in Low-Income Families (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Youth Development Center, 1966), p. 2.

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There is disagreement on this, of course, formulated chiefly by the "culture of poverty" school. However, it would appear, from an overwhelming array of research on nearly every facet of life as it is lived in the lower stratum, that most low-income groups in this country lack an internal status system and value consensus of their own sufficiently integrated to set them apart from the larger society.

Helen Safa formulates the position of low-status groups in American society by distinguishing between acculturation, which is defined as the adoption of values and beliefs, and assimilation which refers to adoption of behavior patterns and institutional practices.

The reference group here is the American middle-class, since their values and behavior patterns are practiced by the vast majority of the population and constitute the ideal pattern for all groups in the society. We would argue that low-income groups in the United States share the same basic value system as the middle class but are forced to adopt a different life-style because they are denied access to middle-class institutions which would permit them to achieve their goals. In short, they are acculturated but not assimilated; they are taught the value systems of the larger society, but they are not encouraged to participate in the institutions of that society.¹

She offers a simple illustration. Most of the poor value higher education, but few of them reach college because they lack the financial means, the

¹Helen Icken Safa, Profiles in Poverty: An Analysis of Social Mobility in Low-Income Families, p. 3.

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academic preparation, and the support of their family and friends to achieve this goal.

Illustrations from several studies can be cited to support the pervasiveness of conventional norms in all segments of American society, regardless of their infrequent implementation for whatever reasons. For instance, based upon his urban field studies of marital arrangements and child-rearing practices among low-income families, Hyman Lewis maintains that:

The belief is not valid that broad categories of people, such as low income groups, newcomers, and certain ethnic minorities, are not troubled by illegitimacy. Birth in wedlock and marriage are important values.¹

He goes on to add, however, and this phenomenon will be the subject of later consideration, especially in the next chapter, that, "in any given instance, either or both (birth in wedlock and marriage) might be pre-empted by another important value, or the realization of them might be thwarted by practical considerations."²

This pattern of consensus over conventional values, the realization of which is thwarted by certain

¹Hyman Lewis, Culture, Class and Poverty (Washington, D.C.: Communicating Research on the Urban Poor--CROSS-TELL, Health and Welfare Council of the National Capital Area, February, 1967), p. 28.

²Ibid.

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constraints, is corroborated by nearly every available study of the lower class. For example, a study recently published in the Journal of Extension concerning the participation of low-status adults from North Carolina in educational programs found that a high level of interest or valuing of education and job training is coupled with very low levels of actual participation.¹

Cagle and Deutscher's review of the literature, introducing their study of housing aspirations of low-income fatherless families, indicates that home ownership, a truly ubiquitous value in American society, is for families of low socio-economic status the culmination of frugal, individual effort--the symbol of having arrived. They conclude, however, that, "while Fatherless Families value home ownership on an abstract level, they are constrained to aspire to public housing."²

Increased sophistication of research on lower-income and deprived groups is correcting a long-held impression that the poor place no value on occupational, educational, or any other commonly held form of achievement. While the poor may have a more modest absolute

¹Robert B. Lewis, "Educational Participation of Low SES Adults," Journal of Extension, IX, No. 3 (Fall, 1971).

²Laurence T. Cagle and Irwin Deutscher, "Housing Aspirations of Low-Income Fatherless Families," Syracuse University Youth Development Center, 1964, p. 21. (Mimeographed.)

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standard of achievement than those who are better off, they still seek the same securities that appeal to other Americans.

Liebow's anthropological study of Negro street-corner men illustrates the predominate importance given by them to having a job, as is true of persons in middle-class society, because this population

. . . is in continuous, intimate contact with the larger society--indeed, is an integral part of it--and is no more impervious to the values, sentiments and beliefs of the larger society than it is to the blue welfare checks or to the agents of the larger society, such as the policeman, the case worker, the landlord, the dope pusher, the Tupperware demonstrator, the numbers backer or the anthropologist.¹

There is an important difference, however. The nature of the ghetto dwellers employment is almost always menial, sometimes hard. It is usually only intermittently available, and never pays enough to support a family. It is of significance then for our inquiry into the valuing processes of low-status people that the low-status employee

. . . has little vested interest in such a job and learns to treat it with the same contempt held for it by the employer and society at large. From his point of view, the job is expendable; from the employer's point of view, he is. For reasons real or imagined, perhaps so slight as to go unnoticed by others, he frequently quits or is fired.²

¹Elliot Liebow, Tally's Corner (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1967), p. 209.

²Ibid., p. 212.

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Clark calls attention to the omnipresence of society's conventional goals in less dispassionate terms, emphasizing the sense of frustration which such standards generate in those who find them desirable but out of reach.

The mass media--radio, television, moving pictures, magazines, and the press--penetrate, indeed, invade the ghetto in continuous and inevitable communication, largely one-way, and project the values and aspirations, the manners and the style of the larger white-dominated society. Those who are required to live in congested and rat-infested homes are aware that others are not so dehumanized. . . . Whatever accommodations they themselves must make to the negative realities which dominate their own lives, they know consciously or unconsciously that their fate is not the common fate of mankind. . . . They observe that others enjoy a better life, and this knowledge brings a conglomerate of hostility, despair, and hope.¹

The Report of the National Advisory Commission on Rural Poverty attests to awareness and acceptance of these same values and goals on the part of the rural poor when the Commission assesses the motives behind migration:

The total number of rural poor would be even larger than 14 million had not so many of them moved to the city. They made the move because they wanted a job and a decent place to live. Some have found them. Many have not. Many merely exchanged life in a rural slum for life in an urban slum. . . .²

¹Kenneth B. Clark, Dark Ghetto (New York: Harper and Row, 1965), p. 12.

²Commission on Rural Poverty, The People Left Behind (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1967), p. ix.

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The nearly consistent verbal acceptance of middle-class norms among low-status people raises a series of questions. Again and again research shows that relative socio-economic rank is highly correlated with specific kinds of behaviors. Blum and Rossi have sifted through this research in order to categorize the behaviors found to be characteristic of the stratum with which we are concerned. They systematically screened each issue of the major sociological journals and a number of related publications from 1950 to 1966. There were some 750 articles and books in all. The data they pursued, and a feature they continually stressed, revealed a large range of variations in behavior, and great heterogeneity within low-status groupings. Nevertheless, certain criteria were found to consistently distinguish lower-lowers or hard core persons from those with higher social status:

1. Labor-Force Participation. Long periods of unemployment and/or very intermittent employment. Public assistance is frequently a major source of income for extended periods.
2. Occupational Participation. When employed, persons hold jobs at the lowest levels of skills, for example, domestic service, unskilled labor, menial service jobs, and farm labor.
3. Family and Interpersonal Relations. High rates of marital instability (desertion, divorce, separation), high incidence of households headed by females, high rates of illegitimacy; unstable and superficial interpersonal relationships characterized by considerable suspicion of persons outside the immediate household.
4. Community Characteristics. Residential areas with very poorly developed voluntary associations and low levels of participation in such local voluntary associations as exist.

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5. Relationship to Larger Society. Little interest in, or knowledge of, the larger society and its events; some degree of alienation from the larger society.
6. Value Orientations. A sense of helplessness and low sense of personal efficacy; dogmatism and authoritarianism in political ideology; fundamentalist religious views, with some strong inclinations toward beliefs in magical practices. Low "need achievement" and low levels of aspirations for the self.¹

The behaviors described above are obviously quite contrary to what is called for by the typical middle-class norms for which low-status persons express such high regard. Given the consistent correlation between socio-economic rank and behavior, how is the apparent preference for and allegiance to middle-class norms across all social strata and the deviation from behaviors consistent with those norms across the same strata to be accounted for? How do we account for the disparity between professed values and actual behavior among low-status persons?

Explanations of Disparity Between Professed Values and Behaviors

Two major kinds of explanations for the origins of human behaviors may help us account for the foregoing disparity between those behaviors and our society's professed values. One is cultural; the other is situational.

A cultural explanation means that an observed relationship between socio-economic rank and a particular behavior item results from (a) the parental transmission

¹Blum and Rossi, op. cit., pp. 351-52.

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of values and beliefs which in turn determine the behavior, or (b) the direct parental transmission of behavior patterns.

Advocates of this explanation have a ready answer concerning the source of deviant behaviors among the poor and even to the question of how or why there has come to be an underclass in American society. The poor have traits of deficiency, pathology, and immorality, all stemming from their personal upbringing. They are undeserving. This is an age-old explanation for poverty. Today's advocates of undeservingness see the poor as deficient in basic skills and attitudes. Educators who share this view describe them as culturally deprived; social workers and clinical psychologists find them weak in ego strength; and community organizers see them as apathetic.

A good number of social scientists, as revealed in Beck's¹ review of the poverty literature, consider the personal and cultural deficiencies of the poor, and not any external source such as resource deprivation, to be the most significant variables contributing to their deviant behaviors and their low-status position.

The logical extension of the cultural explanation, held particularly by anthropologists and some sociologists,

¹Bernard Beck, "Bedbugs, Stench, Dampness and Immorality: A Review Essay on Recent Literature About Poverty," Social Problems, XV (Summer, 1967).

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is to see the condition of poverty as the direct result of a distinct culture existing along-side but separate from the larger society.¹

Roach and Gursslin, who have conducted an extensive analysis of the concept, conclude that those who use the term "culture of poverty" usually hold that, "the poor share distinctive patterns of values, beliefs, and action, and exhibit a style of life which departs significantly from that of the core culture."² In their analysis of the concept, these authors go on to demonstrate that the two elements most crucial to the maintenance of a separate subculture among the poor are that: (1) the values of the poor are not only existential adaptations to reality but also normative for this population, and

¹Among those who have contributed to the literature on the "culture of poverty" in American society, in addition to the work of Oscar Lewis, are Frank Riessman, The Culturally Deprived Child (New York: Harper and Bros., 1962); Thomas Gladwin, "The Anthropologist's View of Poverty," in The Social Welfare Forum (New York: Columbia University Press, 1961), pp. 73-86; Jerome Cohen, "Social Work and the Culture of Poverty," in Mental Health of the Poor, ed. by Frank Riessman, et al. (Glencoe, Ill.: The Free Press, 1964), pp. 128-48; Roland Warren, Multi-Problem Families: A New Name or a New Problem (New York: State Charities Aid Association, 1960); Michael Harrington, The Other America (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1962); Robert E. Will and Harold G. Valter, eds., Poverty in Affluence (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1965).

²Jack L. Roach and Orville R. Gursslin, "An Evaluation of the Concept Culture of Poverty," Social Forces, XLV (March, 1967), 384.

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(2) this culture with its attendant values and behaviors is transmitted from one generation to the next.

According to Louis Kreisberg the situational explanation can have two meanings.

One meaning is that there are no differences in pertinent values and beliefs by socio-economic rank; differences in behavior are the result of differing opportunities. Situational factors operate directly to account for socio-economic differences in behavior. The factors may be social conditions, such as patterns of interaction or non-social conditions, such as differences in financial resources.¹

In other words, behavior is affected not only by currently held values and beliefs, but by the current situation--the social and non-social constraints and pressures which limit the available alternatives. This is, of course, an important source of discrepancy between values and behavior.

However, more important to our analysis of the valuing processes of low-status persons is the interpretation of the situational explanation which holds that not only behaviors but also values themselves are often the result of accommodation to current circumstances. Several studies have attempted to explore this phenomenon.² In Kreisberg's words:

¹ Louis Kreisberg, "The Relationship Between Socio-Economic Rank and Behavior," Social Problems, X, No. 4 (Spring, 1963), 335.

² Examples of studies which illustrate the effect of circumstances on the valuing process include: Albert K. Cohen, Delinquent Boys: The Culture of the Gang (Glencoe:

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A situational explanation may also mean that there are some differences in pertinent values and beliefs, but they result from stratum-shared current situations. Thus different concepts (values and beliefs) may be the result of accommodating to current behavior or the result of current social pressures or generalizations from current experiences. Such shared values and beliefs are to be distinguished from those which are cultural, that is, transmitted through generations.¹

In terms of the acculturation versus the assimilation model cited previously from Safa's study, not only are the poor unable to become assimilated into middle-class institutions, they are also susceptible to a new acculturation process by virtue of the circumstances of social pressure and shared experiences. Or, as Thoreau would have it, they march to the beat of a different drummer.

Perhaps a segment from Allison Davis' commentary on the importance of social rather than biological factors in accounting for the behaviors commonly designated as typical of low-status people can provide an apt illustration.

... The habits of shiftlessness, irresponsibility, lack of ambition, absenteeism, and of quitting the job, which management usually regards as a result of

The Free Press, 1955); Allison Davis, "The Motivation of the Underprivileged Worker," in Industry and Society, ed. by William F. Whyte (New York: McGraw Hill, 1946), pp. 84-106; S. M. Miller and Frank Riessmann, "The Working Class Sub-Culture: A New View," Social Problems, IX (Summer, 1961), 86-97; Richard C. Centers, The Psychology of Social Classes (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1941); Alex Inkeles, "Industrial Man: The Relation of Status to Experience, Perception, and Value," American Journal of Sociology, LXVI (July, 1960), 1-31.

¹Kreisberg, op. cit.

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P. 362.

the "innate" perversity of underprivileged white and Negro workers . . . are in fact normal responses that the worker has learned from his physical and social environment. These habits constitute a system of behavior and attitudes which are realistic and rational in that environment in which the individual of the slums has lived and in which he has been trained.¹

It would appear then that Kreisberg's second situational explanation of the relationship between socio-economic rank and behavior more realistically reflects the complexity of poverty in the United States. The complexity, springing largely from the fact that cultural and situational factors are highly interrelated, poses many difficulties to one trying to estimate the relative importance of the numerous cultural and situational factors which may contribute to the relationship between socio-economic rank and a given kind of behavior.

The situation of members of a given stratum often appears to be what it is because of the values and beliefs they have learned in the process of socialization; and what they have learned is the result of the situation experienced by the persons who socialized them. Furthermore, members of a stratum continue to learn values and beliefs as they face new shared situations and the situations are constantly changing. Finally, there is a sufficiently small amount of intergenerational stratum mobility so that most persons face situations resembling those of their parents. It is therefore difficult to disentangle cultural transmission from common reactions to common situations of parents and their children.²

¹Allison Davis, "The Motivation of the Underprivileged Worker," as quoted in Lee Rainwater, Behind Ghetto Walls (Chicago: Aldine Publishing Company, 1970), p. 362.

²Ibid., p. 336.

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All of this may sound strikingly similar to the culture of poverty concept. It is not, however, because the valuing processes adopted by the poor in the face of poverty circumstances never quite completely eradicate the values and norms of the dominant group. The valuing of poor people as it is manifested in what we will call their substitute games never successfully becomes fully normative for any but a very few of the poor in American society.

Rainwater concludes from this research with the poor that:

All individuals in the group, to some extent and under some circumstances, will assert the validity of conventional norms and the invalidity of substitute norms. . . . There are, in short, too many "squares" around to interfere with efforts to negate the conventional norms. These individuals to some extent counter the existential challenge to the norms by demonstrating that it is possible to live up to them even with very few resources.¹

It is important to acknowledge that individuals represent almost all of the external institutions with which lower-class people come into contact, of which adult basic education is an instance; and that those representatives are fairly solidly ranged in alignment with conventional norms. It is the day-to-day contact with functionaries in schools, stores, work places,

¹Lee Rainwater, "The Problem of Lower-Class Culture and Poverty--War Strategy," in On Understanding Poverty, ed. by Daniel Moynihan (New York: Basic Books, Inc., Publishers, 1968), p. 245.

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public agencies, and the like which provides a salient reminder to low-status individuals that they are not "respectable" in their behavior and attitudes. It comes across very clearly to them in these settings that they would be much better off if they were able to live in a conventional way because other people would not "bug" them so much.

Such dominance and persistence of middle-class norms is perhaps what most militates against the existence and functioning of a full-blown culture of poverty with its own independent normative values, completely self-sustaining and self-perpetuating along side the larger society.

In fact, most social scientists whose field research has been concentrated on the lower class in American society remind us that no category of persons has a way of life completely different from anyone else. Many experiences are shared by all persons. It becomes important, from the research perspective, to recognize that some experiences are shared by everyone, that others are unique to a given socio-economic category, and still other experiences are shared by some persons in one category with some others in a different category.

Furthermore, as Kreisberg concludes from his research with fatherless families

. . . various aspects of life are changing--at different rates and in response to different sets of conditions. Consequently, no completely integrated

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set of values, beliefs, and conduct exists for any category of persons. Discrepancies, inconsistencies, and tensions among values, beliefs, and practices are inevitable. All this suggests another approach to differences in life styles among families of varying incomes. Particular values and beliefs may be shared while others differ as a response to a given situation. Being a response to particular circumstances, the apparent stability of certain values and beliefs reflects the stability of those circumstances. Under new circumstances, patterns of conduct, beliefs, and values are altered.¹

A non-simplistic but inevitable conclusion is that neither a strictly cultural nor a strictly situational explanation is fully adequate for explaining the relationship between low socio-economic rank and behavior. Rather, it is more useful to consider the impact of both elements in relation to each other, for it would seem that the valuing processes of low-status persons are highly influenced by a combination of both situational deprivation and cultural deficiency, just as the valuing processes of the more affluent cannot be separated from their resources, opportunities, and cultural conditioning. In words similar to those of Kreisberg, Gans concludes that:

The only proper research perspective is to look at the poor as an economically and politically deprived population whose behavior, values,--and pathologies--are adaptations to their existential situation, just as the behavior, values, and pathologies of the affluent are adaptations to their existential situation.²

¹Louis Kreisberg, Mothers in Poverty (Chicago: Aldine Publishing Company, 1970), p. 3.

²Herbert Gans, "Culture and Class in the Study of Poverty," in On Understanding Poverty, ed. by Daniel Moynihan, p. 205.

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Fantini and Weinstein dramatize the adaptational element of behavior and values with a deftly posited reversal of circumstances:

Suppose the members of the mainstream culture (now considered to be "advantaged") were forced to adjust to the norms, values, and environmental conditions of the subculture we now label "disadvantaged." Prepared by background for and training in middle-class standards, they would find themselves ill-equipped for survival and success in such a society.¹

Discussions of behavior and value patterns of low-status people in isolation from the social, economic, and ecological setting to which those valuing processes and patterns of behavior are an adaptation will generally prove to be misleading.

Hyman Rodman has introduced the extremely useful notion of "the lower-class value stretch" to account for what amounts to a values juggling act on the part of low-status persons as they seem to simultaneously maintain an allegiance to conventional norms and their own adaptive ones. Rodman explains:

By the value stretch I mean that the lower-class person, without abandoning the general values of the society, develops an alternative set of values. Without abandoning the values placed upon success, such as high income and high educational and occupational achievement, he stretches the values so that lesser degrees of success also become desirable. Without abandoning the values of marriage and legitimate childbirth, he stretches these values so that a non-legal union and legally illegitimate children

¹Mario D. Fantini and Gerald Weinstein, The Disadvantaged Challenge to Education (New York: Harper and Row, 1968), p. 7.

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are also desirable. The result is that the members of the lower class, in many areas, have a wider range of values than others within the society. They share the general values of the society with members of other classes, but in addition, they have stretched these values, or developed alternative values, which help them to adjust to their deprived circumstances.¹

From his research with low-status groups in this country and in the Caribbean, Rodman concludes that:

Lower-class persons in close interaction with each other and faced with similar problems do not long remain in a state of mutual ignorance. They do not maintain a strong commitment to middle-class values that they cannot attain, and they do not continue to respond to others in a rewarding or punishing way simply on the basis of whether these others are living up to the middle-class values. A change takes place. They come to tolerate and eventually to evaluate favorably certain deviations from the middle-class values. In this way they need not be continually frustrated by their failure to live up to unattainable values.²

The net result, while not an autonomous culture of poverty, is what Herbert Gans refers to as a very real "culture of alienation" which acquires limited functional autonomy from the behaviors and values which are normative for the middle class.

Alienation is a product of personal response to inimical external circumstances and the manner in which they are perceived. The poverty literature converges on the phenomenon of anomie as a predominant factor influencing

¹Hyman Rodman, "The Lower Class Value Stretch," Social Forces, XLII, No. 2 (December, 1963), 209.

²Ibid.

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the adoption among the poor of new valuing processes that deviate from those of conventional society. Understanding anomie behavior will contribute to a principled explanation of valuing on the part of those who manifest it.

Anomie, Self-Identity, and
Congruence

In his extremely influential chapter on "Social Structure and Anomie" Robert Merton makes the point that the basic problem faced by members of the lower class is that they are structurally in a position that makes it exceedingly difficult for them to attain the cultural goals of the society by legitimate means, and therefore "the greatest pressures toward deviation are exerted upon the lower-strata."¹ Merton seeks to show that lower-class behavior can be regarded as arising from an effort to adapt to a disjunction between universal American goals and the lack of access lower-class people have to these goals.

His approach is macrosociological; accordingly his treatment of the problem is in terms of a broad outline of five possible general behavioral responses. An individual may accept the culture goals, such as money, as valid or legitimate but reject the institutionalized

¹Robert K. Merton, Social Theory and Social Structure (revised and enlarged ed.; Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1957), p. 144.

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means for achieving those goals. Merton calls this type of adaptation "innovation." Another possible adaptation he calls "ritualism." That pattern is reflected by giving up or drastically reducing the cultural goals to the extent that the scaled-down goals can be met. But even though one gives up the institutionalized goals, "one continues to abide almost compulsively by institutionalized norms." His example is the college-graduate handyman. "Retreatism"--the giving up of both the institutional goals and the institutionalized means to their achievement--proves a form of adaptation not uncommon among the so-called "doomed" or "hopelessly defeated" classes. Merton notes that they are largely pariahs, outcasts, vagrants, vagabonds, tramps, chronic drunkards, and drug addicts. Another adaptation to perceptions of lack of access to the opportunity structure is termed "rebellion." In this mode, the existing goals and means are rejected, but the rejectors subscribe to plans that require replacement of the old means and goals with new ones. And yet others remain, in terms of the model, "conformists." They continue, despite all logic to the contrary, to accept and operate in terms of the institutionalized goals and means.¹

The principle criticism of Merton's conception of lower-class responses is that the central role of creative

¹Ibid., pp. 131-60.

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adaptation to adverse circumstances is neglected. This has also been the chief criticism of early twentieth century studies of Negro social life and personality by scholars such as DuBois, Frazier, Myrdal, and others who viewed the Negro as a passive product of white-dominated racist institutions. This image of Negroes as merely reacting passively to racial oppression seemed to deny them an essential humanity. In contrast, one concern that runs through a great deal of scholarly work on Negro American life in the sixties is to pay much greater attention to the creative ways in which Negroes have adapted to the situation in which racial oppression has placed them.

What is true of early research on the Negroes' situation is also seen to be a shortcoming of Merton's conceptualizing of lower-class behaviors in general. Rodman's concept of the value stretch on the other hand, is that low-status people actually develop a taste for and appreciation of those behaviors which are contrary to or outside of the norms of the larger society. Hyman summarizes the difference between Merton and himself with a metaphorical illustration in the fable of the fox and the grapes.

The fox in the fable declared that the unattainable sweet grapes were sour; Merton's "rebellious" fox renounces the prevailing taste for sweet grapes;

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P. 209.

Structure

but the "adaptive" lower-class fox I am talking about does neither--rather, he acquires a taste for sour grapes.¹

Such an adaptation involves more than the passive responses in Merton's formulation.

Perhaps Merton's most noteworthy contribution to understanding the valuing and behaviors of low-status persons is in his reformulation of the concept of anomie. Anomie has to do with the disproportion between a man's needs and his means for satisfying them. Merton notes that our needs are "culturally induced, deep motivations." He describes the anomic situation as one in which men want something their culture tells them is legitimate to want, but do not have legitimate means to satisfy their desires and, therefore, seek other means which the culture regards as illegitimate. The particular situation of which Merton writes is one in which society first seduces some of its members into wanting something and then denies them the means for obtaining the recommended reward.²

The problem of sufficient means at hand for the attainment of needs and satisfaction of desires is directly related to the various roles available in

¹Rodman Hyman, "The Lower-Class Value Stretch," p. 209.

²Robert K. Merton, Social Theory and Social Structure, pp. 131-39.

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society through which this attainment can be realized. Students of society tell us that in most societies there will be one institutional framework that is the major focus for the generation, satisfaction, and regulation of needs. Rainwater hypothesizes that:

In our kind of society the major focuses are the nuclear family and the economy. The interpenetration of statuses, roles and expectations between these two institutional systems is great. Men are guided to earn rewards through participation in the occupational order and to translate the income and prestige they receive from their participation into rewards from their families and friends.¹

Wives are no less centrally committed to the economy and the family because their traditional principle function is to utilize the income received by their husbands for the purpose of satisfying the needs of all members of their household.

The performance of traditional roles, whether of provider or homemaker, is the acceptable way of reaching for the culturally prescribed aspirations of success and enjoyment of the comfortable life which all the social strata in American society share. Lower-class people are amply exposed to these cultural ideals and the evidence from research with the lower socio-economic stratum indicates that it makes no sense to talk of a lower-class culture so divorced from that of the larger society that

¹Lee Rainwater, Behind Ghetto Walls (Chicago: Aldine Publishing Company, 1970), p. 367.

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the validity of these goals is denied. The bitter conclusion, however, at which low-status people arrive is that neither aspiration is feasible for them, that a conventional culturally acceptable way of life will not bring about harmony between their needs and satisfaction of them.

We have seen in the literature concerning the valuing process that its fundamental and generic nature is to be directed toward the satisfaction of needs and assuagement of desires. It is highly unlikely that low-status individuals will retain little more than verbal allegiance for ways of life regarded as culturally valid in conventional society, but largely unattainable and therefore unproductive of satisfying rewards for them.

The value dilemma for the poor can also be described in terms of resources and norms. On the more microcosmic level of individual roles such as parent, spouse, bread-winner, citizen, and employee, there is also a valuing dilemma confronting low-status people. Society has its norms, its rules for playing each of these roles. None of this is likely or possible over any length of time without resources. The joy in being parent or spouse turns to ashes if the resources for playing that role are absent or deficient. Norms lose

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their regulative force, not necessarily their appeal, when the means for complying with them are not available.

Rainwater describes the erosion of significance in the norms for playing a particular role when resources are scarce:

Individuals in a group negotiate with significant others to be allowed to play the normative game--to get into the game and to have the resources that will allow them to play it. If the individual is not allowed in the game, or if he cannot get the resources to play the game successfully and thus experiences constant failure at it, he is not "conceptual boob" enough to continue knocking his head against a stone wall--he withdraws from the game.¹

This sets the stage for the invention and diffusion, among those who are similarly lacking in resources, of substitute games of a wide variety. These anomie and deviant behaviors have as their immediate purpose the re-establishment of harmony and proportion between one's needs and the means for achieving them.

A valid identity is one in which the individual finds congruence between who he feels he is, who he announces himself to be, and where he feels his society places him. Individuals are led to announce a particular identity because they value the satisfaction it provides for their needs. In this regard, the next chapter will explore the valuing inherent in what are called "phantom roles" among the poor.

¹ Lee Rainwater, "The Problems of Lower-Class Culture and Poverty-War Strategy," in On Understanding Poverty, ed. by Moynihan, p. 242.

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Anomie results when the individual finds that his efforts to achieve a valid identity along the lines supported by the larger society are in vain, as in the case of a man who cannot legitimately lay claim to being head of the house because he is not able to put bread on the table. This is perhaps our best clue to the valuing that is implicit in behaviors some of which may be socially defined as deviant. An individual's identity is questioned either by intrapsychic pressures or by the society, and because a tenable life requires a sense of valid identity he has no other choice than to try alternative behaviors, some of which are socially defined as deviant.

It is important to recognize that labeling anything as deviant presupposes a judgmental perspective or biased posture in favor of one group which uses its own standards as the ideal against which others are to be judged. Joyce Ladner's study¹ of Negro women in an urban ghetto draws attention to the seductiveness of the deviant label. She cites Becker's proposition that:

Social groups create deviance by making the rules whose infraction constitutes deviance, and by applying those rules to particular people and labeling them as outsiders. From this point of view, deviance is not a quality of the act the person commits, but rather a consequence of the application by others

¹Joyce A. Ladner, Tomorrow's Tomorrow: The Black Woman (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1971).

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of rules and sanctions to an "offender." The deviant is one to whom that label has successfully been applied; deviant behavior is behavior that people so label.¹

Any attempt to provide insight into the valuing processes manifest in the lives of low-status people needs to give careful and repeated attention to the ordinarieness of experience among this population.

Sawyer, as quoted in Ladner's study, reminds us:

It is probably a fact and one of which some contemporary students of deviance have been cognizant-- that the greater portion of the lives of deviant persons or groups is spent in normal, mundane, day-to-day living. In the researcher's focus on deviance and acquisition of the deviant perspective, not only is he likely to overlook these more conventional phenomena, and thus become insensitive to them, but he may in the process overlook that very data which helps to explain that deviance he studies.²

Rainwater is alluding to the close relationship between deviancy and conventional phenomena such as the importance of attaining a valid identity and the satisfaction of internal needs as he observed these phenomena in his study of a public housing project.

Behavior considered to be deviant, either by members of their own groups or by others, can be regarded as an effort to attain valid identity, to gratify the prompting of internal need and to elicit

¹Howard S. Becker, The Outsiders (New York: Free Press, 1963), p. 9.

²Ethel Sawyer, "Some Methodological Problems in Studying Socially Deviant Communities," as cited in Joyce A. Ladner, op. cit., unpublished paper presented for a Ph.D. Colloquium in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Washington University, St. Louis, Missouri, May 9, 1967, p. 4.

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recognition from those around them. Deviance from conventional cultural norms is an organized effort to achieve valid identity in a situation in which this has not been possible within the limits of the norms.¹

It is apparent then that valuing and the effort to establish and maintain a self-identity overlap. If a person manages to formulate an identity through behaviors disvalued by the larger society, this deviancy becomes tenable when he finds a group that validates such behaviors. This is the situation in which the lower-class person finds himself.

If a valid identity does not lie in the direction of a viable economic role, allowing a man to be a good provider and a woman to be a good homemaker, then one must seek in other ways to construct a self which can be valued, which provides some measure of gratification of needs and earns some measure of recognition of oneself as a social being.

In the process of constructing such a self a revaluing of behaviors takes place, not that conventional ones are discarded, but that new values come into being, establishing congruence between one's behaviors and one's values or norms. Either the behaviors or the values or both may deviate from what is normative for society. We will examine the phenomenon of congruence as part of

¹Rainwater, Behind Ghetto Walls, p. 377.

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the principled understanding of the valuing processes to be explored in the following chapter.

Summary of Relevant Theory

The research we have cited and our interpretation of the findings has consistently implied that the circumstances of lower-class life interact with the pressure for a valid self-identity and the need to bring one's needs and the means for attaining them into harmony. This produces simultaneous allegiance to conventional as well as adaptive or alternate behaviors and simultaneous valuing of both.

Those studies which have attempted to peer beneath the surface conditions of low-status life through the participant-observer methods of ethnography seem to lend support to Kreisberg's hypothesis cited earlier that there are some differences in pertinent values and beliefs as well as behaviors across social strata, but that they result from stratum-shared current situations.

It can be argued that the methodological problems of value assessment are too formidable for the task of certifying any congruence between values and behaviors. Furthermore, as was asserted earlier, the relationship between values and behavior is not a consistent smoothly flowing unidirectional sequence of cause and effect. To always infer value preferences from behaviors does not allow for the discrepancies we all experience.

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Ultimately, if the concepts of values, beliefs, and norms are to have meaning, they must be defined and assessed independently of specific behaviors. Nor is it likely that a more accurate assessment can be had from paying attention only to what people say their values are. The margin of error is potentially just as great. For instance, people may use a variety of devices to conceal how they value a given behavior or course of action. They may compartmentalize, expressing different values at different times and places to different people.

Nevertheless, those who study the valuing of the lower or any other socio-economic stratum operate on the assumption that congruence between behaviors and values is a strong tendency. This is the central thesis of a study conducted by Festinger.¹ Presumably it distresses people to act contrary to what they desire and think proper. They will try to reduce their distress by increasing congruence, that is, by altering either the conduct or the values.

It is interesting to speculate on which direction movement is likely to occur to bring about congruence. Are values changed to conform with behaviors or is it vice versa: Assumptions on this issue are easily made

¹Leon Festinger, A Theory of Cognitive Dissonance (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1957).

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without even a moment's reflection given to the alternative. Kreisberg reminds us of the issue's complexity.

Consider the implications of asserting that values are generally modified so that they are made consistent to behavior or, on the other hand, asserting that changes in behavior result from changes in values. The first assertion implies that the poor are more likely to value steady employment if they have regular jobs; the second implies that they are likely to be able to hold regular jobs if they value steady employment. If proponents of the cultural and situational approaches were narrowly logical, one would expect the cultural proponents to favor the latter position, the situational proponents the former. Actually, some interaction is generally recognized and there is awareness that the outcome depends upon the items being considered and the setting within which the interaction is occurring.¹

Evidence can be marshalled to show that the values and behaviors we learn in childhood are maintained, and evidence can be just as readily cited to show that contemporary experiences affect our values and patterns of conduct as adults. Traditions learned in the past also undoubtedly are maintained only when there is continuing support for them from contemporary experiences.

Precious little evidence is available, however, on the relative importance for various values and behaviors of the different sources of influence, namely, contemporary experiences and family-of-origin traditions. There is undoubtedly interaction between the two, and neither is likely to be the sole determinant.

¹Louis Kreisberg, Mothers in Poverty, p. 17.

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If, however, it can be assumed that conduct is more likely to be affected by current circumstances than are values, we can expect to find discrepancies between the two at any particular time. Furthermore, if we assume that people tend to develop some consistency between their values and conduct, then we can expect that values are more likely to change after conduct is altered than is conduct likely to change following a value change.

From our analysis of social science literature thus far we can conclude that the behavior of low-status adults, often labeled as deviant in comparison with the norms of conventional society and offering great attitudinal and relational problems for adult educators, is viewed as: (1) a means for establishing a self-identity which will be validated by one's peers, (2) a resolution to the problem of disproportion between one's needs and the means for satisfying them, (3) adaptive strategies or substitute games replacing unattainable conventional goals and norms posed by the caretaker institutions of society with attainable ones, and (4) expressive of values which become congruent with these behaviors over time.

The valuing which is implied in and ultimately congruent with the patterns of behavior characteristic of low-status people will be the specific subject of

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investigation in the next chapter. We will use the terms "behaviors" and "values" or behaving and valuing in precisely that order so as to indicate the sequence which social scientists generally recognize as normal and predictable.

The purpose of Chapter III and the research problem addressed in this study, is to provide a framework for a principled and theoretical understanding of the valuing processes as revealed in the strategic behaviors adopted by low-status persons when confronted with the unattainable norms made explicit by the caretaker institutions of society.

In addition, we will seek to expand upon this very broad conception of the operation of the value function by specifying more precisely the nature of the modifications to which valuing can be expected to be subjected. Our ultimate objective is to consider the impact of low-status behaving and valuing patterns on the formulation of purposes and structuring of encounters for furthering those purposes within basic education.

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CHAPTER III

A FRAMEWORK OF THEORY

Principal Elements Affecting the Valuing Process

We concluded our review of literature on values and valuing in Chapter I by defining the valuing process in generic terms as an activity or experience in which all men engage for the satisfaction of needs and the assuagement of desires. Not the goal or objective itself, but the realization of the desired goal is what constitutes value. The definition implies behaviors which both manifest the valuing process and contribute to the realization of the desired objectives.

We examined, in the poverty literature reviewed in Chapter II, the theory which seeks to interpret the impact of contemporary circumstances on both the behaviors and values of low-status people. We derived from that portion of the literature review the hypotheses that (1) when human needs cannot be satisfied or desires assuaged through accepted conventional behaviors, alternative strategies are devised, and (2) values tend over time to become congruent with the alternative behaviors even

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when they constitute so-called deviant behaviors. To emphasize the sequence of behaving followed by valuing as noted generally in social science research, we will be using the two terms in that order.

We have considered the valuing process as both a universal phenomenon having generic meaning and as a phenomenon which, for low-status persons, has meaning that is situationally specific. The task of this chapter is to construct a conceptual framework for understanding the valuing dimension of situationally specific lower-class behaviors by elucidating the principles expressed or implied in the behavioral science literature on alienation and poverty. The ultimate objective of this effort is to provide a theoretical basis for professional practice appropriate to the unique relational and attitudinal problems that surface in a socially alienated population which is or is intended to be served in adult basic education.

Much of the research on the socially alienated segments of American society shows the lower-class person as caught in a three-way conflict among (1) his own needs and desires, (2) the orientations offered by the life he experiences around him, and (3) the orientations offered by the representatives of the larger society with whom he has contact. Our main conceptual task in extending our understanding of the characteristic

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behaviors and values of the lower-class world is that of explicating the relationships among these three variables.

Each component of the threefold conflict--namely, (1) a person's own needs and desires, (2) the orientations offered by his life circumstances, and (3) orientations offered by representatives of the larger society--interacts with the others and exerts suasive influence on the individual's patterns of behaving and valuing. This squares with the proposition cited previously that valuing follows and is a consequence of behaviors of the individual and his peers--behaviors adopted in response to circumstances. For instance, research on the need for a valued self-identity, cited in the previous chapter, illustrates the interaction between this need and the direction it receives from the orientations of low-status peers as well as the influences of conventional society.

Presumably some behaviors and valuing patterns are easier to maintain in the midst of conflicting circumstances than are others. A major intent of this chapter is to identify and analyze the qualities or characteristics which render behaviors and values malleable or susceptible to the pressures of contemporary circumstances.

Kreisberg's study¹ of urban fatherless families in four public housing projects provides a useful

¹Louis Kreisberg, Mothers in Poverty, pp. 34-37.

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conceptual framework for understanding the qualities of individual behaviors and values which contribute to their malleability. The qualities are: serial independence, noncentrality to the person, presence of feedback, and dependence upon circumstances for expression. The author's hypothesis is that behaviors and values of low-status people, or anyone else for that matter, are less explicable in terms of cultural or family-of-origin influence and more explicable in terms of any or all of these four qualities.

The first quality, serial independence, raises the issue of the stage in the life cycle at which the value or behavior in question is adopted. For example, utilizing a dentist's services frequently originates in adolescence and tends to be serially dependent, while voting for one party rather than another can be more serially independent. "Behavior is serially independent insofar as it can be independent of previous behavior or learning or of general expectations that the behavior will persist."¹ Kreisberg hypothesizes that serially independent (or discontinuous) behaviors and values are more likely to be affected by situational conditions than serially dependent ones.

¹Kreisberg, "The Relationship Between Socio-Economic Rank and Behavior," Social Problems, p. 337.

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The second quality, noncentrality to the person, presumes that values and behaviors are more or less central to a person's self-concept. Characteristics will vary in this regard but gross comparisons can be suggested. This has been demonstrated in a study made by Caudill and Scarr,¹ comparing value orientations of Japanese children and their parents.

Kreisberg concludes that

. . . general orientations--such as about the proper amounts of autonomy and independence children should have in relationship to their parents--are more central to the person's self than are specific aspirations for the children or the way one actually supervises the way children spend their time. The former are probably more crucially part of one's sense of parenthood than the latter. Aspirations or patterns of control are less central to one's self-conception.²

The third quality which affects the degree of persistence of a behaving or valuing pattern is the extent, timing, and character of feedback provided. Some patterns of valuing and behaving lend themselves to monitoring both by oneself and significant others, while other patterns are less amenable to monitoring.

¹William Caudill and Harry A. Scarr, "Japanese Value Orientations and Culture Change," Ethnology, I (January, 1962), 53-91, as cited in Kreisberg, Mothers in Poverty, p. 35.

²Ibid.

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Kreisberg reasons as follows:

The possibility of feedback is affected by the frequency with which an attribute is expressed, the clarity of the consequences, and the length of time needed to express or execute the characteristic. Thus, activities which are frequently carried out, require little time to perform, and whose consequences can be readily observed are particularly subject to contemporary circumstances.¹

Examples of the effect of feedback on behaviors and values are abundantly provided in reports of social science research on low-status life. For instance, the meaning and discrimination of husband-wife roles in the household as a factor to be worked out and tested day by day in interaction with someone else is the subject of a study by Werner.² Feedback as a factor influencing the direction of behaviors and the subsequent valuing of them may be thought of in general as occupying various points on a continuum from extensive to infrequently or seldom experienced. Frequent feedback from peers is readily available for reinforcing value-laden choices in the realms of marital fidelity and working habits among members of streetcorner societies as illustrated by Liebow and Horton,³ and also for conditioning the

¹Ibid., p. 36.

²Joan T. Werner, "A Family Typology and Some of Its Determinants" (unpublished D. C. Sc. dissertation, Syracuse University, 1968).

³Elliott Liebow, Tally's Corner; John Horton, "Time and Cool People," in Soul, ed. by Lee Rainwater (Chicago: Aldine Publishing Company, 1970).

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educational and occupational aspirations of poor young adults.¹ On the other hand religious affiliations, authoritarianism, anti-intellectuality, and extrapunishiveness, values and behaviors frequently designated as characteristic among the lower class,² are less subject to monitoring by significant others and to the pressure of circumstances by which they might be altered. Hence it can be concluded that repetitive and visible behaviors for which there is feedback, giving a person a chance to experiment and learn from experience, are likely to be explicable by situational variables.

Finally, among the four qualities listed by Kreisberg, the extent to which a value or pattern of conduct is dependent upon circumstances external to the individual for its existence and expression affects the likelihood that it will be altered or conditioned by those circumstances.

A consistent finding in many studies of low-status life is that the existence of circumstances external to

¹C. Norman Alexander, Jr. and Ernest Q. Campbell, "Peer Influence on Adolescent Educational Aspirations and Attainments," American Sociological Review, XXIX (August, 1964), 568-75; Irving Krauss, "Sources of Educational Aspirations Among Working Class Youth," American Sociological Review, XXIX (December, 1964), 867-79; Alan B. Wilson, "Residential Segregation of Social Classes and Aspirations of High School Boys," American Sociological Review, XXIV (December), 836-45.

²Albert K. Cohen and Harold M. Hodges, Jr., "Characteristics of the Lower-Blue-Collar-Class," Social Problems, X, No. 4 (Spring, 1963), 303-34.

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the individual severely conditions and restricts implementation of specific values. A case in point might be the supervising of children's homework in order to realize the value placed on education. Circumstances in question include such factors as number of children competing for attention, competition for both parent and child from the allure of street activities, frequent absence of one or both parents, physical facilities, and health conditions.

Another case in point is provided by Wellman's study¹ of a program conducted at a Youth Opportunity Center designed to help lower-class Negro youths find jobs. Their desire for work or valuing of it was not the problem. This was real enough. Missing, however, from the program was first, even the remote likelihood of these young men finding employment, and second, any possibility of doing so without suppressing the individuals' equally significant value-laden elements of life, namely, their distinctive manners of speech and dress. Both circumstances significantly lowered their evaluation of the possibility and the desirability of work.

The attainment of a particular occupational role depends in large part upon other persons providing access to that role. On the other hand, expressing a desire to

¹David Wellman, "Putting on the Youth Opportunity Center," in Soul, ed. by Lee Rainwater.

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attain a particular occupational role is not subject to the direct control of others. This, as well as the need for a valued self-identity, accounts for the phenomenon of "phantom roles" which is cited by researchers as frequently but not exclusively prevalent among low-status persons.

Clark's research in Harlem provides illustrations of phantom roles. He discovered one young man who pretended to be a medical student and carried a briefcase full of books. He was in reality a high school dropout. Another individual represented himself as an employee of a downtown hotel while in fact he was only occasionally called upon to help carry luggage. About these and similar forms of behavior Clark concludes that many young and poor Negroes cope with their frustrations by retreating into fantasies related chiefly to their role in society.

There is, for example, a fantasy employed by many marginal and antisocial teenagers, to pretend to knowledge about illicit activities and to a sexual urbanity that they do not, really, have. They use as their models the petty criminals of the ghetto, whose colorful, swaggering style of cool bravado poses a peculiar fascination. Some pretend falsely to be pimps, some to have contacts with numbers runners.¹

The phantom roles, however, are not confined to teenagers alone as Rainwater relates:

"Poor old Mrs. Johnson" wanted to maintain that in the eyes of the community she was a respectable woman working very hard to raise her children respectably. . . . There is a self--and other--

¹Clark, Dark Ghetto, p. 66.

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deluding character about these protestations of respectability. She has taken on the "phantom role" of a poor but respectable widow woman, but the pretense is thin, honored by none of her children and only superficially by Mrs. Johnson herself.¹

Except in cases or at times in which others are bent upon unmasking a particular phantom role or fantasy value the person requires no external support or cooperating set of circumstances for maintaining the pretense.

The influences of these two qualities--presence of feedback and dependence upon circumstances for expression--in rendering values and behaviors malleable are especially crucial in understanding the effect of the area of residence variable on the valuing or behavior patterns of low-status people. People live in neighborhoods segregated by income, and the neighborhoods of the poor, with their characteristic density of population, inferior schools, and exploitive commercial services, confront everyone in the area with similar problems. It is quite natural that similar solutions will evolve along with similar social support systems to justify them. This is the contention of Rainwater who sees the necessity for resolving problems confronted in poverty which prohibit observance of conventional norms.

Conforming to norms requires certain kinds of social logistic support. Although people are most sensitive to the necessity for certain kinds of resources for living up to norms with respect to their own behavior

¹ Rainwater, Behind Ghetto Walls, p. 212.

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and tend to blind themselves to this . . . when they evaluate other people's behavior, individuals who find themselves in the same boat in lacking resources generally develop some understanding tolerance for each other's deviance.¹

Concerning the matter of residential area, Kreisberg² sees three processes as possibly affecting residents' values and beliefs. They are: (1) normative control by others, (2) response to the examples which others present, and (3) accommodation to the circumstances which the neighborhood social and non-social world presents.

In contemporary American urban neighborhoods social scientists are generally unable to verify the existence, except perhaps in the most homogeneously ethnic cases, of the requisite conditions for normative control. For such control to be effective, neighborhood residents must not only share a high consensus about a particular value or conduct, they must also have and be able to apply effective sanctions for enforcing the norms. Urban neighborhoods do not possess either sufficient consensus or sufficient sanctions for regulating behavior in this manner.

Among the rural poor, however, researchers have been able to find some evidence for the existence of

¹Lee Rainwater, "The Problem of Lower-Class Culture and Poverty--War Strategy," in On Understanding Poverty, ed. by Daniel Moynihan, p. 242.

²Kreisberg, Mothers in Poverty, p. 41.

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consensus and of concerted attempts to enforce sanctions in the direction of normative control. Among themselves especially, adults enforce local norms through ostracism and other socially punitive measures.

Herman Lantz's observations of small depressed communities and the life therein, as well as an intensive study of one community, Coal Town, illustrates the forms of normative control characteristic of some sectors of the rural poor.

1. Detachment from others. In Coal Town one dominant characteristic among the natives centers in their detachment from others. Emotional involvement with others and concern for others are at a minimum. There is also a marked detachment and separation from any positive identification with the community.
2. Absence of serious striving. In Coal Town a second dominant characteristic among the natives is found in minimizing individual abilities and capacities. Active discouragement of personal abilities is pronounced.
3. Aversion to effort. In Coal Town a third dominant characteristic among the natives centers around their attitudes towards work. Tasks which require effort and concentration are to be ridiculed, shunned, and disvalued.
4. Restriction of wishes. In Coal Town a fourth dominant characteristic among the natives centers around minimizing the wish for new or better things. Such wishes are considered to be unrealistic and are likely to invite scorn from others.¹

Normative control in such isolated rural areas is an example of the very few instances in which the

¹Herman R. Lantz, "Resignation, Industrialization, and the Problem of Social Change: A Case History of a Coal Mining Community," in *Blue-Collar World*, ed. by Arthur B. Shostak and William Gomberg (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1964), p. 266. (Emphasis in original.)

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conventional American values of work, individual effort, and initiative are not in vogue. The valuing process is of course the same, but in cases such as those studied by Lantz, it is the simple and casual existence of pre-industrial days that contributes most to the satisfaction of needs and desires. This way of life is protected against the incursion of social change through studied apathy sustained through the four forms of control outlined above. This is the way in which some rural people respond to the generally pervasive pressure of conventional norms.

Two other processes resulting from area of residence which differentially affect valuing and behavior patterns appear, from an analysis of several studies, to be particularly potent in the lives of urban low-status persons. These are the response to the examples which others present, and accommodation to the circumstances of the neighborhood. In reality the two processes often reinforce each other.

In the case of response to example, people observe others and respond to what they see. In the accommodation process neighbors and neighborhood conditions may facilitate or inhibit a particular kind of behavior. One's neighbors provide examples of holding certain values and beliefs, of exhibiting certain conduct, and of the consequences of doing or not doing so. Each person may modify his own values, beliefs, and conduct as he evaluates those of his

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neighbors. On the other hand it may be that circumstances such as population density in the neighborhood, the physical condition of the housing or the presence or absence of different kinds of institutions may facilitate some forms of accommodation and inhibit others. One adaptation sets other adaptations in motion. For example, residence in high-rise housing makes supervision of children's play activities very difficult. Reassessment of the necessity of such supervision, a normally valued behavior, is predictable.

Liebow's study of lower-class streetcorner life presents a poignant illustration of behaviors and valuing patterns formulated in response to visible example. His "theory of manly flaws" can be viewed as evidence of the reinforcement available to low-status persons from their peers.

After reviewing the footprints of apparent failure traced in his subjects' personal history as spouse, parent, and breadwinner, the acceptance and mutual support received from companions in the neighborhood is self-evident in its importance. Liebow describes a process by which an individual adopts new valuing in the face of circumstances.

Increasingly he turns to the streetcorner where a shadow system of values constructed out of public fictions serves to accommodate just such men as

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he, permitting them to be men once again provided they do not look too closely at one another's credentials.¹

The streetcorner, a neighborhood pub, or some other favorite place to hang out becomes a type of sanctuary where the initiates are free to develop the rationale to support a system of values which makes for a world of ambivalence, where, as Liebow explains, "Failures are rationalized into phantom successes and weaknesses magically transformed into strengths."² The author's "theory of manly flaws" is an example of the rationale utilized to explain marital failures which enjoys the reinforcement of peer support.

In each instance, the man is always careful to attribute his inadequacies as a husband to his inability to slough off one or another attribute of manliness, such as independence of spirit, a liking for whiskey, or an appetite for a variety of women. They trace their failures as husbands directly to their weaknesses as men, to their manly flaws.³

His friends, finding themselves addicted to the same "weaknesses" are all too willing to support his contention that he is "too much of a man to be a husband." His observation is a powerful illustration of how behaviors are adopted in response to needs and the subsequent values they acquire.

¹Liebow, Tally's Corner, p. 213.

²Ibid., p. 214.

³Ibid.

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Differences Between Men and Women

Studies such as those of Liebow, Horton, Schwartz, and Henderson, Miller and Harrison, Miller and Riessman, and Wellman¹ serve to illustrate a not infrequent distinction in research on the lower class. Those studies such as the above and others like them which examine the significance of example and peer relationships usually take low-status males as their subjects. On the other hand research concerned with the accommodation low-status persons make to the circumstances posed by neighborhood conditions, such as the studies of Cagle, Ladner, Kreisberg, Rainwater,² and several others, take women, in

¹ John Horton, "Time and Cool People"; Michael Schwartz and George Henderson, "The Culture of Unemployment," in Blue-Collar World, ed. by Arthur B. Shostak and William Gomberg; S. M. Miller and Frank Riessman, "The Working-Class Subculture: A New View," Social Problems, X, No. 1 (Summer, 1961), 86-97; S. M. Miller and Ira E. Harrison, "Types of Dropouts: The Unemployables," ed. by Shostak and Gomberg; David Wellman, "Putting on the Youth Opportunity Center," in Soul, ed. by Lee Rainwater.

² Laurence T. Cagle, "Child Rearing in Fatherless Families: Maternal Values, Beliefs, and Aspirations" (unpublished M.A. thesis, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Syracuse University, 1965); Joyce Ladner, "On Becoming a Woman in the Ghetto: Modes of Aspiration" (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, Washington University, St. Louis, Missouri, 1968); Louis Kreisberg, Mothers in Poverty; Lee Rainwater, "Crucible of Identity: The Negro Lower Class Family," Daedalus, XCV, No. 1 (Winter, 1966), 172, 216; Rainwater, Behind Ghetto Walls.

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particular, those with fatherless families, as their subjects. Investigators of the latter group are primarily interested in such issues as child rearing patterns, family life in high-density neighborhoods, interaction with community social service agencies, and differences in accommodation to circumstances when the husband is present or absent.

In addition to the neighborhood variables discussed above, low-status women are examined in regard to the valuing they manifest in such issues as welfare dependency versus employment, preference for public versus private housing, use of income, and involvement in activities which take them out of the home. We might designate the above group as social variables.

A further refinement in the research process is to consider the general vulnerability of other values and behaviors which are intimately associated with such variables as employment and income. Kreisberg offers a sample of the possibilities.

On the whole activities which require large expenditures of time are more likely to be affected by employment than activities which require little time expenditure. . . . Attitudes and behaviors that require goods and services that must be paid for in money obviously are more likely to be affected by income than are ones which do not.¹

It has been observed by those who have examined the significance of the neighborhood and social variables

¹Kreisberg, Mothers in Poverty, p. 53.

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in the lives of low-status women that this population is more likely to declare and struggle to maintain allegiance to the norms of conventional middle-class American society than their male counterparts. For instance, Rainwater in the context of a discussion of expressive versus instrumental roles, to be considered below, states the difference. It is evident in both words and actions.

Women tend to be more verbal and more energetic than their men in affirming the values of "the good American life." Once they are mothers there is less to be gained by women in an expressive direction, and they tend to be more preoccupied with achieving a decent and stable material standard. They are ready to reward and to punish the men in their household, depending on how well they succeed as providers. Dramatic changes occur within the short span of a day or two in the authority which an unemployed versus employed father can have in his household. The father gets a job and his wife and children are willing to listen to him and do what he says. The father loses his job and the wife becomes much stricter in her evaluation of his demeanor. In one case, a woman had her husband kicked out of their apartment because he scratched her furniture, was unemployed, and could not pay for its repair.¹

The author goes on to observe that for men this kind of encouragement of stability, of the pursuit of material well-being, is not so powerful in the lower class as in the working and middle classes because generally it is only a man's own family who reinforces such behavior. His peers are likely to criticize the fact that he no longer seems loyal to the group and to respond negatively to him for not investing his income

¹Lee Rainwater, Behind Ghetto Walls, p. 384.

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in "living it up." Such expenditures, of course, threaten his family and lower his status within it. The criticism of his peers further encourages unpredictability at work (absenteeism and hang-overs) which increase the likelihood that he will lose his job and his income.

Wellman, in his description of an encounter between the male and female participants, most of whom were Negroes, in a Youth Opportunity Program, confirms the greater affinity of lower-class females for middle-class norms.

The meeting was attended by both young men and women in the TIDE program. The young women were very well dressed and well groomed. Their clothes were not expensive, but were well cared for and in "good taste." Their hair was done in high-fashion styles. They looked, in short, like aspiring career women. The young men wore their usual dungarees or tight trousers, brightly colored shirts and sweaters, pointed shoes, and sunglasses.

The women sat quietly and listened politely. The men spoke loudly whenever they felt like it, and constantly talked among themselves.¹

The occasion for the assembly was a presentation by the local Congressman. When he finished speaking to the group the young men immediately engaged in baiting him with questions such as, "How do we get a raise, man?" The battle of the sexes had been joined before an answer could be formulated. The women scolded the men for their

¹David Wellman, "Putting On the Youth Opportunity Center," p. 104.

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"disrespectful behavior" toward an elected official. One said: "Here he is trying to help us and you-all acting like a fool. You talking and laughing and carrying on while he talking, and then when he finishes you want to know about a raise. Damn!"

Needless to say, the debate was heated, and while it progressed Wellman observed:

During the exchange it became clear to me that the differences in clothing and style between the sexes reflected their different orientations toward the dominant society and its values. In the minds of the young women, respect and respectability seemed paramount. . . . The women's identification with the values of white society became even clearer when the debate moved from what constituted respect and respectability to a direct attack on a personal level. . . .

The direction of the female attack corresponded closely with the basic assumptions of the TIDE program: People are without jobs because of themselves. This barrage hit the young men pretty hard. Their response was typical of any outraged male whose manhood has been threatened.¹

Wellman views the battle of the sexes in this respect as almost a class conflict. That is, while Negro women are more generally in harmony with the major values attached to work and success in our society, the men have generally been estranged from society, and have developed a cultural system complete with the values which flow from behaviors responsive to this estrangement.

¹ Ibid., pp. 105-06.

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Hence the Negro women stands in somewhat the same relation to Negro men as white society does.¹

Various explanations for this valuing difference between low-status men and women are advanced. For instance some social scientists feel that a mother's concern for her children, for whom she is motivated to secure a share in the "good life," accounts for her dogged persistence toward such goals. The relative insulation of women, in comparison to men, from the

¹Lower-class Negroes are more thoroughly researched and analyzed than any other single group in American society. Works concerned with the Negro Woman include: Edith Clark, My Mother Who Fathered Me (London: Allen and Unwin, 1957); William Grier and Price Cobbs, Black Rage (New York: Basic Books, 1968); Louis Kreisberg, Mothers in Poverty; Sylvia Porter, "Negro Women and Poverty," San Francisco Chronicle, August 5, 1969; Alvin Poussaint, "The Special Position of the Black Woman," Essence Magazine, April, 1970; Robert Staples, "The Myth of the Black Matriarchy," Black Scholar, January-February, 1970. Authors concerned with the total family include: Andrew Billingsley, Black Families in White America (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1968); Franklin E. Frazier, The Negro Family in the United States (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966); Herbert Gans, "The Negro Family: Reflections on the Moynihan Report," in The Moynihan Report and the Politics of Controversy, ed. by Lee Rainwater and William L. Yancey (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1967); William Goode, The Family (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1964); LeRoi Jones, Home: Social Essays (New York: William Morrow, Co., 1966); Hylan Lewis, "Agenda Paper No. V: The Family: Resources for Change, Planning Session for the White House Conference to Fulfill These Rights" (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1965); Daniel Moynihan, The Negro Family: The Case for National Action (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1965); Lee Rainwater, And the Poor Get Children (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, Inc., 1960); Barbara Whitaker, "Breakdown in the Negro Family: Myth or Reality?" New South, XXII, No. 4 (1967).

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futility of forever striving for goals beyond one's reach, which accompanies the males' encounters with society, is another.

Speaking of Negro women, Schwartz and Henderson hold that:

Work opportunities are more available for her than for her husband. She is, more often than not, at least a partial provider of the family income. She values work and working, and she values the notion of a man supporting his family. And she communicates these values to her children.¹

A woman's insulation is in reality the other side of the coin of a man's multiple opportunities for failure. There is an immense disjuncture between the demands on him as provider and his ability to meet those demands when he becomes unemployed and cannot or does not find another job. The result is a gradual unresponsiveness to traditional motivators.

This is the position taken in a paper presented to the 1963 annual meeting of the American Orthopsychiatric Association by Miller and Harrison.² Their concern is not with the conditioning events and economic structure which affect unemployment, but with the values and attitudes of

¹Michael Schwartz and George Henderson, "The Culture of Unemployment," in Blue-Collar World, ed. by Shostak and Gomberg, p. 468.

²S. M. Miller and Ira E. Harrison, "Types of Dropouts: The Unemployables," in Blue-Collar World, ed. by Shostak and Gomberg, pp. 478-86.

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the fifty boys, young men actually, white and Negro, whom they interviewed. The subjects were all school dropouts having difficulty in obtaining or keeping jobs, but most of whom seemed willing to work, even in low-wage positions. Their painful experiences have congealed into a dual outlook which divides life into the "now" world and the "if" world.

The world of today, the "now" world, is a world of concretes, of boundaries, of limited possibilities among which one can roam. But the "if" world is the world of what might happen, the world of the possible rather than the world of the probable, and that is seen quite differently. For in the world of the possible, one might get the lucky breaks, or settle down for the training which is necessary. But for almost all the boys, the important world is the "now" world. When they think of the "if" world, they are aware that it is not "now" and that they have to live immediately in the "now" world.¹

The interesting thing to note is that, when pressed to do so, these young men will indulge in projections about life as they would like it to be. Yet, for the most part, the researchers observed what appears to be a self-protecting device of refusing to invest oneself emotionally in any goals that cannot be realized in the "now" world. The actual valuing of anything beyond the limits of what is immediately possible, to the point of emotional stress, is avoided. Their method of coping with the world consists of riding with it rather than directing it, of accepting its concrete possibilities

¹ Ibid., p. 484.

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as goals, rather than harboring higher goals which are constantly frustrated. It is possible that any or all of the four qualities previously cited which render values and patterns of behavior malleable are operative in this situation, namely: (1) serial independence; (2) non-centrality to self-concept; (3) monitoring or feedback from oneself and one's peers, and (4) dependence on external circumstances for existence and expression.

The world of employment and the peer relationships formed around it, even and especially in its absence, is a source to which social scientists frequently turn as indicative of the values of low-status people. Work today provides the individual with resources that enable him to formulate his life-style through consumer activities. Except for members of the professions and the skilled trades for whom work becomes an end in itself and is valued for the satisfaction it provides, work has primarily a "means orientation," the normal instrument for garnering resources required for participating in the good life. The question that must arise is what happens when hard work as a means for achieving legitimate ends is no longer perceived by significant numbers of people as in accord with reality? This is a dissonance and tension-producing situation. Schwartz and Henderson conclude that in such circumstances:

Some restructuring of values must occur if the dissonance is to be resolved; we propose that what occurs is a general devaluation of work as a means

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of obtaining money and the substitution of other means. Moreover, it is reasonable to propose that a new community, in both the ecological and the social-psychological sense, comes into existence in which new values are communicated and shared and to which adolescent males are resocialized.¹

This is a specific and common instance of behavioral changes that precede but are eventually supported by transformations in valuing patterns. It is this pattern which we have found to be at the heart of the valuing process for the population under consideration in this study.

The Significance for Valuing of Soul
Rhetoric and Biculturation
Among Negroes

The concept of "soul" as interpreted by Ulf Hannerz in his research with low-status Negroes encompasses many of the elements which lend substance to an understanding of lower-class values and behaviors. Asserting with the majority of social scientists that lower-class Negroes have largely accepted the values of mainstream American culture, and would have preferred its style of life, Hannerz contends nevertheless:

There has been an adjustment to the lower-class situation, in which goals and values more appropriate to the ascribed social position of the group have been added to, and to some extent substituted for, the mainstream norms.²

¹Michael Schwartz and George Henderson, "The Culture of Unemployment," in Blue-Collar World, ed. by Shostak and Gomberg, p. 469.

²Ulf Hannerz, "The Significance of Soul," in Soul, ed. by Lee Rainwater, p. 24.

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Hannerz's thesis is that the vocabulary of soul has arisen in response to recent changes in race relations in the United States making the social barriers to achievement seem less impermeable to the ghetto population. The result for lower-class people facing a less than clear-cut exclusion from the opportunity structure is a feeling of ambivalence and uncertainty about one's actual chances.

This uncertainty is particularly strong for the younger male, the soul brother. While women have always been able to live closer to mainstream culture norms, as homemakers and possibly with a job keeping them in touch with the middle-class world, men have had less chance to practice and become competent in mainstream culture.¹

The significance of a valued self-identity and self-esteem is intensified because of the doubts about one's worth which occur for the lower-class person in juxtaposition to increasing ambivalence about his opportunities in the changing social structure. Whereas earlier, the lack of achievement could be explained easily by existing social barriers, in more recent years personal failures and deficiencies as causal to failure are also implied.

Hannerz views self-doubts arising in this situation as reducible in different ways.

Some young men, of course, are able to live up to mainstream norms of achievement, thereby reducing the strain on themselves (but at the same time increasing the strain on the others). Higher self-esteem can also be obtained by affirming that

¹Ibid., p. 26.

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the boundaries are still impermeable. A third possibility is to set new standards for achievement, proclaiming one's own achievements to be the ideals. It is not necessary, of course, that the same way of reducing self-doubt always be applied. In the case of soul, the method is that of idealizing one's own achievements, proclaiming one's own way of life to be superior.¹

The motive then of soul vocabulary, in Hannerz's view, is above all to reduce self-doubt by persuading soul brothers that they are successful. The impression is given that such individuals belong to a select group who are connoisseurs of their own special foods, music, and stylized manners of dress and speech that are eminently superior to any others. The rhetoric of soul is a device for convincing others of one's own worth and of their worth. Its basic function is to cast others into roles that satisfy them and at the same time support one's own position. As a way of meeting needs and satisfying desires in similar situations, the development of the concept of soul is supportive of distinct valuing patterns among lower-class Negroes. Hence what is soul is not only different from what is not soul (particularly what is middle-class American); it is also superior and therefore worthy of value. The term appraises as well as describes. The net result is to say that lower-class people, especially Negroes, possess two cultures--the mainstream culture with which they are relatively

¹ Ibid., pp. 26-27.

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familiar, soul rhetoric notwithstanding, and which is in many ways apparently preferable, though closed to them, and the ghetto culture, which is a second choice and is based on the circumstances of living in poverty.

Anthropologist Charles Valentine prefers to describe this situation in terms of a "bicultural model of Afro-American behavior." He sees biculturation as differing from the view of scholars such as Hannerz, William Stewart, and Stephen and Joan Bartz who are said to be proposing a "difference model" for Negro behavior which attempts to establish a single ghetto culture. A difference model, leaving aside the issue of the extent to which it is subscribed by any one researcher, contends that ghetto culture is a distinct system, exclusive of instead of intertwined with the dominant culture. Such a view would argue that the misfortunes of Afro-Americans in the contemporary United States are due to "culture conflict" leading to an inability of people brought up in "Negro culture" to understand or practice mainstream behaviors.¹

Valentine's proposal of a bicultural behavioral model hinges upon the evidence he sees for simultaneous commitment on the part of many Negroes to both Negro

¹Charles A. Valentine, "Deficit, Difference, and Bicultural Models of Afro-American Behavior," Harvard Educational Review, XLI, No. 2 (May, 1971), 137-57.

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culture and mainstream culture. The two cultures are therefore not mutually exclusive.

In support of the phenomenon of biculturation Valentine cites a study of Mesquakie Indians by Steven Polgar¹ in which Indians on a reservation were found to be simultaneously enculturated and socialized in two different ways of life, a contemporary form of their traditional Amerindian lifeways and mainstream Euro-American culture. Valentine remarks that, "in our view biculturation is the essence of the divided identity symbolized by the very name Afro-American and celebrated, dramatized and lamented by every major Black American artist and scholar."²

The author explains the strong appeal of biculturation as a key concept for making sense out of lower-class Negro patterns of life.

. . . The collective behavior and social life of the Black community is bicultural in the sense that each Afro-American ethnic segment draws upon both a distinctive repertoire of standardized Afro-American group behavior and, simultaneously, patterns derived from the mainstream cultural system of Euro-American derivation. Socialization into both systems begins at an early age, continues throughout life, and is generally of equal importance in most individual lives.³

¹Steven Polgar, "Biculturation of Mesquakie Teen-age Boys," American Anthropologist, LXII (1960), 217-35.

²Valentine, "Deficit, Difference, and Bicultural Models of Afro-American Behavior," Harvard Educational Review, 142.

³Ibid., p. 143.

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Each of the two patterns of behavior can be traced to its sources. Much of the intra-group socialization that takes place is focused within family units and primary sources, while mainstream acculturation comes more from wider sources. The distinction however is far from sharp or consistent. The former process is conditioned by ethnically distinct experiences, ranging from linguistic and other expressive patterns of life to exclusive associations like social clubs and recreational establishments, as well as some commercial products and mass media productions designed for ethnic markets.

The list of experiences contributing to mainstream socialization is limitless. It includes the content of most of the mass media, most products and advertising of mass marketing, the entire experience of public schooling, constant exposure to national fashions, holidays and heroes, church activities, public health services, as well as behaviors of parents and others which impinge on the home.

However, most significant to the purposes of this study Valentine contends that:

A good deal of the mainstream cultural content Afro-Americans learn remains latent and potential rather than being actively expressed in everyday behavior. One reason for this is that the structural conditions of poverty, discrimination, and segregation prevent people from achieving many mainstream middle-class values, aspirations, and role models to which they nevertheless give psychologically deeprooted

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allegiance. It seems that for the subordinate strata in plural systems, enculturation in the dominant way of life may often provide great familiarity with mainstream patterns but little opportunity to practice these patterns actively.¹

It is only natural to expect that man's evaluating tendencies will find other channels of expression in compensation and substitution for those goals and norms which he finds unattainable. To paraphrase the age-old "necessity is the mother of invention" dictum, "circumstances necessitate adaptations" in man's evaluating patterns as well as in his manner of eating, sleeping, or other forms of behavior. As stated in the discourse on the meaning of values in Chapter I, any theory of values must be formulated from the point of view of the valuing subject, and all values are situationally anchored.

Adaptation to circumstances is not necessarily detrimental to individuals who find that traditionally valued goals and behaviors are out of reach. For instance, Valentine goes on to observe that poor Afro-Americans--far from being either deficient or merely different in culture--as a consequence of the biculturation process, often possess a richer repertoire of varied life-styles and experiences than their so-called social superiors. We shall consider the implications of this for adult basic education in the next chapter. For the present, it is important to note that Valentine's notion of biculturation

¹Ibid., p. 144.

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among lower-class Negroes is consistent with Rodman's concept of lower-class "value stretch" and the hypothesis formulated by Kreisberg and illustrated by Rainwater, namely: that when lower-class people are prevented, for whatever reasons, from realizing conventional goals and values through accepted forms of behavior, other patterns of behavior emerge for the realization of substitute goals which are in turn supported by the valuing process.

Expansion of Rokeach's Conception
of the Valuing Process Through
Kreisberg's Four Principles

There is some very real questioning about the exact nature of this alternate value system. How real is it? Does it lend itself to systematic formulation? In response to this issue Kreisberg says that lower-class valuing can only be understood and formulated in the context of group sharing in socio-economic ranking. "Shared socio-economic position leads to shared values and beliefs, even if only at a primitive self-interest level, rather than a systematic ideological one."¹

In the analytic portion of his study of lower-class Negro men Liebow contributes a well-formulated synthesis on the quality and nature of valuing characteristic of low-status persons in general. Concerning their alternative value systems he says that they

¹Kreisberg, "The Relationship Between Socio-Economic Rank and Behavior," Social Problems, p. 339.

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. . . are not of the same order of values, either phenomenologically or operationally, as the parent or general system of values: they are derivative, subsidiary in nature, thinner and less weighty, less completely internalized, and seem to be value images reflected by forced or adaptive behavior rather than real values with a positive determining influence on behavior of choice. The alternative value system is not a distinct value system which can be separately invoked by its users. It appears only in association with the parent system and is separable from it only analytically. Derivative, insubstantial, and co-occurring with the parent system, it is as if the alternative value system is a shadow cast by the common value system in the distorting lower-class setting. Together, the two systems lie behind much that seems paradoxical and inconsistent, familiar and alien, to the middle-class observer from his one-system perspective.¹

This descriptive analysis is consistent with the research which documents the nearly universal penetration of conventional norms in practically every segment of American society. It agrees with the conclusion of most researchers that the valuing characteristic of the lower class is a forced choice system and a consequence of adaptive behaviors. However, while the system or patterns of valuing in question may be derivative, insubstantial, and not as operational as the parent system, from the perspective of the valuing lower-class person resources for sustaining any other system or operating in any other manner, no matter how preferable, are not routinely available. Responding to the obstacles which circumstances present to maintaining conventional values and behaviors with simple blind allegiance is simply not a

¹Liebow, Tally's Corner, p. 213.

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viable alternative. This would seem to be particularly true when the variable of prolonged or chronic poverty, a factor not yet examined by researchers for its long-range influence, is operative.

Under such circumstances the formula offered by Rokeach which views valuing as a function of value towards a behavior or norm in the abstract and value towards the same behavior or norm in the face of a situation, as discussed in Chapter I, is particularly appropriate. Rokeach's conception implies the vulnerability and even impotency of certain norms when they are stripped of their effective significance by the debilitating influence of inexorable circumstances.

Kreisberg specifies that the operational significance of any particular valuing pattern can be shorn of its stability and permanence in the event of (1) its serial independence, (2) its non-centrality to the core of the person's self, (3) the effect of feedback or monitoring by oneself or significant others, and (4) its dependence on circumstances external to the person for expression. Illustrations of the role played by these four qualities abound in the social science research on the lives of the poor. The remainder of this chapter serves to document the significance of this theoretical framework.

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The literature concerned with the concept of the deferred gratification pattern (DGP) is a case in point. Schneider and Lysgaard have provided the most compact summation of the DGP.¹ They have concluded that in contrast with middle-class life, lower-class life is characterized by an inability to defer gratification because of "impulse following" rather than "impulse renunciation." Their catalogue of lower-class, "impulse following" non-deferred gratification behavior includes: relative readiness to engage in physical violence, free sexual expression, minimum pursuit of education, low aspiration level, free spending, little emphasis on being well mannered and obedient. On the other hand, middle-class persons feel that they should save, postpone, and renounce a variety of gratification. In effect then, the DGP is usually discussed in the negative--that is, the emphasis is on the characteristics which result from its absence in low-status life.

Quite apart from the presumption of model opposite behaviors among members of the middle class which the catalogue of lower-class sins implies, there are certain other problems in the formulation of this inter-class comparison which are likely to arise if significant circumstances are overlooked and/or the presence of certain conditions is presumed.

¹Louis Schneider and Sverre Lysgaard, "The Deferred Gratification Patterns: A Preliminary Study," American Sociological Review, XVIII (April, 1953), 142-49.

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Miller, Riesmann, and Seagull have critiqued the DGP research. The following is their statement of the requisite conditions for a valid comparison:

1. The two class groups must equally value the satisfaction that is being deferred. If the object is less valued by the low income group, then obviously the interest in making immediate sacrifices is less.
2. The two class groups must have an equal understanding and opportunity to defer an immediate gain for a future reward. If one group is not presented with or is not aware of the opportunities of future gain, then we cannot infer from the fact that it has not deferred that it is unwilling to do so.
3. The two class groups must suffer equally from the deferment. If one class has many more other satisfactions, then it is difficult to equate the impact of the deferment. Or, if the penalty of postponement is greater for one of the groups, the comparison falls down.
4. The two class groups must have the same probability of achieving the gratification at the end of the deferment period. If one group has less risk than the other or has more confidence that the gratification will be forthcoming, then the comparison is not valid. Objective and subjective risk must be comparable.¹

Various authors have commented on the inadequacy of the DGP as a mode for analysis of lower-class life. Their remarks address various components of these four conditions. For instance, concerning the equality of suffering from the deferment and the improbability of it all, Stein comments:

¹S. M. Miller, Frank Riessman, and Arthur A. Seagull, "Poverty and Self-Indulgence: A Critique of the Non-Deferred Gratification Pattern," in Poverty in America, ed. by Louis A. Ferman, Joyce L. Kornbluh, and Alan Haber (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1969 edition), p. 421.

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Isn't the well-advertised motto, "Buy now, pay later," instant gratification? Has the middle-class family ever really denied itself anything it desperately needed or wanted? On the other hand, the practice of deferred gratification is the daily lot of the poor. Perhaps we should look into the possible absurdity of the deferred prize offered by the teacher or the school to explain why the child is not interested in waiting for it. Perhaps he knows he won't get it in the end anyway, because the school has no serious intention of giving it to him.¹

It can be added that the child's experiences of inability to obtain the rewards offered by the school becomes his experience as an adult with rewards offered by other institutions of society. Rainwater casts the problem in terms of impotency as a result of his research in the Pruitt-Igoe housing project.

An underlying sense of impotence that accurately reflects the nature of their lives is probably the central dynamic involved in the orientation toward immediate gratification of lower-class people, an orientation that is much noted in research and is strikingly apparent in Pruitt-Igoe. The traditional statement of this point of view is that lower-class people are not able to defer to long-term goals and are responsive only to the possibilities of immediate gratification. This manner of stating the situation implies that a failure to defer gratification is irrational and self-indulgent. In fact, however, people in a lower-class community such as Pruitt-Igoe cannot choose between immediate and deferred gratifications; the only gratifications available must be taken when they occur or must be foregone entirely.²

The deprivations characteristic of lower-class life which encourage immediate consumption of available

¹Annie Stein, "Strategies for Failure," Harvard Educational Review, p. 185.

²Lee Rainwater, Behind Ghetto Walls, p. 229.

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resources is not limited to material things. Interpersonal relationships such as those between spouses and between friends or relatives are not immune either, as Rainwater testifies.

Pruitt-Igoeans are socialized to enjoy and to give enjoyment immediately, because their relationships cannot be counted upon to be stable enough to encourage deferring gratification in the hope of a long-term and more secure flow of interpersonal rewards. The individual learns that he may be able to count on people to give him something right now, but even with the best of intentions they are not likely to reward any forbearance by producing gratification for him in the future. Similarly, he learns that what he can do for others he should do at once, because he does not sufficiently control his own life to count on being able to meet the needs of a good friend at some future time.¹

Rainwater and others consistently underline the unequal starting points between classes in the matter of deferring satisfaction. They also maintain, contrary to common understanding, the complete rationality and consistency of behaviors manifested by lower-class people in the face of unpredictable circumstances.

More importantly, however, for purposes of this study, the DGP is a graphic illustration of the impact upon valuing from both object and situation. Specific here-and-now rewards as well as spontaneity in interpersonal relationships come to be valued for their immediate pay-off. It is highly unlikely in the face of severely adverse circumstances that the valuing

¹Ibid.

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attached to staying in school, being a model employee, spouse, or parent, or saving one's money is so stable as to be invulnerable when such valuing is not:

(1) serially dependent on an ingrained family-of-origin pattern of valuing, (2) central to the core of one's personality, (3) free of the ridiculing influence of one's peers and the questioning of self-doubt, and (4) independent of external circumstances for its implementation. The extent however to which a specific valuing pattern is affected by any or all of these four qualities is a problem requiring data-gathering tools appropriate for each category of influence. The intent of this study is to provide the framework from which such an inquiry could be launched and to illustrate those areas of low-status life to which the framework seems to be the most applicable.

Kreisberg's¹ research with lower-class husbandless mothers sought to assess the relative vulnerability of specific behavior and valuing patterns to debilitating circumstances. His approach parallels but also extends Rokeach's concept in that he not only records the preference of lower-class people for specific values and behaviors in the abstract and then examines them again under real-life conditions; he also specifies the factors operative in real life that modify abstract values.

¹Kreisberg, Mothers in Poverty, pp. 262-65.

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For instance, Kreisberg hypothesized that in the abstract, when circumstances such as income and amount of time available for supervision of a child's school work were controlled among married and husbandless mothers across social strata, one would not expect to find much difference in values and aspirations regarding their children's education. His study substantiated this position. When the controls were removed these aspirations were severely restrained by difficulties encountered in realizing the abstract goals. It is entirely possible that any or all of the four conditions in Kreisberg's framework accounting for the malleability of values are operative in this example.

Kreisberg found too that residential areas can directly affect parental desire for their children's educational achievement by the norms and expectations held by the residents in the area. The conditions associated with lower-class residential areas seem to affect what is believed to be possible. The variables of amount of income, employment, and area of residence seem to force a more realistic consideration of what is attainable and thus, eventually, even with what would be desirable.

Similarly, his study revealed that while self-employment and living in privately owned housing are universally desirable across social strata, contemporary circumstances largely determine not only one's available

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choices about accepting or not accepting public assistance and living or not living in public housing, they also seem to determine one's feelings about doing so. That is, the tolerance for and indifference about such factors grew in proportion to the necessity thereof.¹ The outlines of mainstream values seem to lose their clarity when stretched to accommodate the exigencies of reality.

In the concluding portion of his work Kreisberg sums up his findings in terms of the four factors which render any behavior or valuing pattern susceptible to alteration. He has previously argued that insofar as behaviors and values were dependent upon others to be carried out, received clear feedback, were not central to a person's self-conception, and were serially independent, those behaviors and values would be vulnerable to contemporary circumstances. Kreisberg states in full:

On the whole, the conditions studied have these qualities. Certainly, whether or not one lives in a low-income neighborhood or more particularly, in public housing, is not simply a matter of personal taste, independent of the constraints and opportunities of other persons. Living in one rather than another neighborhood has many palpable consequences. It is not central to one's self-conception, although some dimensions of residential area have symbolic meanings which may be related to important self-conceptions. Finally, on the whole, where one lives is not very dependent upon previous residence in the city.

Being dependent upon welfare also has qualities which make it relatively susceptible to contemporary conditions. The availability of alternative sources of income, certainly for husbandless mothers, is

¹Ibid., pp. 152-55.

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very largely affected by others--from the former husband to government agencies and programs. There are many clear and immediate consequences of choosing one rather than another alternative. The choices have considerable serial independence if we consider only employment per se and not employment in a particular occupation. On the other hand, some aspects of the alternatives undoubtedly have implications for a mother's self-conception, since working and mothering activities have special meanings in a woman's socialization, and the activities are often viewed as somewhat competing in this society.¹

The tendency to formulate new evaluations toward, or at least increased tolerance for, the life-situations which poverty necessitates regarding such issues in particular as welfare and public housing is a manifestation of what many researchers label as the distinctiveness of the existential perspective of lower-class people in general.

For instance, Lewis found evidence of this distinctive existential perspective among the same lower-class mothers who professed very conventional goals in the areas of educational and occupational aspirations for their children. Lewis relates that while one is struck by the conventionality and ordinariness of the mothers' aspirations, there is also frequently communicated, "a combination of realism and pessimism, a kind of wise weariness that may appear to belie the very educational or career goals they express. . . ."²

¹Ibid., p. 293.

²Hylan Lewis, Culture, Class and Poverty, p. 28.

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This existential perspective is substantiated by compatible findings of nearly all investigators. Their composite conclusion is that from the viewpoint of the lower class the world is a hostile and relatively chaotic place in which one must be always on guard and careful about trusting others, in which the reward for effort expended is always problematic, and in which good intentions net very little.

The Formulation of Lower-Class Meaning Systems

While the four-fold elements of serial independence, non-centrality to self-concept, significant feedback, and dependence on external circumstances may account in part for the formulation of new valuing and behavior patterns, the distinctive existential perspective of lower-class persons, exposure to these four conditions does not entirely explain the process which takes place. We need to give more specific attention to what some social scientists call the "meaning systems" which make up this perspective.

Philip Phenix underscores the universality of man's tendency to order and make rational his relations with significant persons and things in life such as mates, children, kin, friends, work, recreation, and possessions. In sum, he states that, "human beings are essentially

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creatures who have the power to experience meanings. Distinctively human existence consists in a pattern of meanings."¹

The position taken in this study, which seems entirely consistent with both the research on lower-class life we have reviewed and with the writings of sociologist Herbert Blumer² and psychologist-educator, Jack Mezirow,³ is that neither values nor behaviors can be entirely understood without first accounting for the mediating process through which the individual actively assigns meaning to his situation. This pragmatic approach to both the valuing process and the assignment of meaning to situations, in Mezirow's words:

. . . negates a commonly accepted interpretation among social scientists that meaning is somehow intrinsic to the thing that has it and so may be recognized without involving the process of a person's construction of meanings.⁴

Mezirow is referring to the common assumption among some observers of social life in general and

¹Philip Phenix, Realms of Meaning (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1964), p. 5. (Emphasis in original.)

²Herbert Blumer, Symbolic Interactionism, Perspective and Method (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1969).

³Jack Mezirow, "Toward a Theory of Practice," Adult Education, XXI, No. 3 (1971), 135-47.

⁴Ibid., p. 137.

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lower-class life in particular that valuing or meaning systems are relatively autonomous factors and hence operate to determine or bring about behaviors characteristic of a given group. We prefer to conceive of meaning systems as mediating between past and present and future experience.

It has been made abundantly clear that the four conditions rendering traditional values vulnerable to circumstances are particularly potent in the lives of lower-status persons. This does not imply however that the construction of meaning and its attendant consequence of value formation are absent.

Drawing upon the work of Blumer, Mezirow explains the mediation which takes place in terms of symbolic interactionism:

The meaning of an object--be it an animate or inanimate physical object, a category of people, institution, ideal, activity, or situation--arises out of the ways others act toward the person with regard to that object in the process of human interaction. Thus an individual constructs meaning through an active process of interpreting what is going on in his situation. Meanings emerge out of human interaction as rules or habits of action. They are evoked by concrete objects which can be identified as symbols.¹

The meaning systems of lower-class people we have seen seem to evolve from the basic socio-economic situations in which they find themselves. Over time, in both poverty and affluence, our meaning systems

¹Ibid. (Emphasis in original.)

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acquire an established, taken-for-granted character, unless and until new conditions are inserted into what Mezirow calls, "the very process of growth itself--the interaction with self and others by which an individual learns to cope with his world, engages in problem solving, and changes his behavior."¹

It is the peculiar tendency of lower-class people in the United States who are highly socialized in the goals and norms of conventional society to structure their interaction with others, their problem-solving techniques and behaviors in terms of a two-fold dichotomized meaning system. Several researchers draw attention to the tendency on the part of low-status persons to divide their world into the good life, including ideas about what ought to be, and our life, which spells out how things really are and the strategies of behavior called for under such circumstances.

The descriptions and conclusions from studies of lower-class life which follow are selected for their utility in allowing us to "get inside of the defining process" out of which meanings and values are constructed and pragmatic adjustments to external and internal stresses and deprivations are devised. In particular our concern will be with two different but nevertheless overlapping areas of life among the lower class and the

¹Ibid., p. 138.

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meaning systems which have developed, namely first, social relationships, and second, marriage and family life.

In the first instance, the conception of what characterizes informal social relations with relatives, friends, and associates as part of the good life in the abstract are clear enough. In a good world the "golden rule" would work. People would be considerate, helpful, understanding, fair, and mutually supportive. Rainwater found that his respondents in the Pruitt-Igoe housing area expressed over and over again their very strong wishes that such relationships would exist within families, among relatives, between friends and neighbors. In the abstract, relatives and friends were exempt from the generalized sense of mistrust which characterizes the lower-class world view. It was found that beliefs about how relatives should relate to each other were quite conventional: blood is thicker than water, and one ought to be able to depend on one's relatives for help and understanding when needed. The same general norms applied to friends and neighbors, but with less force.

The real world, however, is something else again, as Rokeach's concept would indicate. Instead of the golden rule there is the constant emphasis that one must be on guard against being taken advantage of by other people; one must be distrustful of others, no matter how close.

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In analyzing the responses to questionnaires and recorded observations made during field work the Pruitt-Igoe research team discovered a set of core concerns about the dangers of close relationships with others, whether relatives, friends, or neighbors. Basically, these concerns are with "using and being used." In the words of the report:

Given these dangerous potentialities in their relationships with relatives and friends, Pruitt-Igoeans draw a number of conclusions as guides to survival in their milieu. In addition to being on guard when one communicates with others, no matter how close, he tries not to count on others for much, not to expect others to live up to their putative responsibilities as relatives or friends. Instead, one expects to manipulate others to get what he wants--and this manipulation, of course, reinforces the generalized mistrust each has of the other.¹

One need not strain his cognitive faculties to conclude that something has happened to the traditional value that is accorded to each individual person or to conclude that if friends, relatives, and neighbors are distrusted, representatives of the caretaker institutions, including the schools, will be subject to the greatest mistrust.

A second level of distrust is also apparently interspersed in lower-class relationships. Not only is there the fear of losing material resources when one's guard is down, but another commonly perceived danger is the loss of one's identity resources. Typically those

¹Lee Rainwater, Behind Ghetto Walls, p. 72.

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whose identity and self-image are open to serious challenge have the most difficulty in living up to the responsibilities placed upon them. Clearly the best survival strategy is to minimize or avoid the responsibilities which the conventional norms of the good life would have one assume--to spouse, to children, to relatives, to employer, to others. The claims made upon one by the norms of the good life are too great a burden to meet under the usual conditions of lower-class life. The lesson to be learned is that relationships are brittle. Hence the reasonable person takes care not to place too much strain on them lest they shatter. In the existential perspective of lower-class people

. . . the individual knows that he cannot make good on many of the claims that others have the abstract right to make on him--the claim of a wife that he should provide well for his family, that he should be faithful, that he should not spend his time in the streets. One must be careful in the way he conducts himself with others so that he does not promise more than he can deliver.¹

Let it be clear however that exploitive, manipulative, and what from a middle-class perspective are largely irresponsible behaviors, are not advanced by responsible researchers as evidence of a preferred or intrinsically desirable way of life in the minds of lower-class persons. Rather, such behaviors are nearly always cast in the form of "because" statements: because

¹Ibid., p. 75.

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other people will take advantage of me, because I have so few resources available to me, because everything is unpredictable. The "because" statements made by low-status persons then are essentially accommodations to real-life circumstances. When pressed to do so the same persons will juxtapose these "because" statements with "if only" statements revealing their awareness of and preference for a world in which needs and means have a more proportionate relationship. Alternate adaptive "deviant" strategies are nevertheless routinely adopted which in time are supported by congruent valuing.

Social and interpersonal relationships among lower-class persons are handled through the previously documented adaptive strategies because the conventional norms which guide such relationships among middle-class persons do not possess the requisite serial dependence, centrality to the self-concept, absence of peer-feedback, and freedom from external circumstances for expression to be maintained amidst the debilitating circumstances of lower-class life. In fact the available evidence would indicate that everything about the lower-class setting militates against the formation and realization of a conventional meaning system regarding such relationships. An alternate one is both understandable and inevitable.

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Using Rokeach's conceptualization, it is possible to trace the development of a similar alternate meaning system undergirding the patterns of behavior in the areas of marriage and family life that are characteristic of this social stratum.

A synthesis of the social science research would find nearly unanimous consent to the following norms among lower-class persons in both rural and urban settings: (1) To have the good family life, there must be a good man and a good woman at the head of the family. (2) A good man must have a steady income and he must be faithful. (3) A good woman must be faithful; she must want to be respected and must seek that respect from her husband and from the community around her. She must be willing to maintain a conventional home in which the children are supervised and the husband's needs are catered to. (4) Being married also implies settling down, giving up some of the alluring self-indulgent possibilities of the single life. (5) With love and marriage should come the development of mutual understanding, and consideration of each other's needs and hopes.

The description could be extended but the point is that the realization of these ideals would produce a style of life distinguishable only in accidentals from the average American's. Indeed, many individuals who are poor were found to express the conviction that

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it is possible to maintain these norms regardless of poverty. Yet while it was maintained by some that other persons should live up to such standards, very few people were actually found in the available social science research who held themselves responsible for not realizing these ideals in the face of their limited resources. In other words, the four factors which render traditional values susceptible to change in other realms seem also to be operative in the marriage and family life of poor people.

As in other areas of life, stability is only possible when marriage and family life are not subject to heavy external pressures. Examples of such pressure are abundant in the literature. These sources categorize the pressures into: (1) those that come from the economic marginality which affects the husband's ability to fulfill his role as provider, (2) those which come from the seductions and depredations of the outside social world, especially in the urban setting, and (3) those which arise in a context of deep suspicion of others as untrustworthy, including one's spouse.

The opposite of the male's economic marginality is the phenomenon of the female-centered household, so often noted by researchers especially among the Negro poor. This matrifocal pattern of living simply means that, "the continuing existence of the family is focused

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around the mother, that the father is regarded (to a greater or lesser degree) as marginal to the continuing family unit composed of mother and children."¹

What is essentially an economic issue often eventually takes on the nature of a moral question. That is, even the victims, the husbands and wives involved, end up by interpreting the male's economic marginality as indicative of shiftless irresponsibility, laziness, and moral decay, all capable of reversal through determination, self-denial, greater effort, and perseverance. The folk explanations have it that "men are just like that." They are "naturally irresponsible."

The patterns of interaction between the married partners which develop in response to conditions of poverty are devastating. Rainwater sums up the situation:

Because of their (husband's) marginality, they are locked in an asymmetrical power relationship in which it is much easier for wives to earn respect and status than it is for husbands. Wives are often attracted by the possibilities of earning status with other women by attacking and demeaning their husbands, contrasting their own strength as family heads. The husband often reacts punitively in a desperate effort to regain status and respect, at least for his power to disrupt things. He may do this by flaunting his disloyalty or by physical efforts to assert his authority over his family, but in both cases the very methods by which he seeks to impress the family lower further his legitimacy in their eyes.²

It is quite conceivable that behavior which is inimical to the marriage does more to bolster a husband's

¹Ibid., p. 164.

²Ibid., p. 165.

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self-concept as a man and more easily merits favorable feedback from peers than behaviors conducive to marriage and family stability. He will often feel that he must spend time with other men in the streets and pubs to retain a measure of self-respect and not be regarded as a henpecked husband. Quite naturally wives are uneasy about such activities, and especially resent the diverting of money away from the home. Husbands, for their part, feel a disjunction between the demands made on them as providers and their ability to meet those demands. Even should a husband greatly value the importance of maintaining his home and family, the stability of this value is almost entirely dependent upon the favorableness of external circumstances beyond his control.

The evidence is strong that the value placed on a good marriage and the concomitant behaviors which insure it are not nearly as central to a man's self-concept, as serially dependent, as free from peer feedback, or as independent of external circumstances for their expression as are behaviors and values which contribute to marital instability.

All of this, of course, affects the meaning of marriage. Given the circumstances of male marginality and its reverse phenomenon of matrifocality, marriage, instead of being a long-term relationship to be cherished

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and protected, takes on the limited properties of an initiation rite, signifying only coming of age and maturity as an adult. It is understandable that the marital partners scale down their expectations for marriage based upon the orientations they receive from their immediate surroundings. The orientations they receive from their own needs and from the larger society is quite another matter. The desperate interpersonal needs and anxieties of the partners, needs and anxieties heightened by their depriving existence, lead them to make heavy demands on each other. These demands are often expressed as conflicts over resources, over roles, and over loyalty.

Among lower-class Negroes especially but not exclusively, researchers describe the extra-marital or extra-familial orientations of both young men and women in terms of the "expressive life style" as opposed to the "instrumental life style." The former is variously called the "action-seeking" way of life and the "cats and kicks" syndrome.¹ The basic characteristic of an expressive life-style is development of what Rainwater calls the "self-as-currency" model. His review of community studies of lower-class life as well as the field data from the Pruitt-Igoe project suggest that the

¹Herbert Gans, *The Urban Villagers* (New York: The Free Press, 1962); Harold Finestone, "Cats, Kicks, and Color," *Social Problems*, V (July, 1957).

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many deviations from conventional norms among young lower-class adults are variations on the expressive theme.

The expressive "self-as-currency" style of life implies the cultivation of a dramatic self-image, the main purpose of which is the entertainment of one's peers. It is an accepted way of interacting without assuming new obligations or impossible duties and expectations. In the meantime instrumental orientations to living, represented by the world of work or school where performance is objectively evaluated and carefully measured, can be consistently downgraded. The instrumental areas of life are tolerated and recognized as useful only for keeping body and soul together from day to day. Self-expression, on the other hand, is emphasized, elaborated, and held out as possessing intrinsic merit. Rainwater identifies some forms of self-expression as typical lower-class behaviors.

This elaboration of an expressive self plays a central dynamic role in most forms of lower class deviant behavior. It is directly relevant as a motivating force for alcohol and drug involvement of all kinds. The culture encourages individuals to seek idiosyncratic and nonrational experiences, such as fighting as a self-maximizing mode of relating to the world . . . or sexual activity as a way of presenting the self as unique and powerful. In all of these activities two things are going on at the same time: the individual is experiencing a heightened sense of himself as a total being and he is accumulating an attractive social identity.¹

¹ Lee Rainwater, Behind Ghetto Walls, p. 379.

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Lower-class persons are in the unenviable position of having low expectation of rewards from the traditional reward sectors of employment and family life. In their world this situation calls for adaptive "go for yourself" strategies in which one relies on the appreciative response of one's peers as the principle measurement of success. Therefore the cultivation, especially among lower-class Negroes, of a particular kind of dramatic self to which others will respond favorably is a form of valid identity. Horton's respondents identified "style" as one significant element of the dramatic self.

Style is difficult to define as it has so many referents. It means to carry one's self well, dress well, to show class. In the ideology of the street, it may be a way of behaving. . . . Style may also refer to the use of gestures in conversation or in dance. It may be expressed in the loose walk, the jivey or dancing walk, the slow cool walk, the way one "chops" or "makes it" down the street.¹

Obviously, in the development of the dramatic self, the whole emphasis is on qualities, on what a person is by virtue of his actions rather than on any instrumental role in the world of work or school. The forms and qualities change. Styles of behavior and fashion are subject to much attention over time. Regardless of the form however, the dramatic self as functional in the formation of a valid identity remains an important element in the expressive style of life. It also remains

¹John Horton, "Time and Cool People," in Soul, ed. by Rainwater, pp. 45-46.

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markedly at variance from the official socialized instrumental self legitimated by conventional American society. The one exception, however, is when the lower-class Negro is able to make the dramatic self pay off in an occupational role such as athlete, dancer, or singer. Otherwise, the behaviors which so many researchers have witnessed as highly valued by the lower-class person seem to the middle class simply an expression of the shiftlessness, irresponsibility, and lack of ambition among this social stratum.

To the lower-class person an instrumental orientation frequently involves frustrating or punishing experiences. When a young man who has set out to be someone through the cultivation of a dramatic self moves into the labor market, he finds he has few of the skills that market requires. Furthermore, he has a great deal of doubt about achieving a valid self-identity in an occupational role. As a result, many lower-class young men assign, at least temporarily if not permanently, a low priority to work stability in their lives. We have previously cited one study which interpreted this low priority for employment as giving rise to what the authors call a new "culture of unemployment."¹ One manifestation of this low priority is to engage in

¹Schwartz and Henderson, "The Culture of Unemployment," in Blue-Collar World, ed. by Shostak and Gomberg, pp. 468-76.

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behavior which inevitably leads to being dismissed, and then to stretch out the time between jobs while exhibiting a strong preference for getting along in ways that do not require one to be a steady worker and a good provider.

The pattern described to this point is not, of course, the whole story. Men do not hold to expressive styles of life without some ambivalence creeping in. While there are sufficient forces which encourage individuals to search for a valid identity in an expressive style of life, there are also good reasons for pursuing an instrumental role which allows one to earn his rewards as a good provider and respectable employee. In effect this means that the expressive life style is not always sufficient for the satisfaction of one's needs. This may be because the rewards from expressive activities are meager and quickly evaporate. Or it may be that lower-class individuals have internalized the standards of the larger society more thoroughly than is immediately apparent. A variety of reasons may lie behind an individual's decision to forsake his expressive identity for some instrumental role and to moderate behavior that is detrimental to the performance of this new role.

Nevertheless, even the latter category of individuals continue to regard expressive styles of life and expressive achievements as expectable, understandable, and at times, desirable alternatives which one may

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legitimately choose in situations in which it is not possible to establish a valued self-identity while performing the roles available in the established conventional institutions. The decision to move in either direction is not irrevocable. Considerable alternation between styles of life may occur in one life-time, even in one week.

It is remarkably clear and demonstrable that instrumental roles are clearly at a disadvantage to expressive ones in the struggle to become serially dependent, to acquire centrality to the lower-class person's self-concept, to attain the reinforcement of peer support, and to find favorable external circumstances for their maintenance. Most of the conditions of lower-class life seem to give expressive roles a head start in all four categories.

Review and Summary

The intention of this chapter has been to assess the valuing component of lower-class life in American society by providing illustrations of its operation from several social science reports. Our goal has been to build upon the theoretical base provided in Chapters I and II, and furthermore, to advance our understanding of the valuing variable by examining the conditions to which the valuing process is particularly vulnerable. No claim is made that either the social science research here reported or the elements of lower-class life it

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illustrates are entirely exhaustive. Nevertheless, this study does maintain that its assessment of the valuing variable for this population is significant and representative of the research on which it is based. Throughout the chapter we have given particular attention to what is called the existential perspective of lower-class people as this perspective is formulated in the conflict each person experiences between the three-fold forces of (1) his own needs, (2) the orientations he receives from those persons and circumstances that immediately surround him, and (3) the orientations offered by the representatives of the larger society. The interactions experienced between and within these three forces are productive of meaning systems and supportive values distinctive to the perspective of lower-class persons in response to their situation.

While it is the nearly unanimous finding of studies of the lower class that its members subscribe wholeheartedly to conventional mainstream American norms, such behaviors and valuing patterns undergo alteration in the formulation of adaptive strategies when lower-class persons find themselves unable to implement and achieve conventional norms and goals. This adaptation and adoption of alternative forms of behavior which are further supported by congruent valuing patterns takes place in almost every aspect of lower-class life:

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marriage and family life, social and interpersonal relations, self-regulating and gratification patterns, and employment. It has been especially apparent that the forces affecting a person's performance in any of his several roles overlap and spill over into all the roles.

Furthermore the likelihood of alternate behavior and valuing patterns being formulated is increased and the process accelerated in direct proportion to the extent to which conventional versions of behaviors and their supportive valuing patterns are serially independent, non-central to the person's self-concept, subject to monitoring by oneself and significant others, and dependent upon external circumstances for expression and maintenance.

We have utilized Rokeach's concept of valuing as a product of the interaction between an abstract norm and specific circumstances which affect it. In addition, the above four factors enumerated by Kreisberg as a framework for explaining the manner in which valuing is formulated, were employed as a refinement of the more general process accounted for by Rokeach.

In Chapter IV we will consider the consequences of the preceding assessment of valuing processes of low-status people as they relate to two different forms of strategies for changing the quality of life for low-status Americans. The distinctive existential

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perspective of the poor, emerging as it does in concert with their characteristic valuing processes, is differently accounted for and impacted by such strategies depending upon whether they are functional or structural in their orientation.

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CHAPTER IV

VALUING IN THE CONTEXT OF ANTI-
POVERTY STRATEGIES

Introduction

Our investigation to this point reveals that the valuing processes of lower-class people in American society involve three separate but closely interwoven conceptual strands, so closely blended as to reinforce one another and function as one. Furthermore, it appears that the three strands or elements involved in lower-class valuing constitute generic principles, applicable across social strata. Only the particular or accidental manifestations are changed within separate social classes. The research reviewed in the previous chapter provided evidence of valuing as it occurs among the lower class.

We have seen first, that valuing is an activity, a behavior, an action as basic to human life as breathing. This behavior identifies what a man or a people consider to be worthy, admirable, beautiful, or at least preferable among alternatives. These qualities are attributed and

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valuing occurs when the realization or performance of some activity satisfies and fulfills various levels of need.

Second, and as a logical consequence of the relationship between valuing and satisfaction of need, the behaviors we adopt in the course of making choices among available alternatives, the testing we do for viable options in fulfillment of societal roles, the strategies we devise for establishing some proportion between our needs and our means, precede the possibility of our valuing them.

Behavioral strategies differ, however, in their capacity to provide satisfaction for different levels of need. For example, while suspicion and distrust of one's spouse and one's companions may provide some measure of safety from exploitation of one's scarce resources, at the same time such behaviors and valuing of them preclude other behaviors that might lead to fulfillment of one's higher needs such as love, affection, and belongingness.

In any case, valuing is preceded by the forms of behavior it supports, and usually without much reflective assessment on the relative merits of one behavior over another on a long-range basis. Such "evaluation" while notably absent among persons of all social strata, has particularly punishing consequences for the poor, and is therefore even more likely to be avoided by them.

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Behaviors and the valuing they elicit evolve more from the push of necessity and the pull of habit than from calculated choice.

A third function of the valuing process follows in cause-consequence progression from the previous two. As valuing follows upon the heels of satisfaction--born of behaviors adopted in view of the restricting circumstances of poverty, over time the sequential order of effect is reversed. What began as a reinforcing congruence-building phenomenon, takes on the force of a legitimizing norm. In addition to providing satisfying reinforcement, valuing as an activity acquires the stature of statute and normative standard. The progression from "valuing" to "value" does not however imply a process of abstraction in which the valuing subject removes himself from his circumstances and deliberately constructs values as norms. As with both the first and second strands of our conceptual thread, values have their origin in potential behaviors selected and activated from available behavior options. That is to say, a behavioral strategy receives its "value canon" not because it is possible in some Camelot world but because it has already proven its capacity for meeting human needs and assuaging human desires in this world, more particularly, the world of the valuing subject.

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A rather obvious but nevertheless frequently unrecognized corollary follows in consequence of these three conceptual strands. It has already been described but bears repeating. It is that a man values what he can value. That is to say, societal and institutional structural arrangements make some behavioral options available to some persons and not to others. Only when the potential of a given behavior for fulfillment of human need has been proven through experience does it come to be valued and eventually acquire the status of norm. Middle- and upper-class people value conventional "acceptable" behaviors, first because they have labeled them as such (rather than as deviant) and secondly, because experience has proven their capacity to provide satisfaction and fulfillment. This is to say that for such people such behaviors are available, encouraged, and even enforced through effective sanctions. Or to make the same point in negative form, it is not because of any innate superiority of intelligence or virtue or stamina that members of the higher social classes acquire the values they do, but rather because of opportunity and expectation.

Social science research indicates that members of the lower class in American society are clearly aware of and express a preference for, that is they value, conventional middle-class behaviors and norms. At the

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same time, however, in the process of adapting to their specific situations, poor people devise and come to value behaviors that are at variance from behaviors practiced and valued by the middle class. Out of this difference in existential circumstances arise significant relational and attitudinal problems for anyone who would reduce the differences in social class on the basis of the three indices of education, income, and employment. In this study we limit our assessment of the implications from lower-class valuing to adult basic education.

Two schools of thought have arisen with different conceptions of the problem of poverty and correspondingly different solutions to it. One adopts the Structural and the other the Functional approach as indicated briefly at the outset of this thesis. Adult basic education represents primarily a functional solution. It derives its fundamental definitions of and solutions for the problems of poverty on the basis of functional considerations. In order to better understand those considerations we need to examine the differences between the structural and functional definitions of poverty and their respective solutions to behavioral and value differences between social classes.

This chapter then is divided into four parts with the following objectives for each: I. Introduction--review and preparation for subsequent sections;

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II. Structural and Functional approaches to poverty, described according to their separate objectives and most commonly recognized strengths and weaknesses; III. Each of the two major strategies examined for its concern with and its impact upon lower-class valuing; IV. Adult Basic Education, as a functional strategy in which lower-class valuing differences are addressed.

Structural and Functional Causes
and Solutions of the Poverty
Problem

Neither structural nor functional "ideologies" concerning the nature of poverty's causes and solutions exist in pure form. As a strategy each incorporates some of the methods and objectives of the other. Our purpose in this section is to indicate the broad contour of each strategy category in terms of its assumptions and objectives, presuming that while each is directed at the elimination of poverty, there are fundamental differences in the degree to which relational and attitudinal problems stemming from behavior and valuing differences surface and need to be accounted for by each.

Parenthetically, of course, there are some explanations for poverty which are motivated by a desire to avoid the real issue. This is accomplished by arguing that the poor are either immoral, pathological, biologically inferior, culturally different, or maybe even

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heroic. Any of these labels serves the purpose, to relieve the advocate of any sense of responsibility to deal with the poor as rational and respect-worthy persons.

In a more sincere and objective vein, there are those first, for whom the structural nature of poverty is central. That is, poverty is viewed as primarily a matter of lack of access to necessary resources. Our societal institutions and opportunity structures arbitrarily lock out and admit individuals on the basis of criteria over which they have no control. The structural diagnosis is concerned basically with changing social conditions and man-made poverty-producing situations in order to achieve what some writers have termed "allocative justice."

In a review and synthesis of the objectives behind several different types of structural anti-poverty programs Rein and Miller describe them as designed to provide equal access to employment and education thereby restoring "allocative justice." Such is the case when

. . . policy is guided by a commitment to the more equitable distribution of benefits--who gets what, where, how, and why. This model emphasizes equal opportunity for investment in career, jobs and education and for the redistribution of amenities, income, and resources necessary for well being.¹

¹Martin Rein and S. M. Miller, "Poverty Program and Policy Priorities," Transaction, IV (September, 1967), 65.

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Such programs, as we have previously seen are primarily, if not exclusively, concerned with the societal structures which maintain and perpetuate poverty. The term "structuralists" will serve in this study for reference to the proponents of such programs.

It is possible, of course, to make the value assumptions of differing anti-poverty policies the subject of research in itself. For instance, the authors quoted above maintain that some of our social policies formulated to eliminate poverty hold this objective in second place, subordinate to other goals such as economic growth, social stability, or physical renewal of urban centers. The value choices implicit in the establishment of these and other priorities for social programs, as well as the consequences accruing to each of them in terms of political and organizational feasibility constitutes a separate issue with its own concerns.

Programs designed to eradicate functional causes for poverty address themselves to remedying the personal inadequacies of individuals. It is the contention of this school of thought, whose proponents we will call "functionalists," that while injustices with regard to equal opportunities as presently available in the social order do indeed exist, the functional disabilities of poor people must first or at least simultaneously be addressed before increased access to resources can be

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utilized as an effective leverage for removing poverty. The functional diagnosis aims then at the rehabilitation and improvement of individuals through psychological and primarily educational programs of which adult basic education is an excellent example. The underlying premise is that a person or group of people must first acquire and perfect the knowledge and skills requisite for functioning in an advanced technological society if they are to respond successfully to the opportunities which will hopefully become increasingly available.

Some strategies are hybrids hopefully combining the best of both approaches. For instance, the Model Cities method of securing local resident representation on decision-making task forces through neighborhood elections is a "participation oriented strategy." The functional element is provided for as indigenous residents acquire personal and political knowledge and skills necessary for more complete participation in the democratic process. Structural objectives are in play when participation in the political order is intended to make the system more responsive to its many constituencies.

It can be argued that functional strategies for overcoming poverty take more realistic account of the poor as a heterogeneous group. Some have been poor for generations, others are poor periodically; some are downwardly mobile, others are upwardly mobile. Many

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already share middle-class values and have made them operational; others are aware of such values but functionally take no cognizance of them. Some have become so used to the defense mechanisms they have learned for coping with deprivation that they have difficulty in adapting to new opportunities. Some have physical or emotional illnesses that effectively block the possibility of utilizing any new opportunities that may come their way. Perhaps functional strategies enjoy greater flexibility with regard to such individual differences; though in the educational enterprise today there are certainly more critics than defenders of the schools' capacity for flexibility.

On the other hand, structural strategies seem to manifest a much clearer and more realistic appreciation for the non-personal nature and external origin of poverty problems. Consistent personal patterns of behavior can perhaps be best explained not on an individual basis but as responses to particular conditions within the opportunity structure. As C. Wright Mills stated some years ago:

When in a city of 100,000 only one man is unemployed, that is his personal trouble, and for its relief we properly look to the character of the man, his skills, and his immediate opportunities. But when in a nation of 50 million employees, 15 million are unemployed, that is an issue, and we may not hope

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to find its solution within the range of opportunities open to any one individual. The very structure of opportunities has collapsed.¹

Since, from an historical perspective, the traditional American answer to poverty has been to rehabilitate and improve the capacity of individuals to better their lot through individual effort, social science research tools have frequently been employed to serve the purpose of functionally oriented strategies. Increasingly prominent, however, in social science research is the tendency to begin a study with the expressed purpose of learning more about individual functional disabilities of poor people and their so-called pathologies only to conclude with emphasis on structural and institutional causes of poverty-perpetuation and with recommendations more structural than functional in orientation.

Our own study, based upon several independently conducted researches into behaviors and values as related to controlling circumstances, lends credence to the reasonableness of this shift in perspective. The circumstances or situations confronting the poor, as presented and analyzed in studies reported in the previous chapter, guarantee failure. Failure, in turn, precipitates survival strategies, eventually valued in themselves for their capacity to provide some measure of need-satisfaction.

¹C. Wright Mills, The Sociological Imagination, as quoted in Harry L. Miller and Roger R. Woock, Social Foundations of Urban Education (Hinsdale, Ill.: Dryden Press Inc., 1970), p. 24.

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Thus behaviors and values, personal in the sense of performed by and sustained within individuals, are ultimately traceable to social structures beyond the control of the individuals whose poverty they insure. That this is so is the final conclusion of several studies initially designed to examine functional inadequacies of lower socio-economic populations.

Rainwater, for instance, relates in the preface to his report on the Pruitt-Igoe housing project:

Our original intention was to learn about people in the project in order to assist government agencies involved in developing more effective social welfare programs. Later the concern shifted toward questions involving the changes in the socio-economic system necessary to eliminate inequalities suffered by the residents.¹

In Washington D.C. Hylan Lewis began his study of lower-class mothers with the intention of recording their attitudes and values in regard to such issues as illegitimacy, welfare, public housing, and child-rearing practices. Commenting later on the study he states:

It is important that we not confuse basic life chances and actual behavior with basic cultural values and preferences. . . . The focus of efforts to change should be on background conditions and on precipitants of the deviant behaviors rather than on presumably different class or cultural values.²

¹Rainwater, Behind Ghetto Walls, p. vii.

²Hylan Lewis, "Culture, Class and the Behavior of Low Income Families" (paper presented for Conference on Views of Lower Class Culture, New York City, June 27-29, 1963). (Emphasis added.)

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Similarly, Liebow's study of lower-class males focuses primarily on their functional roles as husband, employee, parent, and friend. But the levers of change, he concludes, are in the social machinery which consistently perpetuates failure.¹

Annie Stein specifies racism as the particular institutional and structural barrier perpetuating poverty. She vehemently lashes out at those who would locate the pathology of the ghetto within the individual child's or adult's functional deficiencies in school or on the job. Early in this study attention was given to the host of researchers, cited by Stein, who provide "evidence" of ghetto pathologies. By rejecting the position of the functionalists she lays the blame for poverty on the door-steps of our social institutions, in particular the schools, where the poor are the victims of "daily, bitter discrimination and exploitation." Her analysis concludes:

The role of the "honest" social scientist must be to begin the systematic study and exposure of the pathology, not of the ghetto, but of the oppressing society. The teacher, the principal, the boards of education, the economic and political forces that program the action, must be the subject of intensive research and remedy because it is there that the illness lies.²

¹ Liebow, Tally's Corner, pp. 222-23.

² Stein, "Strategies for Failure," p. 191.

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Kreisberg too, after a lengthy and sophisticated study of husbandless mothers in terms of their functional relationships and performance with children, relatives, neighbors, and representatives of various caretaker institutions gives circumstantial and structural variables the greater weight in perpetuating the behaviors and values characteristic of these lower-class women.

The implication of this study is that the life style of the poor, and the movement out of poverty by parents in their own life or by their children depends upon the circumstances in which they live. It is unreasonable to expect people to stop acting like they are poor as long as they are poor. Values, beliefs, and patterns of conduct interfering with moving out of poverty will persist if the conditions supporting such thoughts and actions continue; if those conditions are altered, so will the thoughts and actions. . . . ¹

The reasonableness of a structural rather than a functional perspective, as advocated by the researchers cited above is given further, albeit left-handed or back-door support from Rodman's analysis of middle-class misconceptions about lower-class family behavior. "Promiscuous" sexual relationships; "illegitimate" children; "deserting" husbands and fathers; and "unmarried" mothers are terms which the former group uses to describe what it considers to be functional pathologies of the later group.

¹Kreisberg, Mothers in Poverty, p. 309.

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These characteristics are frequently viewed in a gross manner as simply, problems of the lower class. My own feeling is that it makes more sense to think of them as solutions of the lower class to problems that they face in the social, economic, and perhaps legal and political spheres of life. . . . ¹

No wonder when problems become solutions they also acquire new-found value in the process. This has been at the heart of our analysis of lower-class valuing processes. Little wonder too, that misconceptions of lower-class behaviors as problems strain the relationship between representatives of conventional institutions and their lower-class clients. Such was the phenomenon between teachers and lower-class students with whom we began our study.

Regardless of the relative merits of either ideological position, both structural and functional strategies will continue to have their advocates; and each is likely to serve as basis for even more expansive programs for eliminating poverty in our society. It is generally recognized that a dynamic progressive society cannot afford to permanently exclude a major segment of its population from sharing in the good life. At the very minimum then, both strategies serve as useful instruments for achieving the goals of economic growth, social stability, and physical renewal of our urban centers. Whether lower-class life styles are "problems"

¹Rodman, "Middle Class Misconception About Lower Class Families," p. 65.

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or "solutions" they command attention from educators, politicians, and social scientists alike.

Lower-Class Valuing as a
Strategy Concern

This study has proceeded on the premise that, since valuing is a fundamental human activity engaging us all, any program of planned social change or any theory of human behavior on which planned change is based ignores the value variable at its own peril.

For instance, Bryan and Bertrand¹ sought to explain the factors that influence willingness among a group of rural poor to act positively to change their life conditions. The researchers by-passed the issue of aspirations and conflicting values inherent in social mobility. They preferred instead to rely first, on the rate of social participation, and second, on the level of fatalistic feelings as indicants of the subjects' willingness to act positively to change their circumstances through participation in programs of vocational and educational improvement, and hence change their life conditions. The study found neither of the two "independent" variables to be related to subjects' willingness to utilize the opportunities available for bettering their

¹C. Hobson Bryan and Alvin L. Bertrand, Propensity for Change Among the Rural Poor in the Mississippi Delta: A Study of the Roots of Social Mobility (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service, 1970).

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life conditions. Yet non-participation of this group of rural poor, unrelated to rate of social participation or level of fatalistic feelings, in available programs of vocational and educational betterment remains high. Why? Is it not possible that such participation and the implied objective of social mobility presents a value conflict which the poor frequently resolve in favor of behaviors which keep them in close affiliation with the people, places, and things they love--all providing some measure of need-satisfaction and hence worthy of value? Or in the words of Haggstrom cited earlier in this study, and highly applicable here:

That minority of persons from low income areas who do become educated leave their friends and neighbors and families in order to enter someone else's life patterns. The object is wealth, autonomy, status in the larger society, better housing, and the price reluctantly paid is adoption of ways of behaving, patterns of interaction, styles of relationship, which are foreign and unattractive¹ to those to whom the education is being extended.

Many poor persons are unwilling to pay the price implicit in the value conflict just described. Furthermore, the basis for their non-participation in what are basically functionally oriented programs is, as discovered by Bryan and Bertrand, unintelligible without recourse to the value variable. And, of course, whether or not a given program of social change takes direct

¹Haggstrom, "Poverty and Adult Education," p. 150.

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cognizance of the valuing processes of the target population, those processes are operative and powerfully so.

An interesting phenomenon seems to occur in the case of structural strategies for inducing social change. Of the two categories of change-strategies programs designed to effect the social structure and bring about increased access to resources for poor people, appear to take the least overt cognizance of the values of the people for whom the programs are designed. The Emergency Employment Act, for instance, concerned primarily with providing greater numbers of unemployed persons with access to the labor market, a structural phenomenon, takes no account of values and valuing processes of the people it assists as an immediate or even remote concern. This, of course, makes sense in the light of the observation made early in the study that the kind of solutions seen as appropriate to any problem are directly related to the way in which the problem is defined. Structurally oriented programs then, such as those involving Civil Rights legislation, equal access to higher education, equal opportunity employment practices, open-housing ordinances, and court-ordered busing to achieve integration of schools, are responses to problems defined in terms of injustices within our society's social, economic, political, legal, and educational structures. When the problem is defined in institutional rather than individual terms

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the institutions involved are the targets for reform. The problems then are not defined in terms of functional inadequacies such as value deficiencies on the part of individual poor persons. Therefore, the valuing processes of program beneficiaries seldom if ever, at least overtly, enter the picture as variables to be accounted for in structural strategy design.

Functional or personal deficiency-oriented strategies for reducing and eliminating poverty are quite another matter. The concern of these programs is with development of survival and occupational skills, the prerequisites for obtaining one's share in the good life available to those who find their productive niche in a production-consumption society. With optimum functional efficiency of individuals in mind, valuing as well as reading, writing, intelligent buying, computing, and personal health care skills are all on a par--as instrumental to development. The values of the target population as observed, for instance, in our previous discussion of the deferred gratification pattern, are fair game for both change agents and social science researchers alike since their perseverance in aberrant form is seen as inimical to improvement of the individual's position in the social order.

According to this perspective, functional strategies as described in the Rein and Miller study cited above,

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are a form of therapy, designed to exact conformity of behavior along the lines of prevailing, accepted, and predominantly middle-class standards. Wellman's study of the TIDE program, described at some length in Chapter III, is a case in point. If only the participants would dress, talk, and conduct themselves in a more conventional manner their acceptability quotient as prospective employees would be enhanced. The program thus concerned itself with functional, including value, deficiencies. The availability, or non-availability of actual jobs, a structural problem, was not a matter with which this program dealt.

Various programs of rehabilitation reflect the psychological, as distinct from the strictly instructional, aspect of functional strategies. As Rein and Miller describe rehabilitation:

This approach concentrates on changing people, usually by psychological means, to restore social functioning. It ranges from guidance and counseling through casework, to psychotherapy and psychoanalysis. Rehabilitation hopes to overcome poverty by overcoming personal and family disorganization and deviancy. Those reclaimed will become more acceptable, more employable, more competent. Rehabilitation, seeking to change the person, accepts the environment as it is.¹

Undoubtedly there are varying schools of thought concerning the significance of values and valuing in rehabilitation counseling. At least one approach casts

¹Rein and Miller, "Poverty Programs and Policy Priorities," p. 64.

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the role of counseling in terms of the pursuit of values.

As expressed by psychologist Charles A. Curran:

It is the unweaving and disentangling of conflicting and confused values that constitutes the central achievement of the counseling therapy process . . . allowing the client to "dig through" these confused conflicting states and their engaged emotions and gradually to uncover the complicated mosaic of present and past values in which a person has consciously or unconsciously invested himself.¹

Considering rehabilitation counseling as a tool for enabling a person to extricate himself from the practice of debilitating behaviors which perpetuate his poverty, it is no accident that, in rhetoric at least if not in fact, counseling services are viewed as an integral component of other functional strategies and as effective in themselves for overcoming individual personal deficiencies.

Social science research too has spread its mantle of legitimacy over the concern for personal values as one dimension of an individual's over-all capacity to function effectively and remove himself from poverty's shadow.

Denis Goulet is one author who objects to the tendency among social scientists to predicate development on the support of functionally efficient values. He finds this particularly objectionable in the light of

¹Charles A. Curran, Counseling and Psychotherapy (New York: Sheed and Ward, Inc., 1968), pp. 6-7.

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uncritical acceptance of the definition of development in terms of dynamic economic performance, modernization of institutions, and proliferation of goods and services. Values, a frequent target of functional anti-poverty strategies, come to be viewed in this brand of social philosophy, as primarily instrumental to development. Relational and attitudinal problems between the social classes are important only to the extent that such problems may retard development. The main premise of Goulet's thought is that

. . . conventional social science research on values is deficient because it is incapable of treating values other than instrumentally. It views the values of a populace, either as aids or as obstacles to achieving development, itself is [sic] uncritically assumed to be good. The result is that values are subordinated to the goals of development. Yet it is this very equation which must be inverted, for development itself is but an instrumental good. What is conventionally termed development--dynamic economic performance, modern institutions, the availability of abundant goods and services--is simply one possibility, among many, of development in a broader, more critical sense. Authentic development aims at the full realization of human capabilities. . . .¹

Goulet's concern with the dimensions of authentic development takes us into the realm of objectives for educational programs to be discussed below. For the moment we have limited our attention to the value-oriented

¹Denis Goulet, "An Ethical Model for the Study of Values," Harvard Educational Review, XLI, No. 2 (May, 1971), 206.

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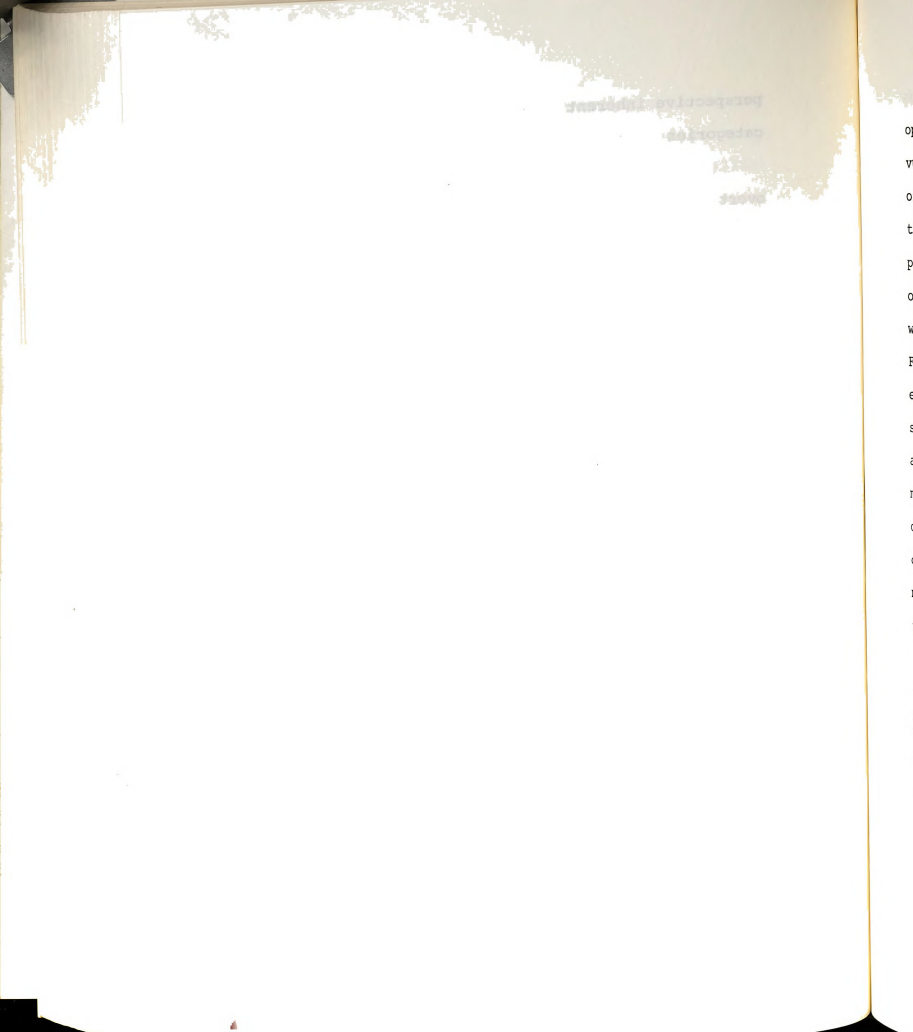
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perspective inherent in functional and structural categories of anti-poverty strategies.

Ironically, those strategies having the least overt explicit interest in the valuing processes of low-status people, with their expressed purpose to change societal structures, may nevertheless affect such processes the most. How is this possible? Recall the sequential relationship between behaviors and values in their accommodative response to external circumstances as hypothesized by Kreisberg. Behaviors are affected by current circumstances first. Once so-called "deviant" or "pathological" behaviors prove their capacity to provide some element of satisfaction of needs and/or assuagement of desires, supportive-congruent valuing becomes operative giving the behaviors respectability. This implies, if not a change from conventional to adaptive values, at least a simultaneous maintenance of two value perspectives--one for the real and one for the ideal world. It was further posited that the malleability of conventional behaving and valuing activities can be accounted for by four factors: their serial independence, their non-centrality to one's self-concept, the feedback received from associates in response to their expression, and the extent to which they are dependent upon circumstances external to the individual for their existence and expression.



If it is true that the circumstances of poverty operate to render conventional behaving and valuing vulnerable under the influence of any one or combination of the above four factors, would it not also be true that effective structural strategies might reverse the process by bringing lower-class persons within the orbit of facilitative rather than prohibitive circumstances with respect to conventional behaving and valuing patterns. For example, by the advent of a chance for or actual experience with meaningful employment or some other successful experience in a conventional setting, deviant adaptive behaving and valuing might be rendered equally malleable, given the four factors mentioned above, the critical ingredients in accounting for the valuing processes of low-status persons. This time, however, the movement would be away from deviancy and toward conventional behaviors and norms.

For instance, while the possibility of admission to college for the ghetto high school sophomore may seem highly unlikely because of the absence of favorable circumstances, denigration of the idea from peers, its non-centrality to self-concept and the complete serial independence of the whole idea, an actual bonafide opportunity not only for oneself but for many significant others to receive a college education could make dropping out of school a very unvalued behavior. The

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changed circumstance, making a college education possible, could make the formerly valued drop-out behavior now vulnerable to peer ridicule, to absence of external support, to non-centrality for one's self-concept, and, once accepted, to serial independence.

The near universal conclusion of social scientists is that culture is a response to conditions; it is itself situational in origin and changes as situations change. In attesting to this reality Herbert Gans also summarizes the potential for positive change implicit in all structural strategies.

Behavior patterns, norms, and aspirations develop as responses to situations to which people must adapt, and culture originates out of such responses. Changes in economic and social opportunities give rise to new behavioral situations, which then become recurring patterns, are later complemented by norms that justify them. . . .¹

He goes on to make a further point that this process of new situations giving rise to new norms will be repeated time and time again. Some norms, however, have more persistence than others, and neither behaviors nor norms change immediately with a change in a situation. Gans maintains:

A new situation will initially be met with available norms; only when these norms turn out to be inapplicable or damaging will people change; first their behavior, and then the norms upholding that behavior.²

¹Gans, "Culture and Class in the Study of Poverty," p. 210. (Emphasis added.)

²Ibid.

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Strategies directed toward the removal of poverty through change in societal structures then, regardless of their intent or lack of intent to deal with valuing patterns, indirectly and probably unwittingly do so by opening the possibility for new behaving, the satisfaction from which comes to be valued.

This is not to argue for a strictly structural approach to poverty nor is it an affirmation that structural strategies can always accomplish what they intend or ultimately change what was originally unintended. Rather, the logic of our inquiry and the consequences of earlier adopted propositions seem to argue for the possibility of significant impact upon the valuing processes of the poor stemming from structurally oriented programs.

Functional strategies on the other hand confront problems of a different sort relative to the value domain. As indicated previously in this context, personal values, like intellectual and psycho-motor skills, are generally perceived in public policy and profession practice as instrumental to the achievement of goals.

Goals in an instrumental as opposed to an expressive style of life are those of the world of school or work or family, as considered in the previous chapter. Values are important because they serve as both tools or means for attaining goals and as support

for their legitimacy. Goals may take the form of outcomes of uncritically analyzed development, to which Goulet objects, or of behaviors far less grandiose in their scope such as being on time for work, buying bread before beer, or staying out of trouble with the law. It is quite understandable that programs directed to helping individuals better themselves by upgrading their skills and stirring up their interest make it their business to implant or encourage the proper values in support of these behaviors.

Unfortunately, however, it is normally true that lower-class persons have very low expectations of rewards from the traditional reward sectors of school, work, or family life. This, as we have already observed, is part of their distinctive existential perspective and a good illustration of potential underlying relational and attitudinal problems. The perspective is eminently reasonable in view of the frustrating and punishing experiences which they derive from an instrumental orientation. The frustration stems not only from failures experienced in attempting to fulfill instrumental roles, but also, as in the case of male economic marginality, from the implication that failure is due to personal shiftlessness, irresponsibility, laziness, and moral decay. Functional strategists, in the interest of securing better performance in instrumental roles, of

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course, maintain that the foregoing "value problems" (shiftlessness, irresponsibility, laziness, and moral decay) are capable of reversal through "value reform" (determination, self-denial, greater effort, and perseverance). The lower-class person who buys this line of reasoning unwittingly blames himself for a situation he did not create. Some obviously do, as for instance those women who berate their husbands for their deviant behavior. Many, however, seem to instinctively recognize that since the problem is not defined correctly the solutions proposed in value-oriented functional strategies are no less misleading. Small wonder then that at this juncture a new dynamic is at work. A comment made by a female welfare recipient to Robert Coles will serve to introduce what is fundamentally a relational and attitudinal issue.

They keep on telling us, those welfare ladies, to take better care of our money, and to save it away, and buy what's the best in the stores, and do like them for dresses, and keep the children in school, and keep our husbands from leaving us. There isn't nothing they don't have a sermon on. They tell you it's bad to spend your money on a smoke or a drink; and you're not supposed to want television because you should be serious with your dollar; and the kids should study their lessons hard and they'll get way ahead and up there.

Well I'll tell you, they sure don't know what it's about, and they can't, not if they come knocking on my door every week until the Lord takes us all.¹

¹Robert Coles, "The Poor Don't Want to Be Middle Class," The New York Times Magazine, December 19, 1965, p. 55.

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The point is that "those welfare ladies" have made their assessment of what is needed for survival and eventual betterment of oneself and one's fellows. The group receiving the sermon, as represented by the above spokesman, has found their prescriptions and proscriptions not necessarily undesirable or unattractive but inappropriate in view of the absence of sufficient resources for complying with the recommendations.

A male member of the lower social stratum is somewhat more incensed not by what is advised, but more by what assistance is offered, in terms of anti-poverty strategy. After stating his preference for remedies in the form of more jobs and more money, he remarks:

Isn't that the way to beat old man poverty, instead of taking some of our kids to a camp and trying to get them to learn something, when they figures after they learn it there still won't be the number of jobs we need? And what about that surplus food you have to beg to get, and saying only when you are older than 65 you can get a doctor for free?

I see those kids on the blocks growing up, and they starts giving up around 10, I'd say. They just gives up and it's because they knows the score, and no man can fool them, I don't care how clever he be.

They try to though. Instead of giving us what we need, they try to make us be like them.¹

When all is said, and less is done, it is not at all unusual, in the estimation of Coles and other commentators, that the poor person is not sure that he wants to talk and dress like those in the suburbs do, and that

¹Ibid., p. 58. (Emphasis added.)

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he resents any suggestion that he make a change in his speech, his appearance, or his style of life as the price for food and cash since these remedies are unrelated to the problem anyway. Others have called attention to the same sentiments. Wellman's study of the TIDE Program attested on the one hand, to the staff's belief that if you want a good job in this society you have to play society's game of politeness, punctuality, and good appearance; and, on the other hand, to the participants' evident unwillingness to control the expression of their hostility sufficiently to play that game instead of their own.

Miller and Woock¹ consider the phenomenon observed in TIDE as a very significant clue to the general failure of such training programs as Job Corps and Neighborhood Youth Corps, and others with a functional orientation to achieve sizeably significant results. No doubt, as these authors have observed, a number of factors were involved in the general failure of such programs. From the evidence gathered throughout this study, however, it seems clear that to place the emphasis in any program on removing the so-called deviant behaving and inchoate valuing of lower-class participants in order to inculcate their more appropriate counterparts in the service of

¹Miller and Woock, Social Foundations of Urban Education, p. 33.

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conventional roles is to overlook the context in which such survival strategies have evolved. It is also to overlook the relationship between needs and means which "deviant" strategies have successfully established, and to underestimate the inherent relational and attitudinal problems in the effort to produce conventional behaviors.

It is not at all surprising that whether packaged in the form of gentle admonitions by "welfare ladies" or straight-from-the-shoulder man-to-man advice as in the TIDE effort, or as coping skills in adult basic education, conventional middle-class directives on how to dress, buy, bathe, talk, or act in any of their roles as parent, spouse, friend, employee, and citizen strike lower-class persons as singularly inappropriate, nay even insulting, given the perpetuation of existing societal forces and circumstances.

The reasonableness of this rejection response, and an inescapable conclusion of several studies is that the survival strategies manifested in the hustling, enterprising, and opportunistic behaviors of poor persons are eminently successful for the resolution, in terms of Maslow's hierarchy, of basic physiological, survival, and safety needs. No wonder then that such behaviors are valued in their own right. A hard-won and experience-earned "diploma" in street knowledge is understandably

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more highly valued and valuable in terms of an individual's immediate welfare than any advice from middle-class social service practitioners.

An interesting example, illustrative of adequately functioning lower-class survival strategies, is contained in John Horton's research¹ on the phenomenon of time among lower-class Negro males. His conclusions, summarized below, are significant for this study of lower-class valuing.

Time, after all, is a very significant factor in life. None of us has an unlimited supply. In an industrial society time is measured by the clock. It is directed toward the future, it is rational and impersonal. In contrast, Horton observes that time for the lower class is directed to the present, rational, and personal. Obviously, a diversity of time perspective cannot be tolerated when the issues of development and profit are at stake. Hence, those who do not measure up to the dominant standard (be it eastern, daylight savings, or central mountain) are perceived as shiftless, lazy, lacking in the traditional virtues of ambition and striving for success, and, of course, the proper values with respect to time. "Viewed solely from the dominant class

¹Horton, "Time and Cool People."

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norm of rationality, their presumed orientation to present time is seen only as an irrational deviation, something to be controlled and changed."¹

Horton observed that from the perspective of the one whose values and behaviors are to be controlled and changed, principally through functionally oriented strategies, time has a rhythm all its own, quite apart from industrial concerns. His methodology, at least in part, included observations and questions about the details of daily survival of his subjects from which he attempted to construct street time schedules.

What from the middle-class point of view is a seemingly wasteful and irrational use of time, from the point of view of Horton's Negro male subjects is rational; it helps them get what they want. Time is "dead" when money is tight, when people are occupied elsewhere--working or in school. Time is "alive" when and where there is action. For time to work to your advantage, whether in the stock market, in checking an airline schedule, or on the street, a person must have the requisite knowledge and power to manipulate time to his advantage. Knowledge, however, is peculiar to cultural situations. Horton says of the lower-class street male:

¹Ibid.

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For the most part, he lacks the skills and power to plan a move up and out of the ghetto. He is "lame" in the middle class world of school and work; he is not ready to operate effectively in unfamiliar organizations where his street strengths are his visible weaknesses. Though irrational in moving up and out of the street, he can be rationale in day-to-day survival in the street.¹

There he has the knowledge of available opportunities, and hence the power to make time work to his advantage, though obviously it is a different rhythm of time than that kept by the factory punch-clock. When you think about it, this is exactly what the rational member of the middle-class does in his own setting, namely, he takes advantage of the opportunities that present themselves. The lower-class person likewise uses time efficiently and cunningly in the pursuit of goods and services.

Negro street time is built around the irrelevance of clock time, white man's time, and the relevance of street values and activities. Like anyone else, a street dude is on time by the standard clock whenever he wants to be, not on time when he does not want to be and does not have to be.

When the women in school hit the street at the lunch hour and he wants to throw them a rap, he will be there then and not one hour after they have left. But he may be kicked out of high school for truancy or lose his job for being late and unreliable. He learned at an early age that school and job were neither interesting nor salient to his way of life.²

Business dealings and socializing are related in a lower-class setting more to emotion and feeling and chance than to any fixed standard of time governing such

¹Ibid., p. 41.

²Ibid., p. 42.

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activities in other social strata. Obviously, he who would advocate reform in the behaving and valuing of such persons with respect to time, goods, and services or human relationships, had better understand that what is is because it has proved workable, it satisfies physical survival needs, and hence it is valued in its own right. Furthermore, it seems reasonable to assert that the passage of time only serves to reinforce this relationship and to cause older persons to be even less amenable to adopting behaviors of unproven potential for providing satisfaction and therefore, unvalued in the "now" as opposed to the "if" world.

Any strategy which advocates the substitution of conventional behaviors and values for adaptive "deviant" lower-class strategies without providing requisite resources can be predicted to fail. The relational and attitudinal problems that will arise between those who advocate the change and the targets of the recommendation are immense and prohibitive. The reason, as we have previously stated, is that the survival strategies of the lower class, while preventing their movement out of poverty, successfully provide for their survival needs and are appropriate to the setting while they are in it.

Relational problems are even further compounded when advocates of middle-class behaviors fail to recognize the extent to which some of the behaviors they

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find abhorrent are valued for their capacity to provide for more than mere survival. We have previously considered many such behaviors in Chapter III. Phantom roles, for instance, manifested in any social class but noted with particular frequency among the poor, are creations which boost one beyond the "now" world of mill-stone limitations to another world where self-esteem and self-actualization are achieved through the medium of fantasy. The transformation of failures into phantom successes and weaknesses into strengths under the mantle of "the theory of manly flaws" is valued not merely for survival, but for a level of esteem and belongingness among one's peers that is unavailable elsewhere.

Attachment to old and familiar ways, with concomitant apathy for what is new and strange, more common among the rural than the urban poor, indicates concern not just for survival, but also for protection against outside threats to established systems of reward, esteem, authority, and the established modes for self-actualization. The preference for self-investment in the "now" as opposed to the "if" world among unemployed young men is clearly a defensive maneuver for avoiding the demeaning probabilities of failure and loss of self-esteem. Soul rhetoric and soul artifacts, creating as they do another standard for excellence, for belongingness, for

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self-actualization, help maintain some proportion between these needs and the means available for their satisfaction. The same motivation can help to account for the perpetuation of a separate cultural heritage (biculturation) on the part of any ethnic minority group.

The orientation toward immediate gratification on the part of poor people is eminently reasonable, not only from a survival standpoint but for the possibilities this orientation offers for some measure, admittedly limited, of response to higher needs. A bottle of cheap sweet wine, passed around among one's friends, is a waste of resources only from one point of view. Likewise an expressive "self-as-currency" style of life enables one to find meaning in life far beyond that provided in the instrumental roles generally available to poor people. The appreciative response of one's peers, ephemeral as it is, elicited by an expressive performance of one sort or another may do more for an individual's self-esteem than a paycheck.

Meaning, as we have seen above, is not an intrinsic property of things or persons or institutions or situations. Rather it is constructed through a process of active interaction with all of these. Lower-class people are engaged in a process of finding meaning and fulfilling their needs through the behaviors we have summarized immediately above. While these behaviors may not be

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acceptable among those who adhere to conventional standards they are nonetheless effective and valued for their capacity to provide satisfaction for basic human needs which remain constant across social strata.

Where members of different social classes differ in the meanings they assign to both a particular behavior and its corresponding value, attitudinal and relational problems are inevitable. Such problems surface in any functionally oriented program in which one group attempts to change the other's behaviors and values as is typically the case with adult basic education.

We would argue that two things are necessary for obviating the relational and attitudinal problems that arise in this educational program: (1) the teacher must understand the valuing and meaning that lower-class people attribute to their behaviors as satisfying needs on a continuum from survival to self-actualization; (2) the teacher and adult student relationship must be so structured as to minimize and, if possible, eliminate the relational and attitudinal problems that arise from the value variable.

We have attempted to provide insight into the various factors involved in constructing meaning and assigning value from the distinctive existential perspective of lower-class persons. It remains now for us to consider the teacher-student relationship in adult basic education and to make recommendations as to its

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purposes and structure in view of relational and attitudinal problems which arise out of valuing differences.

Adult Basic Education as a
Functional Strategy

Proponents of adult basic education as a means to integrate the poor and underprivileged minorities into the mainstream of life in the United States perceive their potential clients as marginal men and, by definition, on the fringe or outside of society's economic and social currents. Furthermore, those they would reach through their programs are considered to be functionally illiterate. This means that they are deficient, to varying degrees in knowledge, skills, and values, for successful functioning in this society. Values in particular receive attention because, as presumed sources or causes of "deviant pathological" behavior, continuance in their aberrant form obstructs the possibility of rehabilitation.

Paulo Freire has described the "medicinal" perspective of the educator who sees his clients as marginal men.

In accepting the illiterate as a person who exists on the fringe of society, we are led to envision him as a sort of "sick man," for whom literacy would be the "medicine" to cure him, enabling him to "return" to the "healthy" structure from which he has become separated. Educators would be benevolent counselors, scouring the outskirts of the city for

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the stubborn illiterates, runaways from the good life, to restore them to the forsaken bosom of happiness by giving them the gift of the word.¹

The purposes of basic education are usually phrased in terms of personal development and of adjustment of marginal individuals to the configurations of the dominant way of life. Fitting in, finding one's niche in society, helping one to meet adult responsibilities, improving one's attitudes--all these describe desirable educational objectives for persons regarded as patients in a dynamic developing society.

Those in the "helper" role--be they educators, social workers, hygienists, missionaries--experience anguish over the stubborn resistance of the lower-class client, their inability to communicate, to convince, to help. Robert Coles describes their feelings and in doing so provides us with a clue to some of the relational and attitudinal problems that characterize the encounters between professional emissaries of conventional society and their lower-class clients. The professionals cry out:

Cannot our very presence, our honest, earnest, generous presence undo the distrust of others? Our lives, after all, are gaining meaning from the work we do. Soon--we hope--those we want to help will see that, and then begin to forego what we find to be their sullen inertia, or their resentful unwillingness to abide by our rules or customs.²

¹Paulo Freire, "Adult Literacy Process," Harvard Educational Review, XL, No. 2 (May, 1970), 211.

²Coles, "The Poor Don't Want to Be Middle Class," p. 56.

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Implicit in these protestations of sincerity is a negative evaluation of the poor with respect to their ability to think, to choose wisely, to cope successfully, to act civilly. The catalogue of negative criteria for membership in the lower social stratum are well known and usually find their way into the statement of objectives for the program.

With respect to the valuing of these marginal people the argument can usually be paraphrased to say: "Change their old ways of valuing and you will change their behaviors."

It is not uncommon, according to some analysts of basic education and other anti-poverty programs, for the target population which has internalized the denigrating opinions of the professionals to engage in a similar process of self-depreciation.

So often do they hear that they are good for nothing, know nothing and are incapable of learning anything--that they are sick, lazy, and unproductive--that in the end they become convinced of their own unfitness. . . .

Almost never do they realize that they, too, "know things" they have learned in their relations with the world and with other men.¹

To the extent that this negative perception of potential clients is held mutually by both parties, the nature of the encounters which do take place can be characterized by a teacher-student relationship which in

¹Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, p. 49.

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Freire's terms is fundamentally "narrative," wherein the students (objects in the process) are instructed by a narrating teacher (subject) as to how they can best adapt and prosper in the existing economic and social order. This results in a "banking" concept of education in which knowledge, skills, and values are "deposited." The scope of action for students extends only as far as receiving, filing, and storing the deposits.

Obviously, to clients who consider their so-called "deviant" behaviors and valuing of them to be not only reasonable but also eminently effective in satisfying universally felt human needs, the narrative-banking model of educational practice shortly becomes unacceptable. The arrogant posture assumed in this model with respect to the knowledge, skills, and above all, values of the client population would and does meet with scornful rebuff by any but the most fatalistic and self-denigrating of recipients.

Two very significant objections have been raised to educational practice which takes as its mission the reforming of lower-class adults to facilitate their successful entry into the mainstream of conventional society. Both involve values as fundamental. The first focuses on the values of the dominant "healthy" society which lower-class persons are encouraged to adopt. The second makes the purposes and structure of basic education

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with respect to the valuing of lower-class people its principle concern and the key to resolving potential relational and attitudinal problems.

The premise on which the first objection rests has been formulated by Ivan Illich. It is that in either the United States or Latin America, the values and way of life of the affluent society are in large measure neither viable nor worthy enough to be perpetuated and shared with the poor. Illich maintains that the poor should avoid the seduction of being fitted, through remedial training and adaptation, into peaceful co-existence with a middle-class society which is itself morally bankrupt. Why aspire to that which itself is wracked by a crisis of faith in its own value judgments, to a dominant order no longer able to motivate and inspire others to accept or share in its "benefits?" Illich's evaluation leads him to predict that:

Increasingly the "poor" will slam the door in the face of salesmen for the United States system of politics, education, and economics as an answer to their needs. This rejection goes hand in hand with a growing loss of faith in his own tenets on the part of the salesman. . . . ¹

Initially the push to share the advantages of a better standard of living is associated with the generous

¹Ivan Illich, Celebration of Awareness (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1970), p. 25.

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motive of providing a richer life for all men. Illich maintains, however, that over time the real motives for this "missionary" work begin to emerge and

. . . the enterprise grinds down to one compelling purpose: to protect the style of life and the style of death that affluence makes possible for a very few; and since that style cannot be protected without being expanded, the affluent declare it obligatory for all. "That they may have more" begins to be seen in its real perspective: "That I may not have less."¹

To the extent that questionable priorities and self-serving motives represent valuing deficiencies of the middle-class they fall on the periphery of our focus in this study. To the extent, however, that lower-class people perceive basic education as a vehicle for shoring up the privileges and priorities of middle- and upper-class people, this perspective may be expected to complicate already existing relational and attitudinal problems.

The second, and for purposes of this study, more consequential objection to educational programs which have as their objective to equip marginal men to function adequately in society's conventional roles has to do with the limited purposes of such programs and the structure of the encounter. We will concern ourselves first with purposes.

¹Ibid., p. 24.

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Purposes or objectives are typically stated, at the most general level, by the electorate and their chosen representatives, and more specifically by the professional educators involved. So purposes in adult basic education originate from a distinctive perspective of the clients' needs in relation to the dominant society. This perspective has been variously described as "nutritionist" (the poor are intellectually undernourished) and "medicinal" (the poor are sick, separated from the healthy structure). Educators in both cases are the healing agents bringing knowledge, skills, and values to bear on the deficiencies of marginal people. Their goal is to render such persons fit and able to participate in the structures and institutions of society, thereby reaping a share in the benefits of the good life.

Freire, however, is exercised by what he claims is a distortion of educational purpose when objectives are determined by a need to remove marginality and by a need to fit clients to existing structures.

The truth is, however, that the oppressed are not "marginals," are not men living "outside" society. They have always been "inside"--inside the structure which made them "beings for others." The solution is not to "integrate" them into the structure of oppression, but to transform that structure so that they can become "beings for themselves."¹

We have seen earlier in this study that the poor typically become "beings for themselves" by means of

¹Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, p. 61.

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expressive, sometimes "deviant," behaviors which can only be engaged in outside conventional institutions. These behaviors are highly valued precisely because of the personal satisfaction of higher human needs which they provide.

We say further that behaviors which equip a person to function effectively in a middle-class setting of work or school (instrumental roles) are often not highly valued. Rather they are perceived as necessary evils, temporarily useful for acquiring sufficient resources, such as income, for pursuing more satisfying and therefore more highly valued activities. In conventional roles, especially the menial ones available to him, the poor individual sees himself as a "being for others," a situation to be tolerated only on a temporary basis.

Implied further in Freire's objection, and advocated by others, is the thesis that adult basic education should have as its purpose to go beyond imparting institution-serving "being for others" knowledge, skills, and values and as its means some that go beyond narrative-depository methods. These current purposes and means are seen by lower-class people as tailoring them to occupy some niche in the present scheme of things, a scheme they have experienced as oppressive. It should not be surprising, so the argument goes, that educational

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salesmen have trouble selling this package to any but those most immediately proximate to the middle class in terms of motives, aspirations, behaviors, and values.

In contrast with education which aims to fit the individual to the situation and ultimately to enhance the process of development in terms of increased goods and services (Gross National Product), Goulet advocates formulating the objectives of educational programs in terms of "authentic development."

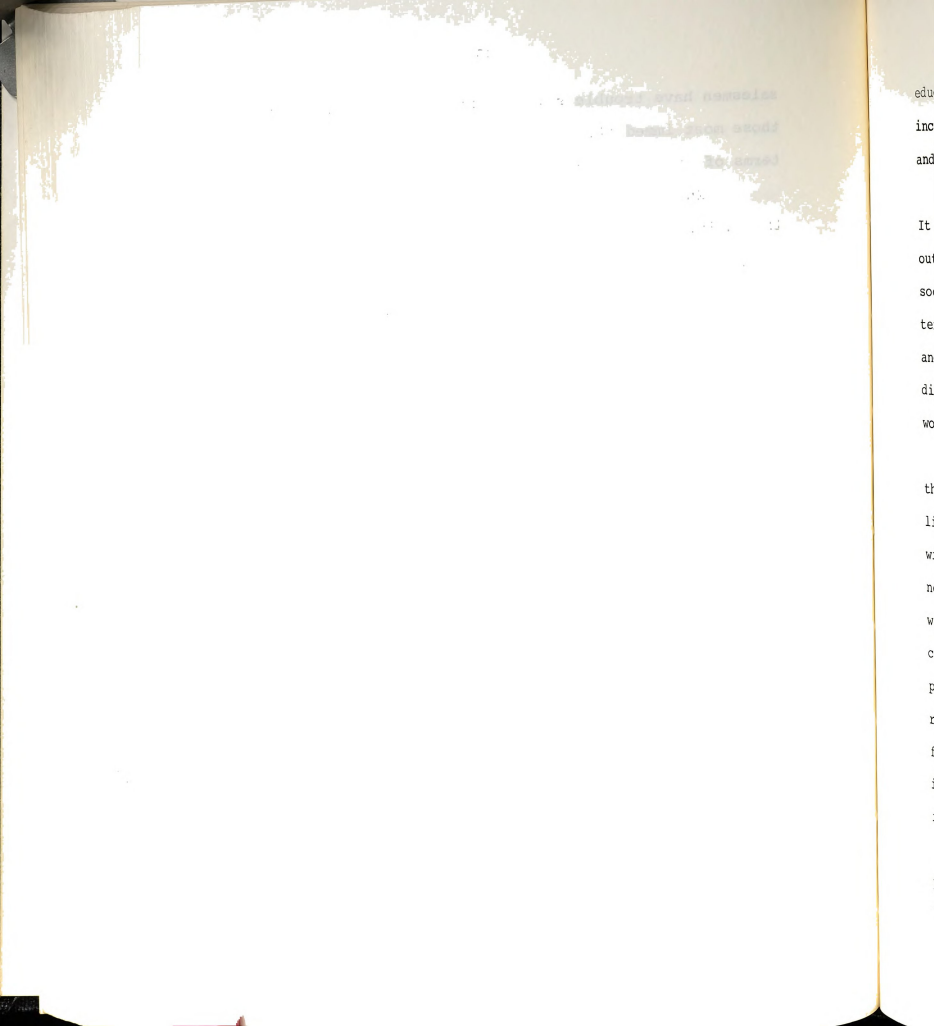
Authentic development aims at the full realization of human capabilities: men and women become makers of their own histories, personal and societal. They free themselves from every servitude imposed by nature or by oppressive systems, they achieve wisdom in their mastery over nature and over their own wants, they create new webs of solidarity based not on domination but on reciprocity among themselves, they achieve a rich symbiosis between contemplation and transforming action.¹

Goulet's formulation echoes the "broad human focus best served by educational objectives resting on a personal and interpersonal base and dealing with students' concerns," which Fantini and Weinstein² were earlier seen to envision for education in a free society.

Authentic development, however, cannot stand alone, apart from the circumstances in which men live, unmediated by one's surroundings. Hence adult basic

¹Goulet, "An Ethical Model for the Study of Values," p. 206.

²Fantini and Weinstein, Toward Humanistic Education: A Curriculum of Affect, p. 18.



education which sets up this star to steer by also must include, as a matter of its concern, immediate surroundings and additional circumstances which prevent its realization.

Education, even in a free society, is never neutral. It either functions to facilitate the integration of those outside it into the present social order with its existing social strategies, or it becomes an instrument, in Freire's terms, for "the practice of freedom, the means by which men and women deal critically and creatively with reality and discover how to participate in the transformation of their world."¹

Adult basic education has been categorized in this study as primarily a functionally oriented strategy limited to imparting knowledge, skills, and values that will equip the poor to enter society's mainstream. It need not, however, be limited to functional concerns, and with respect to valuing as we have researched its processes among the poor, it dare not remain so, lest limited purposes result in unlimited alienation. It seems reasonable to conclude that the poor will perceive their functional deficiencies as relevant when they are placed in relation to the task of effecting change in present institutional structures.

Whereas adult basic education has generally placed the lower-class client in the position of object,

¹Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, p. 15.

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to be repaired, retreaded, and reformed, it can only serve "the practice of freedom" when both educator and client become "subjects," those who know and act, and institutions and structures which formerly have relegated the poor to menial roles become "objects" which are known and acted upon.

There are eloquent spokesmen for making basic education an instrument for "the practice of freedom" and "authentic development." They are rightly perceived as revolutionaries calling for institutional reform. For them, the object of all action, the institution, be it of education or of some other public enterprise, is the reality to be transformed by them together with other men of all classes. The object is not other men themselves but the situations in which they live. An example follows:

Revolutionary leaders do not go to the people in order to bring them a message of "salvation," but in order to come to know through dialogue with them both their objective situation and their awareness of that situation--the various levels of perception of themselves and of the world in which and with which they exist. One cannot expect positive results from an education or political action program which fails to respect the particular view of the world held by the people. . . .

Often, educators and politicians speak and are not understood because their language is not attuned to the concrete situation of the men they address. Accordingly, their talk is just alienated and alienating rhetoric.¹

Our purpose, however, is not to repeat what others have said about means and ends for adult basic

¹Ibid., p. 84.

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education or any other program beyond this cursory sampling of the emphasis they provide. Rather our purpose is to indicate the supportive evidence which this study of lower-class valuing processes seems to offer for those who cast the purposes of adult basic education in terms of structural reform through functional proficiency rather than in terms of functional considerations alone. The so-called deviant and pathological behaviors and supportive values of lower-class people are eminently reasonable, given perpetuation of existing oppressive circumstances. Hence adult basic education must somehow take account of oppressive social structures if its emphasis on client knowledge, skills, and values is to gain any hearing at all.

In addition to the question of purposes for adult basic education, this study of lower-class valuing processes has also indicated the importance of the manner in which the encounter between educator and client is structured. We have considered the survival and higher human needs to which lower-class behaviors and values are directed. In the encounter, however, between lower-class client and educator, the latter's cultural forms are perceived by both parties to be dominant and superior while the former's are vulnerable and inferior. If the stronger partner's economic and technical superiority, and the power to impose his cultural values is not

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somehow neutralized in the encounter, relational and attitudinal problems are inevitable and authentic development is unlikely.

Again, the findings of our study of lower-class valuing processes as they are discoverable in social science research seem to echo the concerns of spokesmen for a new kind of adult basic education. Goulet, for instance, places the concept of vulnerability at the heart of the problem associated with the stance or posture adopted by representatives of the dominant society. To a large extent whatever is accomplished will depend upon the manner of the meeting and the locus of vulnerability between those in need and those wanting to be of help. The substance of this study seems to indicate that experts risk having their superiority held against them by lower-class people if they do not adopt a self-effacing posture, acknowledge the inadequacy of conventional behaviors and values in a lower-class setting, and even honor the coping strategies which lower-class people have devised. In doing so they acknowledge their own vulnerability. For Goulet:

The crucial question is: are encounters to be founded on reciprocity or on domination? Weaker partners reject domination as invalid, and stronger groups can no longer practice it in good conscience or even with realistic hope of success. Ultimately,

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reciprocity is necessary for esteem, an idea which has come of age. And reciprocity is the sole basis for non-manipulative relationships.¹

Satisfaction of the need for esteem has previously been identified as a plausible explanation for the valuing of several forms of "acting out" behavior among lower-class persons. To be unaware of or insensitive to the "beyond survival" purposes of such behaviors, to repudiate their already limited "fulfillment potential," and to discredit those who engage in them by means of unfavorable comparison with more "virtuous" individuals is to both describe and condemn, in effect to dominate. The weaker partners in this encounter already resent the superiority of the helper. Additional evidence of paternal domination further impedes the relationship.

Freire, whose caricature of education as a narrative-banking-depository enterprise is another indictment of its paternalistic structure, identifies the traditional teacher-student relationship as the first area of needed reform. It is the key to what Freire calls "liberating education."

Liberating education consists in acts of cognition, not transferrals of information. . . . The teacher is no longer merely the-one-who-teaches, but one who is himself taught in dialogue with the students, who in turn while being taught also teach. They become jointly responsible for a process in which all grow. In this process, arguments based on

¹Goulet, "An Ethical Model for the Study of Values," p. 216.

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"authority" are no longer valid; in order to function, authority must be on the side of freedom, not against it. Men teach each other, mediated by the world, by the cognizable objects which in banking education are "owned" by the teacher.¹

We have previously considered some examples of the interaction in the lower-class setting between (1) a person's own needs, (2) the orientation offered by the larger society, and (3) the orientation of the world immediately surrounding him. This three-fold interaction constitutes the mediation with the world in which the individual formulates his meaning systems--the meaning he attributes to a job, to his spouse, to his peers--and their corresponding values to him. What the world teaches the lower-class person about any important thing, person, institution, or event is an excellent place for the teacher to begin the dialogue.

Ironically enough, two prerequisites for dialogue are both antitheses of the narrative-teacher model, silence and humility. It is no coincidence that both of these traits contribute substantially to reciprocity in the encounter between educator and client.

Much has been written about non-verbal communication. Study of the ways in which meanings are transmitted has shown that much more is relayed from one man to another through and in silence than in words. Words

¹Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, p. 67.
(Emphasis in original.)

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and sentences are composed of silences more meaningful than the sounds. In fact, as many clues to what a man values are provided from his silence and the contexts in which silence occurs as from his speech. Illich has observed the importance of silence as an internal part of language:

It is thus not so much the other man's words as his silences which we have to learn in order to understand him. It is not so much our sounds which give meaning, but it is through the pauses that we will make ourselves understood. The learning of a language is more the learning of its silences than of its sounds. . . . It takes more time and effort and delicacy to learn the silence of a people than to learn its sounds.¹

This is one of those qualities much easier to describe than to practice. A listening silence of deep interest is difficult for the teacher in direct proportion to his degree of "narrative sickness." In addition to narration, listening silence is most threatened by another silence--by what Illich calls "the silence of disinterest." This silence assumes that there is nothing I want or can receive through the communication of the other. With respect to values this is a great mistake because the teacher's listening silence is the medium through which a great gift can be transmitted, the gift of explanation and understanding of a person's own values, motives, fears, and regrets. These secrets are stored in a man's heart, a sanctuary which can be

¹Illich, Celebration of Awareness, p. 45.

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stormed but cannot be opened by any amount of words. Still necessary for dialogue to occur, beyond interested listening to both silence and words, in fact an essential component of silence and dialogue, is humility. It is Freire's conviction that dialogue, as the encounter of men addressed to the common task of learning and acting, is broken if the parties (or one of them) lack humility. The questions Freire asks constitute criteria by which humility is measured; they also pose the refrain of all claims to class superiority.

How can I dialogue if I always project ignorance onto others and never perceive my own? How can I dialogue if I regard myself as a case apart from other men--mere "its" in whom I cannot recognize other "I"s? How can I dialogue if I consider myself a member of the in-group of "pure" men, the owners of truth and knowledge, for whom all non-members are "these people" or "the great unwashed"? How can I dialogue if I start from the premise that naming the world is the task of an elite and that the presence of the people in history is a sign of deterioration, thus to be avoided? How can I dialogue if I am closed to--and even offended by--the contribution of others?¹

Obviously humility precludes easy assumptions as to another's deficiencies in knowledge, skills, and values. This is not to rule them out, but only to wait and see, to render oneself vulnerable to the other's area of relative superiority.

The lower-class person who can make do with few resources, who is enterprising enough to turn street-time

¹Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, pp. 78-79.

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to his advantage, whose "expressive-self" is a profit-making form of currency, who is outside the structures of confusing government bureaucracies and yet can manipulate them to his own advantage, who is bicultural in language, dress, food, music, and norms, who can with ease "put on" or "put down" educated representatives of society's caretaker institutions to their consternation, who can read the mood of the Man and react accordingly for his own survival and advantage--the list could go on--is not entirely underdeveloped and should not be made entirely vulnerable.

It is possible for the monitor (teacher or counselor) to acknowledge underdevelopment too and thus find himself more of an equal partner in dialogue, establishing greater reciprocity and reducing domination. He or she need not look far for ways to do so. He can start by acknowledging that development in terms of goods and services is only relatively valuable, with technology encompassing several undesirable elements. He can further admit his own powerlessness to answer or resolve the basic value conflicts between humanism and technology and their over-all effect on the quality of our lives. More centrally, he can give credit to and show respect for the strengths of lower-class people and acknowledge the oppressive circumstances under which such strengths are forged. These are but a few of the possibilities

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for honesty and reciprocity in the adult basic education encounter. In the final analysis the crudities of poverty--insufficient resources for a standard of living comparable to that of the majority--are less difficult to endure than the demeaning subtleties displayed by representatives of various caretaker institutions.

We have come nearly full circle. We began our investigation of the valuing processes of low-status adults by indicating some of the relational and attitudinal problems which emerge under the tension of valuing differences between middle-class educators and lower-class students. It was further observed that problems of greater intensity can be predicted to arise as adult basic education extends its engagement with real and potential lower-class students who have progressively less of middle-class orientation. We are now in a position to specify the conditions under which these valuing differences can best be accommodated and accounted for in the design and conduct of adult basic education. We will complete the circle with these considerations in Chapter V.

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CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS FOR ADULT BASIC EDUCATION

Summary and Conclusions

We began with values and the valuing process because of our fundamental assumption that the general absence of hard-core lower-class people from adult basic education programs, and the relational and attitudinal problems surfacing to the extent that they are involved in such programs, are due basically to different perspectives for judging what are appropriate behaving and valuing patterns.

Our position has been that valuing is an activity engaged in by all men as naturally as eating and sleeping. That this is so is immediately apparent upon consideration of such propositions as: "People value this more than that; how can they value this and still value that; if you value this then you cannot value that; and so on."

Looking more closely we have concluded that valuing is intimately tied to needs and desires, and that



it comes into being as realization of needs or assuage-
ment of desires is or is not experienced. Valuing then
has its genesis in the experience of satisfaction and the
behaviors that produce satisfaction. Needs, however, are
basically the same and arrange themselves in basically
the same patterns for all persons. Whether one is low
or middle or high on the social status ladder, needs
for survival, belonging, respect, esteem, and fulfillment
or self-actualization are present for all. Furthermore,
since valuing is intimately related to experiences of
need-satisfaction and desire assuagement, it normally
follows after and in support of behaviors which provide
these experiences. That is to say, valuing is situ-
ationally anchored and generally follows satisfaction-
producing behaviors as a supportive congruence-building
phenomenon. Our perspective for studying the valuing
process has been from the point of view of the valuing
subject, in this case the lower-class individual. The
lower-class person selects, as does any other person,
behaviors which are intended to provide satisfaction of
his needs; and he values them positively on the basis of
successful experience and negatively on the basis of
unsuccessful experience in yielding satisfaction.

Based upon an assessment of social science
research, we have concluded that the behaving and valu-
ing of people of all social classes can be more

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adequately explained by situational circumstances, than by cultural values as absolutes. This conclusion is based on the evidence we have found for the influence of forces over and above any family-of-origin or ethnic or community cultural conditioning in the formation of low-status behaving and valuing.

To be sure, men of different social strata have been exposed to and conditioned by distinctly different cultural experiences. These culturally based differences play some part in setting levels of satisfaction of needs which any given behavior is expected to attain. Cultural milieu varies according to social class. The millionaire in Grosse Pointe has both a life-style and levels of expectation for behaviors which differ culturally from those of the Detroit ghetto resident.

Nevertheless, it is significant that the members of every social class are limited in the behaviors available for selection. No one group or person within it has unlimited economic, political, or social power. Culturally defined limitations on behavioral options exist; situational circumstances are always at work setting limits on alternatives. This is as true for the Grosse Pointe millionaire as it is for the ghetto resident in Detroit's inner city. In addition, individuals of every social class are limited by their perception of the options available for the satisfaction

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of needs. Every person, regardless of social class, is the prisoner of his own perceptions, energy, and creativity.

Hence, while behaviors are valued for their capacity to satisfy needs according to culturally learned levels of expectation, they are still subject to the limitations of availability, according to circumstances and the individual's perceptions of those circumstances.

Culture then is only one variable to be understood in accounting for the valuing processes of low-status or any other class of people. For to maintain that family-of-origin or ethnic or community cultural conditioning are the primary forces shaping behaving and valuing patterns, is also to conclude that, for instance, the Indian's weakness for whiskey, the Mexican's tendency to put off unpleasant chores until tomorrow, and the Negro's skill in athletics are behaviors whose origins lie in pre-existing cultural values as absolutes.

Our conclusion, on the contrary, is that there are more reasons for positing similarity or commonality between the Grosse Pointe millionaire, the ghetto resident, the Mexican, and the American Indian than there are reasons to support assertions of great difference. Two such reasons to posit commonality are: (1) the

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universality of human needs, and (2) the process of acculturation by which middle-class behaviors and norms come to be regarded by every social class as the acceptable means for resolving those needs.

As extensive research exposes these areas of commonality it becomes evident that external circumstances exercise the dominant suasive force in shaping the behaving and valuing patterns of members of any social class. This is the verdict supported by wide-ranging observations contained in the research reports we have reviewed. It is the general conclusion of these researchers that the only proper perspective for understanding and relating to the poor is to view them as an economically and politically deprived population whose behaving and valuing patterns are creative adaptations to their existential situation.

In like manner, the Grosse Pointe millionaire's behaving and valuing are adaptations to his situation. The major difference is that most conventional behaviors and norms function to the millionaire's advantage, while those that do not are more easily circumvented because of his power and superior position. This is not to say that his behavioral options are completely unfettered by circumstantial limitations. No one enjoys complete impunity, and everyone confronts prohibiting consequences of some of his choices. It is the range of alternatives

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which seems to be so much greater as a result of wealth and power. Transfer any individual from circumstances of affluence to circumstances of prolonged deprivation and, as with lower-class people, the stage is set for the invention and diffusion of a whole set of substitute games or alternate, usually labeled "deviant," strategies for the resolution of his needs. This is to say that a man values what he can value. Allegiance to conventional behaving and valuing for members of any social class is not so much a matter of virtue or intelligence as it is a function of supportive circumstances and, over time, of habit or of culturally induced expectation levels.

Lower-class people are not as generally or as fully assimilated, as are members of other social strata, into the institutions which provide resources for playing the roles of parent, spouse, breadwinner, citizen, employee, neighbor, and friend which the middle class holds up as acceptable means for the resolution of human needs. To use a homely illustration, the role of breadwinner is dependent on the role of employee. However, if the role of employee is either not open or yields insufficient resources for putting adequate food on the table, then there is little balance or harmony between this role and the man's needs for esteem, respect, and fulfillment, to say nothing of survival. Little wonder then, that lower-class people, especially in urban settings which

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are dominated by a money economy, have very low levels of expectation of rewards from the traditional reward sectors of work and family.

Kreisberg¹ has hypothesized that behaviors and values are most susceptible to modifications when they are: (1) serially independent, (2) non-central to self-concept, (3) monitored by peers, and (4) dependent upon external circumstances for their existence and expression. That these qualities contribute to the malleability of behaving and valuing, whether "conventional" or "adaptive," seems to be firmly established from our view of research on low-status people. In particular, this research reveals the extent to which the influence of these four qualities has led to the formation of new patterns of behaving and valuing among the poor.

Kreisberg's four factors provide insight into the process suggested by Rokeach that valuing of a behavior or norm in the abstract undergoes modification when the same behavior or norm is encountered in a specific situation. Both formulations imply the vulnerability of conventional models of behaving and consequent valuing when these models are stripped of their power to satisfy needs by the debilitating influence of inexorable circumstances.

¹Kreisberg, Mothers in Poverty, pp. 34-37.

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The concept of deferred gratification poses a powerful illustration of Kreisberg's formulation. The traditional perception among other social classes with respect to lower-class people is that they are not able to defer to long-term goals because of impulse following as opposed to impulse renunciation. Such behaviors are attributed to weakness of character which contributes to self-indulgence. The evidence, however, indicates that in fact, patterns of immediate gratification and the lower priority attached to such behaviors as staying in school, saving one's money for future needs, working hard on the job, and foregoing expressive behaviors which drain resources from the home may often represent the only reasonable position to assume. People in lower-class communities usually cannot choose between immediate and deferred gratification; the only gratifications available must be taken when they occur or be foregone entirely. Specific here and now rewards as well as material and personal resources must be enjoyed while they are available since the low-status person does not sufficiently control his own life to preserve them for future use. It is likely, in the face of severely adverse circumstances, that conventional behaviors such as those mentioned above and valuing of them will normally prove to be: (1) serially independent, (2) non-central to

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self-concept, (3) ridiculed by peers, and (4) dependent upon external circumstances required but non-existent for their expression.

A wide range of other behaviors and value preferences are similarly subject to modification in the face of inadequate or inaccessible resources. Examples include living in private as opposed to public housing and relying on one's own income rather than public welfare. It is not that the poor prefer the choices they make. They frequently will describe their assessment of life in dichotomous terms: ideal vs. real world, if only vs. because, maybe someday vs. today. These descriptions imply a preference for the conventional world and its roles for the resolution of needs to which they have been acculturated. At the same time they convey a distinctive existential perspective, characteristic of poor people, which includes increased tolerance for and valuing of alternate behaviors which poverty necessitates. In short, the research on various aspects of life among low-status people reveals their appreciation of and fundamental preference for the behaviors and norms of conventional middle-class society. In day-to-day living, however, research shows that these behaviors and norms are readjusted, or in Rodman's terms, "stretched" to accommodate new behaving and valuing appropriate to their situations.

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Oftentimes these accommodations and adjustments are inventive, opportunistic, enterprising, indicative of creativity, and even genius--qualities usually admired and extolled in conventional society. In this context, however, they are perceived as reprehensible, decadent, and indicative of need for corrective action.

In sum we have found that:

1. The universal activity of valuing is intimately related to satisfaction of needs and assaugement of desires.
2. Behaviors are valued for their capacity to satisfy needs.
3. Needs are basically similar regardless of social class.
4. Needs, as posited in Maslow's hierarchy, range on a continuum from survival to self-actualization.
5. Acculturation as the process of learning "appropriate" behaviors and values for the resolution of needs permeates every social class in American society.
6. Behaving--valuing is dependent upon availability of requisite resources.
7. Low-status people generally lack access to these requisite resources for behaving in compliance with conventional middle-class expectations.

8. Behaving-valuing patterns are malleable to the extent that they are:
 - a. serially independent
 - b. non-central to self-concept
 - c. monitored by peers
 - d. dependent upon external circumstances
9. Conventional behaving-valuing patterns are often rejected by low-status Americans in favor of alternate patterns because they are malleable and because of the absence of resources requisite for compliance with them.
10. Low-status Americans stretch conventional roles and norms to accommodate new adaptive behaving-valuing patterns for the resolution of needs and assuagement of desires.
11. Many such adaptive behaving-valuing patterns are indicative of resourceful enterprising creativity.

Valuing by Low-Status People in
Relation to the Purposes and
Structures of Adult
Basic Education

This study is specifically addressed to adult basic education. As seen earlier this particular anti-poverty strategy is concerned with correcting functional deficiencies in terms of knowledge, skills, and values of poor people. Given this formulation of purposes for

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adult basic education there are certain implicit assumptions about the clients to be served which are manifested in the paternalistic patterns of encounter for achieving those purposes. The worth of the clients as mature adults is frequently impugned. For to conclude that a man cannot get or keep a job, or is frequently in trouble with the law, or does not know what is good for him, or is incapable of managing his own affairs either because of: (1) cultural inferiority, (2) personal deficiencies, or (3) low status, is to conclude that such a man is not worthy of respect, needs to be spoon-fed, and must be helped to overcome his own weakness.

Obviously such a perception of lower-class people is at extreme variance from the position supported by this study that their behaving-valuing differences from other social strata are due not to differing aspirations or to ignorance but to the absence of circumstances favorable to the expression of and allegiance to conventional behaviors and norms. Furthermore, it may be concluded that adaptive behaving-valuing patterns of low-status people, invented in the face of severely adverse circumstances, are indicative of resourceful creativity, enhancing rather than demeaning their worthiness as adult persons.

It would seem then that if our assessment of the behaving-valuing patterns of low-status life is accurate,

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the burden of worth rests not with the prospective clients but with those who manage and conduct adult basic education programs to serve them. With respect to purposes, low-status people may be expected to ask if adult basic education can address itself to oppressive circumstances under which poor people are forced to live as well as to their functional deficiencies. With respect to its encounters low-status people may be expected to ask if these will be so arranged as to honor their wisdom, resourcefulness, and maturity. Significant relational and attitudinal problems arise when potential clients perceive that the purposes to be served and the pattern of the encounters employed to further those purposes are, at best, unrelated to their needs and their situation, and, at worst, demeaning and detrimental to their dignity, freedom, and authentic development.

Our inductive analysis of the relationship between the purposes and patterns of encounter within adult basic education programs on the one hand and the behaving-valuing processes of potential low-status clients on the other can be formulated in the following ten propositions, each of which is susceptible to modification in response to new data and changing circumstances.

With respect to purposes we conclude that:

- I. Insofar as the purposes of adult basic education are formulated only in terms of adapting and

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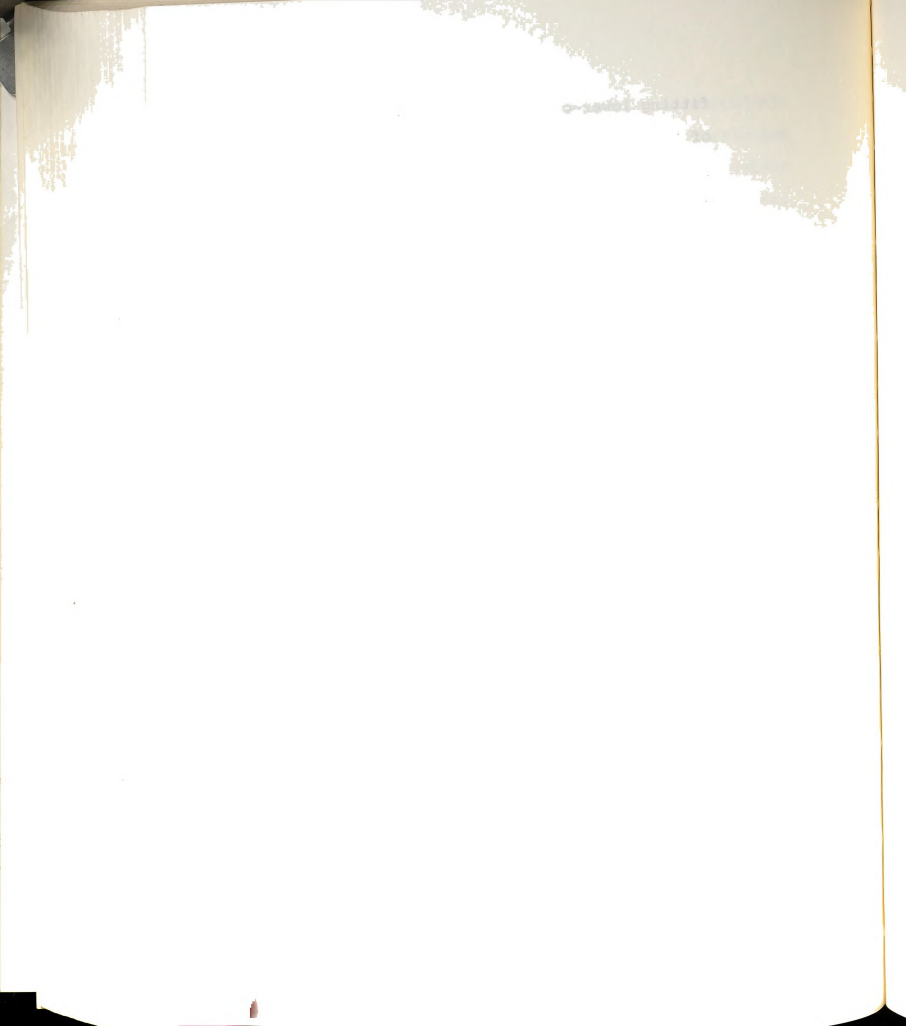
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fitting lower-class people to the structures of the dominant society by remedying their perceived knowledge, skill, and value deficiencies, resistance to and absence from such programs may be expected.

- II. Lower class people will not value adult basic education until they perceive its purveyors as agents loyal to them, as acting in their best interests, and as partners in the shared tasks of furthering freedom and authentic development.
- III. Adult basic education which is perceived as a vehicle for shoring up the privileges and priorities of the dominant social strata is unacceptable to the poor.
- IV. Societal structural reform is as significant an objective of adult basic education as are functional behaviors and skills. In the absence of such reform lower-class people will continue to value behaviors and norms which have proven successful in their present circumstances.
- V. Adult basic education can most effectively change behaving-valuing patterns which are destructive, serially independent, and non-central to self-concept when it is allied with programs which



diminish peer support and ameliorate external circumstances contributing to their existence.

With respect to the structures of the encounter we conclude that:

- VI. In encounters between lower-class clients and adult basic education mentors, relational and attitudinal problems can be minimized if the relationship is one of reciprocity and parity rather than domination, if vulnerability is a shared experience, and if the behaving and valuing processes of clients are recognized, nay even honored, for their capacity to satisfy both survival and higher human needs.
- VII. Reciprocity, parity, shared vulnerability, and respect for the reasonableness of lower-class behaviors and supportive values are possible to the extent that interested listening to silence and speech, as well as humility, characterize the posture of adult basic education mentors with respect to their students.
- VIII. Negative evaluations and feelings of adult basic education mentors toward the knowledge, skills, and values of marginal lower-class clients, communicated to and sometimes internalized by them, contribute to relational and attitudinal problems in the educational setting.



- IX. Narrative-banking educational practice on the part of educators, whether a consequence of negative perceptions toward their clients or a carry-over of practice employed with children, contributes to strained relationships.
- X. Many "deviant" behaviors of low-status people, enterprising and ingenious as they are, represent promise and potential rather than aberrations and problems in an adult basic education context.

These propositions have highly significant implications for the resolution of relational and attitudinal problems--the human variables--in adult basic education. Mezirow,¹ as related in the Introduction to this study, concluded that the most alienated, poorest, and least constructive members of lower-class society pose very much more difficult problems for educators than the upwardly mobile, middle-class oriented members of it who are now being served.

It would seem that the people who are most alienated and poor are not likely to participate in adult basic education unless we engage their interest by formulating its purposes and structuring its encounters so as

¹Mezirow, Analysis and Interpretation of A.B.E. Experience in the Inner City: Toward a Theory of Practice in the Public Schools.

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to satisfy their needs. This calls for new strategies and leads to recommendations for both fundamental and instrumental modifications in practice.

Recommendations and Implications

Five fundamental recommendations emerge as especially relevant in the light of the above ten propositions. They are addressed to the issues of both purposes to be served and the manner in which encounter is structured in adult basic education.

The recommendations, in turn, have implications in terms of instrumental requirements for practice, questioning the appropriateness of some current practices, and affirming the appropriateness of others. Mezirow provides us with carefully drawn bench-marks of current practice in adult basic education in the United States against which we may compare each of our recommendations and the implications flowing from them.

The first recommendation is that:

- A. The principal form of encounter in adult basic education should be essentially dialogic in character.

As presently structured, adult basic education suffers from its all too prevalent narrative character.

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Mezirow¹ described the interaction in most classrooms in terms of a "present-recite/test-correct" pattern, departures from which are rare. The composite impression formed from Mezirow's assessment is of the teacher depositing information in the students who function as depositories, a banking operation in which the scope of action allowed to students extends only as far as receiving, memorizing, and repeating the deposits. Their involvement in the determination of what they need to know, what is to be taught, and the means chosen for accomplishing the stated objectives is minimal at best. Again, Mezirow concludes that, with respect to objectives, content, and methods, most adult basic education classes are almost exclusively under the control of the teacher.

Education, on the other hand, which addresses problems and survival needs in dialogue, consists not in transfers of information, but in acts of cognition. Both teacher and students are critical co-investigators in the process, acting upon the objects of their investigation, which in banking education are "owned" by the teacher. The teacher is no longer merely the-one-who-teaches, but one who is himself taught in dialogue with the students, who in turn, while being taught, also teach.

¹Ibid., pt. III, p. 19.

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This first recommendation then implies a type of encounter in which parity is established and vulnerability is shared, in which learning is as truly the task of mentors as it is of clients. Parity is achieved when the former share control and decisions with the latter to make the educational process more adequately serve their mutually determined purposes. Shared vulnerability is implied in the willingness of mentors to learn with and from their lower-class clients.

The recommendation precludes the presence of any naively conceived model of the "good man" such as that described by Mezirow as implicit in the "latent lessons" of basic education. These are the incidental teachings about such things as the importance of industriousness, deferred gratification, self-directed learning, and education as the high road to better jobs, mobility, and success. Such lessons implicitly indict the maturity, intelligence, and ability of those whom the classes are intended to serve.

Dialogue on the other hand, imposes itself as the way by which lower-class persons retain their autonomy, express their needs, and in effect, achieve their significance as integral partners in the education process.

Because of the dialogue's significance, it is crucial that teachers be found who are also students, who are committed to the development and freedom of

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clients. It takes a special form of love and humility to lead without arrogance, without projecting ignorance onto others, without paternalistic manipulation. These behaviors and their accompanying feelings are not disguiseable. Rather they are recognizable and their presence threatens the credibility of the whole enterprise.

It is not enough, however, that adult basic education be dialogic. The dialogue itself must be addressed to the real world confronting those whom the education is intended to serve. Hence, it is also recommended that:

- B. Adult basic education should focus upon the circumstances confronting lower-class people, upon patterns of response which might be facilitated through appropriately designed content and style of instruction, and THEN upon such instruction.

This recommendation is above all else a statement of purpose or mission which transcends the goal of fitting individuals to take their place in society by simply equipping them with the requisite knowledge, skills, and values for adequate functioning.

This is a radical reorientation in the literal sense. It means that basic education consists of much

more than reading, writing, counting, or taking a few class periods to focus upon social issues, civic affairs, or good citizenship. The intent is not to deny that lower-class adults need to be able to read, write, and count. Nor does it deny that social issues, civic affairs, or citizenship are important. Rather this re-definition of purpose contends that lower-class persons must discover that they too can act as well as be acted upon; that they are creators as well as creatures in this world; that because their present circumstances of poverty are a product of man-made past and present forces, they are also susceptible to transformation; and that learning to read, write, and count plus numerous other learnings can and will be useful in achieving that transformation.

It rests upon the premise cited earlier that the educational process is never neutral. Either it functions as an instrument to facilitate the integration of its students into the world as it is, bringing about conformity to it, or it becomes as Paulo Freire advocates, "the practice of freedom," the means by which men and women deal critically and creatively with reality and discover how to participate in the transformation of its oppressive elements.

This form of adult basic education seeks to critically consider and recognize the causes of situations which are oppressive, in particular, the societal and

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institutional structures maintaining and perpetuating them. Next it seeks to determine the means of action required to create new situations, more humanizing and liberating. In this manner adult basic education subtly moves its participants from preoccupation with their own functional deficiencies to a concern for structural forces that affect them. Its students must come to see reality, oppressive as it is for lower-class people, not as a closed world from which there is no exit, but as a limiting situation in which the limits can be transformed. Within this context and from this perspective the traditional middle-class staples of computation and communication skills can extend their time-honored significance to lower-class students.

For most adult basic education teachers, as Mezirow reports, the question of content is simply a matter of what he/she will do in the next class. For the dialogical, problem-posing teacher-student, on the other hand, the program content is neither a gift nor an imposition--bits of information to be deposited in students--but rather an organized and developed "re-presentation" to individuals of the things about which they want to know more. Mentors, above all else, should avoid recommending coping skills to lower-class clients who long ago determined what is necessary for survival in their world, and who find the prescriptions of outsiders inappropriate and even insulting.

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Authentic liberating education, of which adult basic education should be a supreme instance, in Freire's terms, is not carried on by "A" for "B" or by "A" about "B" but rather by "A" with "B." The objects of mediation in the dialogue between these two are those situations and realities already heavily impregnated with anxieties, doubts, hopes, or hopelessness. Decisions about objectives, about curriculum, about learning activities cannot be made apart from consideration of their relationship to the real world of the participants and from dialogue with them. Predictably, the issues of recruitment and retention which presently loom so large in adult basic education will be of less moment when its purposes and structure of encounter are redefined and redesigned.

If, however, adult basic education is to: (A) be dialogic in character, and (B) focus upon the circumstances confronting lower-class people and their patterns of response to be facilitated through appropriately designed content and style of instruction, then the following modifications of present practices seem to be instrumental to implementation of these recommendations:

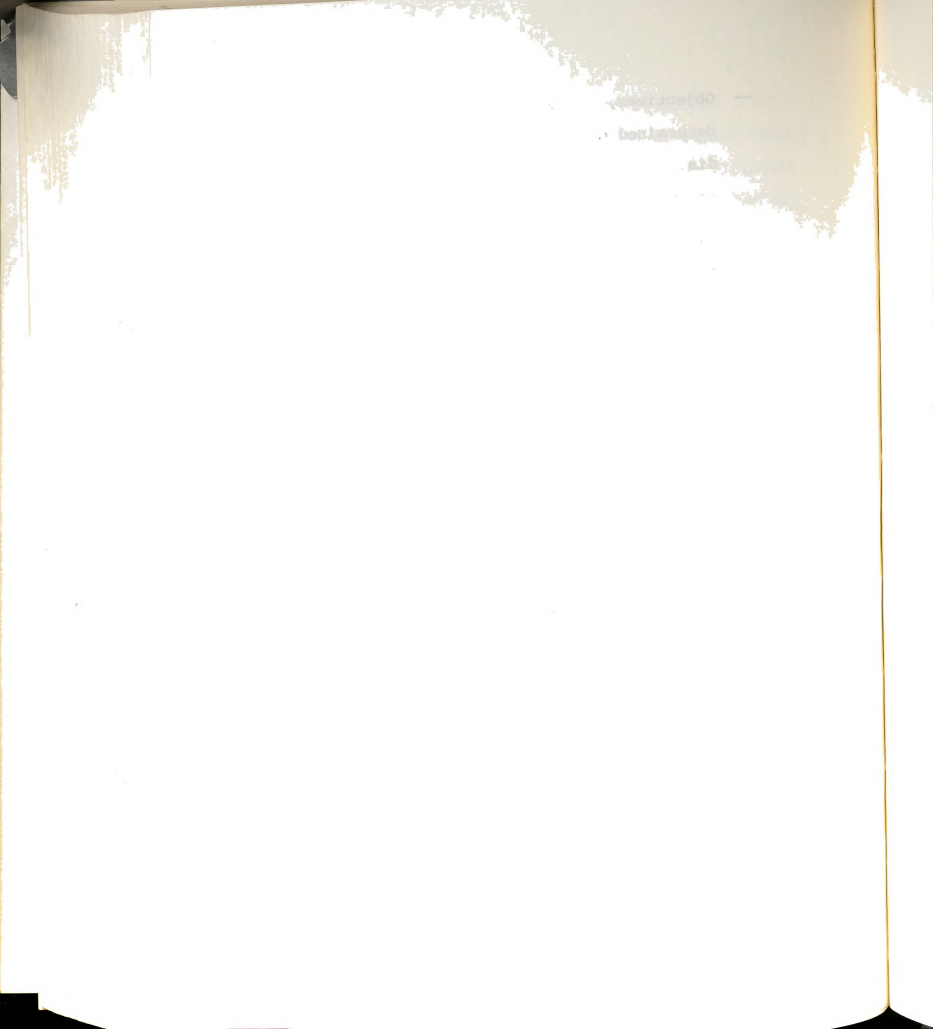
- The pattern of "present-recite/test-correct" in ABE should be employed only in the service of mutually determined goals;

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- Objectives, content, and methods should be determined mutually by participants after dialogical assessment of their relationship to the social reality to be transformed;
- The practice of planning special activities such as field trips or the involvement of guest resource persons should be based on prior inventory of students' needs and interests;
- Teacher-students should be chosen not only on the basis of knowledge and teaching skills, but also on their capacity to operate as integral partners in the dialogical process;
- Students as mature and respect-worthy adults should have a part in the selection of their mentors;
- The practice of bringing both opportunity and facilities for basic education to the neighborhoods of potential clients should be continued since it is the reality of their world which is the object of this process;
- The now almost unheard of involvement of students in any kind of evaluation of methods, materials, and teacher performance should be provided for as part of the dialogical process;



- The dearth of emphasis on coping skills in the adult basic education curriculum is not to be lamented since the implied criticism, and latent paternalism, of such prescriptions diminish their utility; and
- Coping skills that do become a part of the ABE curriculum should originate with the clients to be served and be shaped in dialogical encounter.

Furthermore, in view of the foregoing re-definitions of the structure of encounters in and purposes to be served by adult basic education, it is also recommended that:

- C. A major portion of the training provided for professional adult basic education personnel should consist of field experience to both orient, familiarize, and sensitize them to the behaving and valuing of potential clients and equip them to function in the dialogical encounter.

Regarding the characteristics of mentors, the Mezirow study observed that there is no clearly defined preparation for basic educators. Almost all of them are part-timers, who regularly teach children and whose ABE work is a "moonlighting" operation. The transition from teaching children to teaching adults is not always made successfully.

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When we consider also that hard-core lower-class adults offer considerably greater challenge to educators and the education process than any other group, then some form of prior preparation is not only desirable but absolutely essential.

Add to this the previous recommendation that dialogue be the principal means through which mentors and lower-class clients mutually address social reality and the means for its transformation, and some form of field experience in studying that reality would appear to be essential. The experience could be arranged and developed with the help and direction of those indigenous persons who are recognized leaders in the poverty setting.

Given the lack of adequate in-service preparation for what is already admittedly, a very difficult educational task, it is no surprise, as Mezirow concludes, that adult basic educators have not yet adapted themselves or their methods, materials, and policies to accommodate those individuals in our society who are the least middle class oriented in their behaving and valuing. In fact, almost total ignorance of the forces shaping lower-class behaving and valuing makes such an accommodation well nigh impossible. It is predictable that adult basic educators who are outsiders to this society will be unappreciative of certain "deviant" behaviors and their meeting-of-need and assuagement-of-desire potential.

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What to a knowledgeable observer may appear as behaving with inventive genius or enterprising ingenuity, to the outsider may smack of callous disregard for honored norms. Thus what may in fact be intelligence and promise may be interpreted as ignorance and waste.

A major conclusion of this investigation into the processes affecting lower-class valuing is that field internship experience is needed by those who will function as partners and leaders in adult basic education. Such a preparatory experience is needed to equip prospective mentors with insight into the survival strategies devised by their clients and with appreciation for the value assigned to those strategies. In short, it is necessary in order to transcend the limited and misleading perspective of the outsider.

In the process of field study, the teacher-student will many times be exposed as lame and vulnerable in a setting wherein he had supposed superiority. This is not to be regretted. Such humbling experiences can contribute to the openness with which he plays his part as both teacher and learner in the dialogue, as one who carefully speaks and carefully listens.

At the same time, however, he will discover what Freire calls the contradictions and self-destructive tendencies inherent in some of the "solutions" devised by lower-class people. Such contradictions will be the

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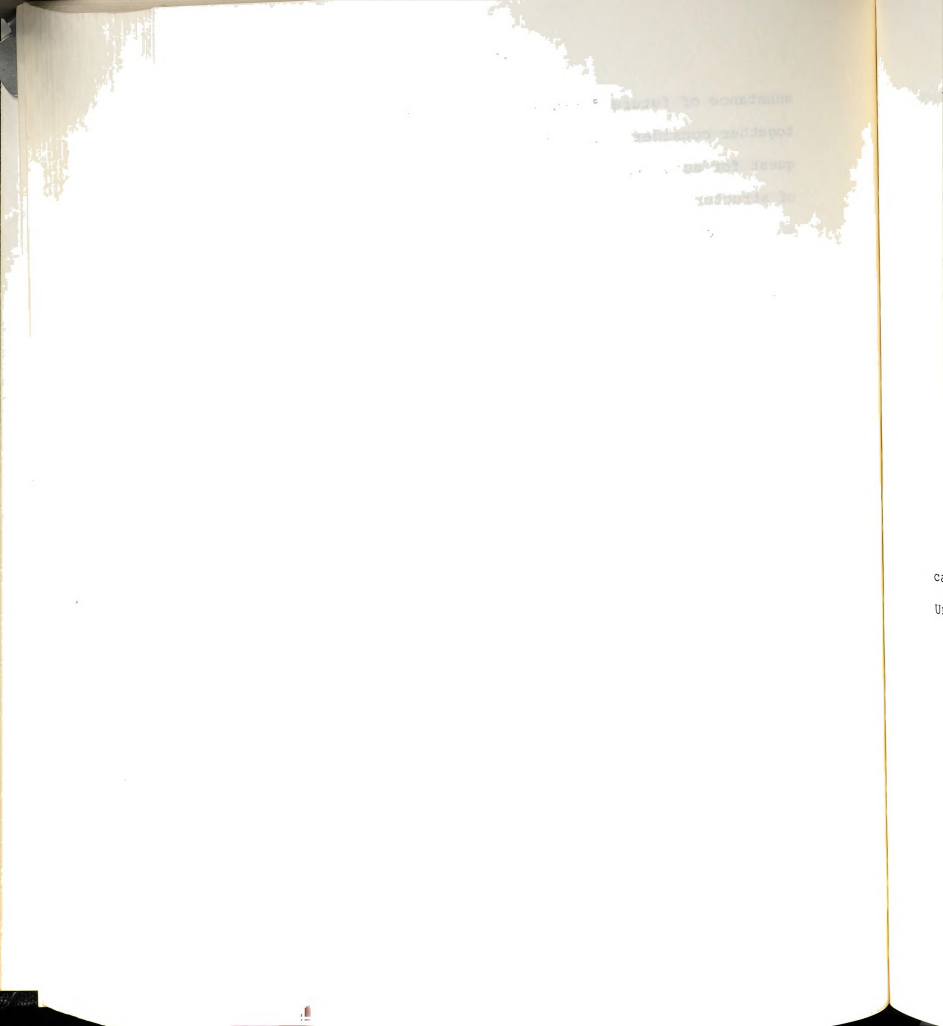
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substance of future dialogue in which mentors and clients together consider the course to be followed in their quest for authentic development and the transformation of structures which oppress them.

Some current practices in adult basic education must be evaluated in relation to this proposed field experience. It is our conclusion that:

- The appropriate response to deviant "acting-out" behaviors in and out of the classroom is not ridicule or paternal reprimand. Rather, the origin and purpose of such behaviors, the valuing of them, and the hidden resources of intelligence they imply, are all grist for the dialogical encounter;
- Part-time commitment as the most common form of ABE staffing is inadequate for the magnitude of the task of providing basic education to lower-class adults;
- "Moonlighting" in the adult program by K-12 teachers should normally be discontinued because the required transition is rarely made without contaminating ABE with attitudes, methods, and practices damaging to parity in the dialogical encounter;



- The neighborhoods of lower-class people are appropriate settings in which to arrange opportunities for adult basic education and the principal base for field experience;
- Study of social science research in a formalized academic program as well as training in traditional subject-matter competency should supplement the field experience; and
- Standard requirements of professional certification should be waived for individuals whose intimate association with the lower social stratum has equipped them to function effectively as mentors in the dialogue.

In view of the structural components of both the causes and solutions to the problem of poverty in the United States, it is recommended that:

- D. Adult basic education should have close working relationships with anti-poverty programs attempting to alter the structures perpetuating poverty, especially those with career opportunity components.

It is futile, and worse, potentially explosive to make oppressive social reality and the means for transforming that reality the object of the dialogical encounter in adult basic education if there is no

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evidence of reciprocal interest and response from those who control the structures and man the gates of opportunity. Even less is there any reason to regard the acquisition of communication and computation skills as appropriate tools for participating in the transforming process if there are no corresponding signs of communication and cooperation from the sources of power and control.

If adult basic education is to be recognized as a viable tool for the entry of lower-class people into the mainstream of society, then it must also be deemed desirable for such persons to do exactly that. Adult basic education will never be fully valued by potential clients or anyone else as long as it is viewed only as an instrument for supplying literate and civilized maids, janitors, dishwashers, and street cleaners.

With respect to career opportunities, the poor typically hold entry level, usually menial occupations, valued neither by the employer nor the employee. Furthermore, the opportunity to move beyond entry level positions is dependent upon prior successful completion of increased educational requirements. Adult basic education at present, however, too frequently goes on quite apart from the structures of occupational and other opportunities, with no direct relationship to them. It is not particularly valued because its relevance to greater

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opportunities and a better life is neither apparent nor guaranteed. It offers too little real incentive to discontinuing those behaviors which have provided some measure of satisfaction of needs in the past.

Adult basic education combined with a built-in career ladder, on the other hand, would be able to counteract such forms of deviant behaving and valuing as are serially independent and non-central to self-concept by substituting more positive feedback of peers and modifying the external circumstances which give them support and justification. This is possible to the extent that clearly defined and publicly acknowledged career ladders allow a poor person to advance from low-skill entry-level jobs to any station to which his developing competence entitles him. Such positions must become as available to him as to the more favored members of society. Indeed, it should become possible to take the first step on the ladder without first having to qualify according to some arbitrarily established set of educational criteria.

It is the contention of several scholars, that today, for the poor, training cannot be considered a prerequisite for employment, especially since even highly skilled and well-trained persons quickly become obsolete. Rather, in most cases training must take place after employment is secured. Then, further advancement implies

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further training, both on-the-job and in formal courses. Advancement along a continuum ranging from non-skilled entry level positions, extending through intermediate sub-professional functions, and culminating in full professional status is accompanied and accomplished by acquisition of the requisite knowledge, skills, and values.

The poor can be expected to understand the relationship between education and the satisfaction of their needs and desires when that education is seen as being directly related to altering the circumstances now preventing them from achieving resolution of those needs and desires.

The reasonableness of this recommendation is borne out by Mezirow's study. His survey of present facts of life in ABE reveals that it is not uncommon to find students who are bitter about employers who demand educational credentials that they feel are unnecessary to do a job.¹ It is not lack of knowledge or intelligence that holds such persons back--it is lack of schooling. In the words of a middle-aged black man who had failed exams for the Post Office and the New York Transit System,

¹Ibid., IV - 5.

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Everywhere you go you have to take a test for a job, and how you gonna take that test if you don't know a job? It's just a front. It's a front cause a man can do the job without a college education. Schooling knocks me back every time.

And this man has bothered to try. One can only guess at the numbers of ghetto youth and "hard-core unemployed" who refuse to enroll in ABE or job-training programs because they are convinced that the "system" is stacked against them.

Sociologists tell us that "career" means different things depending on social status. The middle-class person thinks of "career" in hierarchial terms; one works his way up from one level of responsibility and reward to the next (instructor, assistant professor, associate professor, etc.). "Career" for the building maintenance man who sleeps in the basement is likely to mean a sloped lateral movement to a "better job"--with a dryer basement.

When there is the possibility, however, of getting on and moving up a real career ladder then other forces are set in motion. From a simple job upgrading comes more security, a little higher status, a bit more pay, and so on. These small differences have a great deal to do with how a person lives and how he feels about himself. Soon Kreisberg's four factors rendering behaviors and values malleable take effect. As circumstances change, so too does the nature of feedback received. What was serially independent and non-central to

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self-concept anyway, is no longer valued. New opportunities, increased and supported by adult basic education, have begun to satisfy needs and assuage desires.

One career opportunity to which adult basic education can provide access with a minimum of outside negotiation and contractual agreements is the involvement of paraprofessionals within its own programs. As an adjunct then of the previous recommendation, it is further suggested that:

- E. Paraprofessionals be much more extensively utilized in adult basic education.

There are several good reasons for advocating utilization of the services of paraprofessionals in adult basic education. The presumption is that such persons will be indigenous to the social class and neighborhood setting of those being served by the program.

The inclusion and active participation of paraprofessionals is recommended first, because they will normally enjoy greater credibility with participants than those who have only recently entered their world. Second, if adult basic education is to proceed with dialogue as the principal form of encounter, paraprofessionals are in a position to facilitate the dialogical process both by encouraging the participation of clients and by contributing their own assessment of

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the circumstances confronting low-status people and alternative measures for their transformation. Third, adult basic education pays more than mere lip service to the innate abilities and respect worthiness of low-status people by the employment of paraprofessionals. This single step in itself speaks volumes and provides convincing testimony of the value accorded the expertise of such individuals. Finally, the inclusion of paraprofessionals in adult basic education, is a specific vehicle for admitting poor people to the entry level position to a bona fide career opportunity in the teaching profession. As has been previously advocated for career opportunities in other forms of employment, the various steps and corresponding requirements for advancement on the career ladder within the teaching profession needs to be spelled out and clearly understood.

As a consequence of these two preceding structurally oriented and career opportunity based recommendations for adult basic education, and in support of their implementation it is further concluded that:

- Adult basic education offered apart from direct ties with increased opportunities should not be expected to be generally attractive to lower-class people.

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- Adult basic education should not be employed to recruit and prepare low-status persons into employment which offers no possibility of advancement.
- No relationship between ABE and career opportunities should be made or inferred unless it is based on fact.
- The practice of enrolling students into a program oriented toward eighth grade or high school equivalency is inadvisable if short-range student goals can be met with short-range modified programs of instruction.
- ABE that is tied in with real career ladders should offer vocational counseling to acquaint students with the specific opportunities and their corresponding requirements at each level of advancement.
- ABE should provide appropriate instructional components for realizing the stated requirements of each level of advancement.

The above recommendations and their implications are not necessarily new or proposed for the first time in this study. What is new, however, is the theoretical framework we have discovered for supporting these proposals.

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Implications for Further Research

The five broad recommendations for adapting adult basic education programs to more effectively serve the more alienated segment of poor people are based upon a conviction that low-status adults will increase their involvement in basic education in proportion to the degree of control they exercise over its purpose and direction.

The efficacy of each recommendation, while strongly implied in the research we have analyzed, is speculative until such time as it is implemented and tested. Furthermore, the interrelationships among the recommendations may have some bearing on the efficacy of basic education programs for low-status adults. Is there a difference in the degree of involvement of such persons if recommendations A and B are implemented without C, D, and E, if A, B, and C are implemented without D and E, and so on? One hypothesis as the basis for further study is that the effort to implement recommendations A, B, and C may not yield significant results until D, and perhaps E, are also operational.

Many other aspects of this study may, of course, be subjected to empirical analysis. Each of the ten propositions summarizing the position of low-status adults with respect to the purposes and structure of the encounter within basic education warrants careful

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analysis, and the precise impact of cultural conditioning on behaving-valuing patterns for different ethnic groups needs to be more clearly understood if adult basic education programs serving ethnically discrete groups are to be adapted to achieve maximum effectiveness.

Concluding Statement

We began with general propositions taken from the literature about the nature of valuing, added new ones as they seemed to account for further refinements in the process, and then followed these propositions through the research on various facets of life among low-status people. The literature on the purposes and procedures of functional and structural strategies for eliminating poverty provided evidence for the impact of these strategies on the valuing process which outside forces are able to generate. Specifically, we examined the evidence for the effect of adult basic education programs on low-status peoples' valuing processes. The summation and analysis of the evidence from these many investigations strongly support the ten propositions we identified and form the theoretical basis for a set of recommendations for improving adult basic education.

Our conclusions will meet the objections, as have similar conclusions of others, first, that dialogue as a structure of encounter and as a vehicle for instruction will not work--it is too complicated and

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cumbersome; second, that an internship among the poor is too much to ask of teachers--the preparation is too difficult and the rewards too few; and third, that society will not support adult basic education that threatens the status quo nor will business, industry, and the professions open up doors to share their power and privileges.

No doubt there are other objections too, all with a certain amount of support in both logic and precedent.

Nevertheless, if the principles and supporting evidence derived from this study have any validity at all, then society must ask itself: do we just want the forms of programs of education for the poor or do we want programs that work, that will be effective; is it too much to ask teachers to be vulnerable--have not the lower-class clients always been so; and what of our purposes in basic education--do we want janitors or free developing hopeful people? What is our choice and what price are we willing to pay for the choice we make? As others have said: "Civilization is a race between education and catastrophe." Adult basic education as presently practiced among the poor is not helping to win that race.

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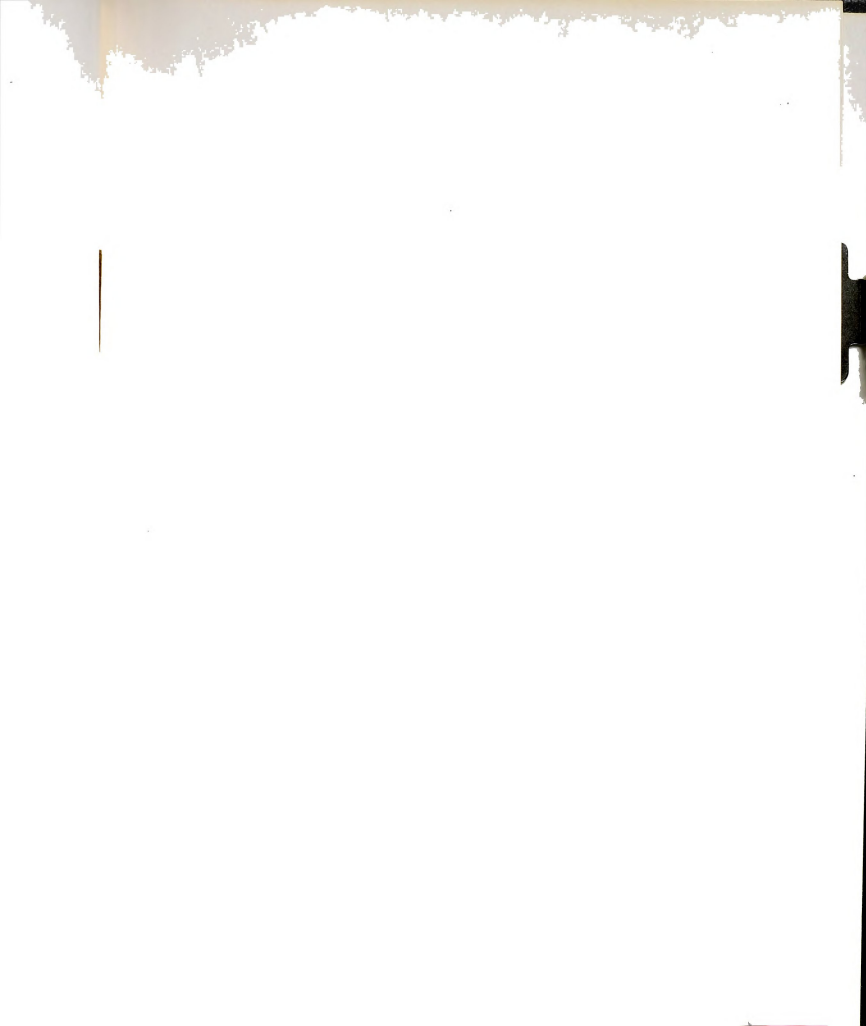
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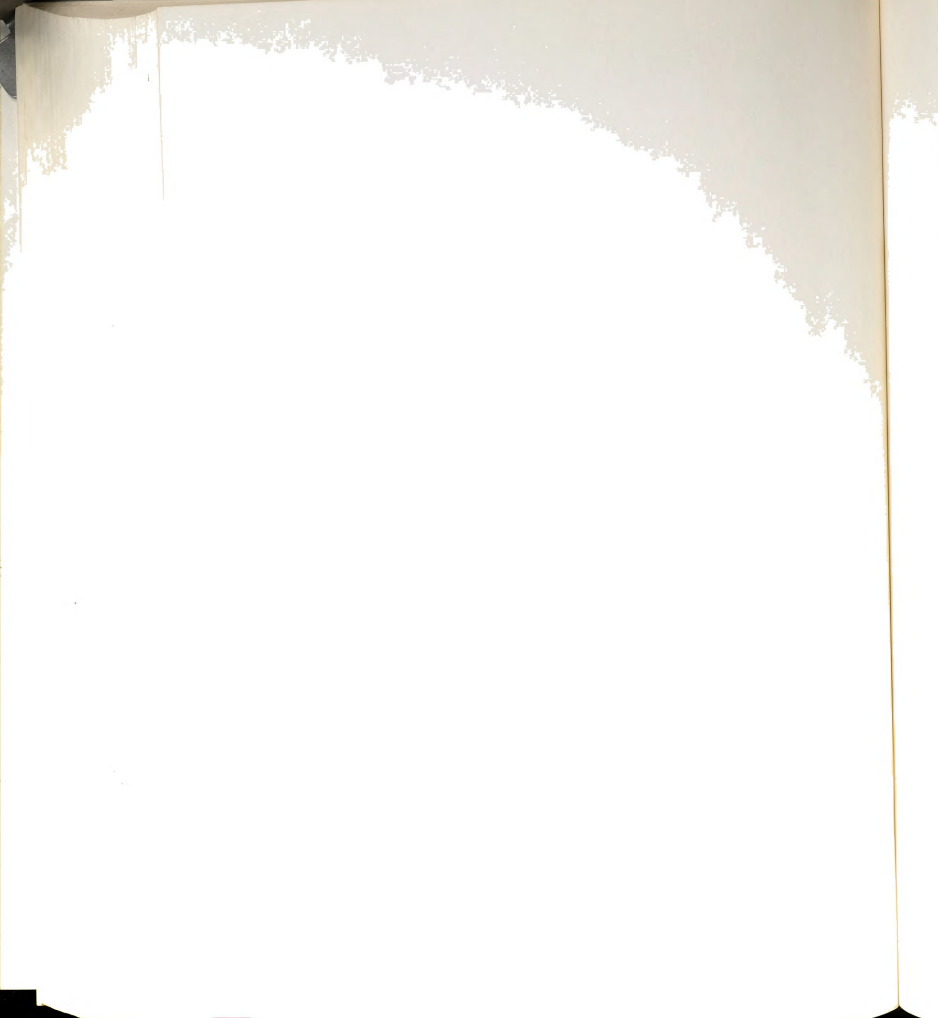
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