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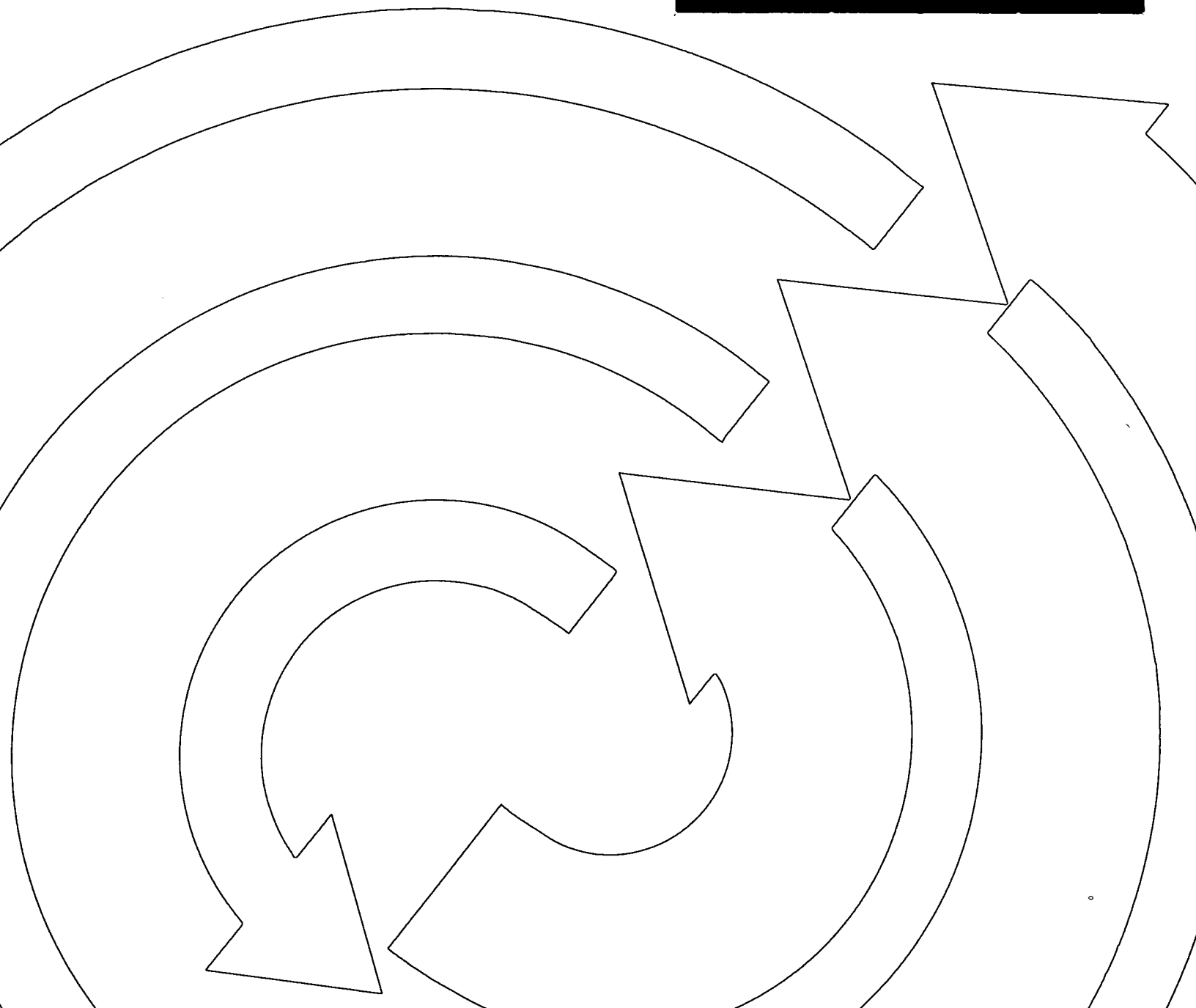

THE PROGRAM ON CONFLICT MANAGEMENT ALTERNATIVES

The Program on Conflict Management Alternatives (PCMA) was established in January, 1986, funded by grants from the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, with additional funds from the University of Michigan. The Program supports an agenda of research, application, and theory development, focusing explicitly on the relationship among social justice, social conflict, and social change. The Program examines the use of innovative settlement procedures and roles for disputants and third parties, the institutionalization of innovative mechanisms and organizational and community structures that permanently alter the way conflicts are managed, and the fundamental differences and inequalities between parties that often create conflict and threaten its stable resolution. We work primarily in United States' settings, in conflicts arising within and between families, organizations, and communities, and between different racial, gender, and economic constituencies. These specific efforts are supported by a variety of research and action grants/contracts with governmental agencies, foundations, and private and public organizations/agencies.

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MEANS OF EMPOWERMENT IN INDIVIDUALS, ORGANIZATIONS, AND COMMUNITIES: REPORT ON A RETRIEVAL CONFERENCE

by

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Thomas J. Gerschick, Barbara A. Israel, and Barry Checkoway

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MEANS OF EMPOWERMENT IN INDIVIDUALS, ORGANIZATIONS AND COMMUNITIES: REPORT ON A RETRIEVAL CONFERENCE

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MEANS OF EMPOWERMENT IN INDIVIDUALS, ORGANIZATIONS AND COMMUNITIES: REPORT ON A RETRIEVAL CONFERENCE

REPORT SUMMARY

The Program on Conflict Management Alternatives (PCMA) held a retrieval conference on "Means of Empowerment in Individuals, Organizations, and Communities" at the University of Michigan, May 8-9, 1989. The purpose of the conference was to discuss and analyze the different meanings empowerment has for people, the multiple levels on which empowerment works, and the relationships among these levels. The conference also focused on strategies and skills for empowerment; conflicts that arise when attempting to empower individuals, organizations, and communities; and case studies of empowerment efforts.

Case study presentations addressed empowering individuals, empowering organizations, empowering communities, empowering education and training, and action and participatory research. Sessions also addressed the definition of empowerment and questions and issues for further dialogue. This report summarizes the presentations and discussions at the conference and provides a synthesis of the major themes and findings. The report closes with a conference critique and concluding comments.

BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION

THE PURPOSE

The purpose of the retrieval conference was to discuss and analyze the different meanings empowerment has for people, the multiple levels on which empowerment works, and the relationships among these levels. The conference focused on strategies and skills for empowerment; conflicts that arise when attempting to empower individuals, organizations, and communities; and case studies of empowerment efforts. This topic grew out of PCMA faculty's research and intervention efforts as well as their commitment to social justice.

WHAT IS A RETRIEVAL CONFERENCE?

The idea of a retrieval conference is generally credited to Ron Lippitt, former professor of Psychology and Sociology at the University of Michigan. A retrieval conference involves convening outstanding practitioners and scholars on a particular subject and "retrieving" the information on that subject from their focused discussion and interaction. This format differs from an ordinary intellectual seminar in that it is used to help bridge the gap between academic and practitioner communities. When several "front-line" practitioner-experts come together in the company of several academic-experts, retrieval flows in both directions. Practitioner-experts have an opportunity to share their practical wisdom and experience and academic-scholars have an opportunity to match these experiences with their research endeavors or with accumulated scientific literature. As a result, both groups are enriched and their knowledge is enlarged.

PCMA had used this model effectively in two prior events. The first conference focused on grassroots community organizers' efforts to create change and solve disputes. The second retrieval conference focused on changing organizational racism and sexism. Experience with these events resulted in a consensus that it was a valuable format, both for exchanging information and increasing knowledge.

THE DESIGN

In the initial design stages for this conference, a list of questions related to empowerment were developed by PCMA core group members: Barbara Israel and Barry Checkoway. Through discussion with the entire PCMA faculty, these questions were narrowed down to the list presented in Appendix 1. These questions were sent to all conference participants prior to the event. General questions included: What is meant by empowerment? What are strategies and skills for empowerment? What are internal and external barriers to empowerment? What is the role of conflict in the empowerment process? What are the different levels on which empowerment works? What is an empowered individual, organization, and community? What is an empowering individual, organization, and community?

Concurrently, a preliminary list was generated of people whose work involves empowerment. Specific attention was paid to inviting a diverse group of people. In most cases, the invitees were known by at least one PCMA member, either personally or through their written work. Persons were selected who were well versed in the theoretical and practical literature on empowerment as well as who had experience as a practitioner or change agent. The list of conference participants is included in this document as Appendix 2. Participants included eleven core group members, five of whom presented case examples from their own work, and audience participants. Audience participants were invited with the understanding that they would contribute their insight and ask questions at selected times during the conference. The format of the conference was as follows: core participants presented their definitions and case studies, the core group discussed the issues generated, and then the discussion was opened to include the entire group.

Response to PCMA invitations indicated that there was a great deal of interest in the idea of a retrieval conference on empowerment which would help bridge the gap between academia and practice. The planning committee relied on the knowledge gained from the two previous retrieval conferences in planning this conference. Inviting core participants to present case

examples encouraged them to focus on the questions which were considered crucial to the learning goals. Different core participants were asked to focus on different areas so as to draw on a range of levels and strategies that they represented (see Appendix 1). In addition, core participants were asked to send their vitaes and a sample of their written work on empowerment. These were shared among all participants prior to the event. The conference agenda is included in this document as Appendix 3.

CONFERENCE REPORT METHODOLOGY

Detailed notes were taken by a recorder throughout the conference. In addition, the proceedings were tape-recorded. The recorder listened to the tapes to embellish the fieldnotes. In an earlier draft of this report, notes of each case study presentation were shared with the respective presenter for feedback and accuracy. These fieldnotes were then analyzed[1] for themes both within and across presentations and discussions. A selection of these themes is included in this report in the section titled, Major Themes. This report is organized in the following manner: first, to present a synthesis of the conference discussion of: What is Empowerment?; second, to examine the major themes identified throughout the conference; third, to summarize the case presentations; fourth, to identify questions and issues for further discussion; and fifth, to critique the conference. It closes with some concluding comments.

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1. Following the procedure first described by Glaser and Strauss in The Discovery of Grounded Theory, New York: Aldine Publishing Company, 1967.

WHAT IS EMPOWERMENT? DIFFERENT CONCEPTIONS

The conference began with the core participants describing what empowerment meant to each of them and their work. Following that, the discussion was opened to the larger group to continue the dialogue of different conceptions of empowerment. (A summary of the various perspectives that were presented is included in Appendix 4.) The goal of this dialogue was not to reach consensus but rather to give participants a better sense of where each person was coming from. Discussion began by noting that empowerment has become a buzzword that is used in a multitude of ways. Concern was expressed that without specification, there is a danger of the word's misuse and that it will become so diffuse that it will lose all of its meaning.

This issue of the definition of empowerment was a recurrent theme during the conference. It was apparent from the opening discussion (see Appendix 4) that most participants did not actually define empowerment but rather talked about different components of it. This is not surprising given the difficulty people have conceptualizing this phenomenon and agreeing on what it means. This section draws on the discussions that occurred throughout the conference and seeks to disentangle the different conceptions and highlight the common issues that were articulated.

This segment of the report begins by reviewing the levels on which empowerment occurs, then discusses multiple levels of empowerment and the relationship among them, and closes by discussing selected issues. Quotes from the conference are used to enhance the presentation of these perspectives.[2]

The introductory discussions and case presentations provided the basis for a discussion of the different levels on which empowerment occurs. Each level of empowerment implies a slightly different definition. On the individual level, the following statements suggest the nature of the conversation during the conference:

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2. Because the tapes of the conference were not directly transcribed, the quotes throughout this report are paraphrased.

A person that is empowered is able to make decisions that really affect their lives. They have that kind of control over their lives. As a consequence, they can gratify their basic needs beyond their material needs.

We can say that individuals are "empowered" as they become able to participate in the dynamics of social relations with a personal sense of potency, critical political awareness, and practical strategic skills. Empowerment then is the process of developing participatory competence.

Thus empowerment on the individual level involves the ability to act in an efficacious manner. Similarly, participatory competence applies to both the organization and community levels:

The notion of participatory competence may be extended and applied to the process of empowering groups, organizations, and communities. They all have, as growing and changing entities, entry points that permit the introduction of a sense of group or community critical consciousness, for example, as well as the development of critical comprehension and functional competence.

The definition of an empowering organization draws heavily from democratic management theory. Empowering organizations are organizations where members design, implement, and control processes and structures to achieve members' goals. Consequently, they empower individuals as part of the organizational process:

I don't think you can have a powerful (empowered) organization without people in that organization feeling empowered.

Empowering organizations are democratically organized and share power, information, and decision making. In addition, there must be cross-cutting linkages among the members who comprise the organization. These linkages include organizational interest groups, status groups, and the formal sub-units. For further description of empowering organizations, the reader is directed to Jim Crowfoot's case presentation on page 30.

An empowered community is a community within which individuals and organizations apply their skills and resources in collective efforts that lead to community competence. Through such participation and control, the community is able to meet the needs of its individuals and organizations.

You can't have a powerful (empowered) community without powerful (empowered) people.

Community empowerment is important because it provides support among individuals and organizations and consequently sustains change.

(Ultimately we would have) a totally empowering community which then generated empowering organizations which then created empowered people.

According to one participant, community empowerment is the outcome of a process that can be designed deliberately:

Community participation leads to community competence which involves creating the conditions for problem solving within the community. Competence can also be understood as how well a community provides and acts on opportunities to provide support to members. Community competence then leads to community development. Community development is an outcome, like health development. These then lead to community empowerment.

Participants generally agreed that empowerment is a multi-level concept operating on the individual, organizational, and community levels. As one participant summarized it:

There are multiple levels of empowerment. One is individual efficacy where a person feels they can do something. The second is organizational development and the third is community change. The best is when all three occur because here there is impact on the wider community.

It was suggested that there is a need to expand the conception of levels to take into account the global community:

In today's global world, what does the empowerment of one community mean? Can it be separated from all similarly affected communities? If we empower one group of workers in Appalachia (to fight toxic waste), we may simply be moving the toxic chemicals to the Third World. Can empowerment occur at the individual or community level without being inclusive of the links globally? This is a very difficult concern. If we don't address this global structure, however, we can be turned against one another. So in the end we are disempowered as we struggle with local issues.

An additional level, interpersonal empowerment, appears in the literature. Interpersonal empowerment occurs between the individual and organizational levels and involves skill development and the ability to influence the actions of others. However, this level was not emphasized during the conference.

Similarly, empowerment was discussed as occurring on a continuum. An individual, organization, and community can be empowered in some spheres but not in others and at some times but not at others. Hence empowerment should be thought of as a continuous process that occurs across spheres and levels of one's life and throughout one's lifetime. Thus the more areas and times in individuals, organizations, and communities' lives in which they are empowered, the more empowered they are.

There was general agreement among participants that professionals must pay attention to all levels as they seek to facilitate the empowerment of others. However, it was noted that most of the work currently being done on empowerment addresses only the individual level.

...looking at the multiple levels is what is paramount. What really concerns me about the word's (empowerment) use now is that it is focused on the individual. It is just not enough to be empowered as individuals, it is within the broader organizational, community, and global context that we need to start thinking about the implications. So contextual issues and individuals must be addressed.

There was some disagreement at the conference over the linkages among individual, organizational, and community levels and whether the three levels must be addressed simultaneously or whether one leads to another.

The three levels are not exclusive...rather there is a synergism going on among them.

As an ideal, we should be thinking of them working together but in practice they don't always work together.

You must have all the levels operating simultaneously, even if they don't incorporate all the different actors on each level. Too often we focus all of our attention on just one level.

(It's not clear) whether these are all or nothing systems, whether the whole system needs to be implemented at once or whether it slowly unravels.

As noted above, however, conference participants agreed that it was important that all levels be addressed as part of the empowerment process.

So it is important that these things go together (the levels) because a supportive community is critical. Much of the troubles that individuals are facing in our inner-city communities are troubles caused by the lack of a cohesive community. The community is generally the family and it is usually the conduit through which morals and values are expressed. When this breaks down, we get into a lot of difficulty with individuals and their families. So we can talk about empowering individuals but if we don't embed it within the context of the family and a cohesive community, there is little probability that the intervention will work.

This highlights not just empowerment at multiple levels but the combination of empowerment across levels:

(Empowerment) is best done in a collective effort. People who are best able to (provide) support are those that build in the environment and support networks. Empowerment happens best within a community, whether that community is geographical or whether it occurs more in the mind. The sense of group and/or community membership best supports and sustains decisions and actions.

Empowerment, then, incorporates three primary dimensions. One, the development of a more positive and potent sense of self; two, the construction of a more critical comprehension of the web of political and social relations which comprise one's environment; and three, cultivation of resources and strategies for effectively attaining personal and collective sociopolitical goals.

It is not a given, however, that accomplishment of one level of empowerment automatically leads to movement to the next level. There were numerous examples shared at the conference where change or achievement at one level did not lead to the attainment of another level of empowerment. In fact, numerous practitioners expressed frustration with situations where individuals, organizations, and communities did not see the connections across levels. This issue is developed more fully in the Major Themes section of this report.

Participants were aware that empowerment efforts often occur in indifferent and antagonistic environments. For them, this meant focusing on power as an important variable in the empowerment process.

...the exciting tension in this (empowerment) is the ability to fuse the personal and political...It makes power the central focus of social work practice and alerts us to what we should be focusing on and on how we can help people and communities gain power, rather than the illusion of power.

This also highlights the role of conflict:

Empowerment is a process of conflict to overcome violence, which reduces internal and external blocks of power in individuals and groups. The matter of violence is central to the topic of empowerment. Separating them fails to come to terms with the roots of what we are dealing with. There are awesome consequences of the failure to empower people. It means the sacrificing of some peoples: their well-being and even their lives.

Consequently, power plays an important role in the empowerment process because it enables individuals, organizations, and communities to challenge the people and structures which disempower them. However, participants were careful to note that having power is not the same as being empowered. It is possible to be powerful without being empowered. This applies at all levels.

...we could talk of the university as a very powerful institution but not as an empowering institution at almost any level. It lacks integrity and strips people. In order to talk of it (as empowering), it would need integrity, democracy, and linkages among the people who comprise it.

...very often we think of (people) as powerful because they are repressing others on an individual level.

For conference participants, a central component of being empowered is having power but exercising that power in responsible ways. This means that empowered individuals, organizations, and communities must not think of power in patriarchal, coercive, violent, and zero-sum terms. Rather a new, more cooperative conception of power needs to be developed that stresses participation, restraint, caring, sharing, and responsibility to others. Several other components of empowerment were shared by conference participants:

What is missing (in the definition of empowerment) is a conception which includes voluntary restraint of your own power. You have to leave space for others to operate in. In Israel, there is a Hassidic notion that God is more powerful but exercises voluntary restraint. So others then get a sense of the totality and their place in that totality. So we need to learn how to establish relationships and communities where people do not see the restraint or transformation of their power as a loss and where they start thinking in terms of service to the whole.

We need to add an additional element to our conception of empowerment that includes action which falls within normative ends.

(Within the empowerment process) we need to pay attention to our socialization into roles. Males are often socialized to feel aggressive, to violently express their status. It is learned behavior. We need to change the socialization process.

Thus for conference participants, a key component of empowerment is not infringing on others' ability to become empowered. This criteria helps distinguish a person who has power from a person who is empowered.

A variety of types of power: economic, social, and political were recognized as essential to the empowerment process. To this list was added "knowledge power":

We need to expand our notion of power and therefore empowerment to include the struggle over knowledge, socialization, internalization of myths, and control of information.

Accordingly, the kind of power that empowered individuals, organizations, and communities should have includes knowledge power, defined as the ability to define one's own knowledge and experience as important. Participants noted that in order for empowerment to occur, popular knowledge (defined as the individual and collective knowledge which is based on personal experience) must be validated and incorporated into empowerment efforts. This operates across all levels. The importance of this highlights the need to examine how knowledge is conceptualized and valued.

There is socialization around education. Our belief is that knowledge comes from the people but we constantly confront the attitude that educational knowledge is superior to experiential knowledge.

In general, it was noted that popular knowledge is not valued and individuals, organizations, and communities are socialized throughout their lifetimes to defer to authorities and experts and to disregard their personal or popular knowledge.

Denigration of popular knowledge disempowers people by causing them to trust authorities rather than acting in a way that their common sense understanding suggests:

...there are many instances where people have accepted the official view even though it contradicted their personal experience.

By making people think that knowledge is something beyond them, they in effect become convinced that they cannot create or control knowledge. This effectively takes them out of the decision making process, allowing other people or groups to make decisions without regard for them. This reinforces disempowerment. Thus people interested in empowerment must question who defines knowledge.

A key component, then, of empowering people is to control knowledge. This is where power and knowledge intersect. Having power allows traditionally disempowered people to place issues on the public agenda, thereby validating their popular knowledge. In order for empowerment to occur, popular knowledge must be validated and incorporated in empowerment efforts. For more discussion of power and knowledge, the reader is directed to John Gaventa's case presentation on page 40.

This discussion of knowledge underlines the issue of professionals' knowledge vs. lay persons' wisdom which is also conceived of as the expertise/experience split. Often the problem with experts is that they are schooled in "formal" knowledge and models which do not mirror people's experience or their realities. This split has ramifications for the role of practitioners which are addressed in the section on Major Themes.

Empowerment was described at various times in the conference as a process, and both as a process and an outcome. In the former, participants felt that empowerment is a process of gaining independence and control over one's life. This process begins with a change in attitudes, beliefs, and values and ends by acting on these new beliefs which leads to empowerment.

Some participants added the dimension of outcomes to their conception of empowerment. To them, focusing on outcomes was a central part of the empowerment process because it acts as one measure of the success of the empowerment process. It is also an indication that individuals, organizations, and communities have the power to empower themselves in other spheres. In order for empowerment to occur, the individual, organization or community must "own" the outcomes. Without owning the change and without the ability to transfer the lessons learned in one struggle to other struggles in their lives, they are left dependent upon other people or systems. So this changes our conception of empowerment slightly as one participant explained:

(Empowerment) refers to both a state of being and a process of becoming.

Consequently, some participants concluded that empowerment must be addressed on all levels simultaneously while others thought the levels led to one another. Some participants understood empowerment as a process; others agreed but added a focus on outcomes. These are issues that merit further discussion.

MAJOR THEMES

A number of major themes emerged from the conference: some were suggested by participants during the conference and were written on a sheet of newsprint; others were identified by the authors in analyzing the fieldnotes in the manner explained in the section on Conference Report Methodology. Throughout the following discussions of these major themes, the goal was not to reach consensus but rather to explore different conceptions and perspectives on these issues. The quotes are included to allow participants to speak for themselves. Although numerous themes emerged from the conference, the authors chose to focus on the following themes in this section: The Role of the Practitioner: Who Sets the Agenda?; The Role of the Practitioner: Organizing and/or Providing Direct Services?; Different Conceptions of Context and Its Importance; Empowerment for What? and the Importance of Vision; and Differing Models of Action: Alinsky and Freire.

THE ROLE OF THE PRACTITIONER: WHO SETS THE AGENDA?

There is clearly not one universal role for a practitioner interested in facilitating empowerment; a variety of roles were discussed at the conference. This section presents the issues that were raised concerning the different roles that practitioners can have, the conditions which affect these roles, and who sets the empowerment agenda.

The conference participants agreed that the role of the practitioner was not to "give" people power as part of the empowerment process.

We can't give people health and we can't give them power, you can't produce health among powerless people. But we can make it possible for health to occur by transferring tools, authority, and income.

When I hear the word (empowerment), I recoil because I often hear others say my job as an organizer is to empower other people, which I find quite presumptuous because if we have so much power how did we get Reagan and Bush?.

In fact by trying to give people power, a practitioner can actually disempower the people they are trying to help. As a result, several participants noted that:

Empowerment is based on the needs generated or developed by the group or collective, not the trainer. Sometimes this means that if our needs and assumptions fly in the face of what the community wants to do, the community must take precedence.

Even the powerless have power, we need to understand what that power is and understand what power others have over us, the relationship between the two, and how we might go about changing it. The process of organizing then confronts these issues.

The empowering practitioners are ones who clearly see themselves not in a superior, hierarchical position to the client, but as a part of a collaborative process where the client can gain ownership of any change that occurs and that the practitioners promote a cohesive community around the client.

Here the practitioner was variously defined as a helper, a collaborator, and a person who helps others determine their power. This role description does not include setting the agenda; hence, the agenda of the practitioner must take lower priority to the agenda of the individual, organization, and/or community.

Most participants agreed, in theory, with the stated components of this practitioner role. However through the discussion, some participants noted that the commitment to the individual, organization, or community's agenda was difficult to sustain in practice. For instance, the context within which a professional enters the community has an effect on the role one plays and on who sets the agenda.

We must question the kind of agenda we are using to gain entree. Sometimes our agenda is set by our funding source, sometimes we enter communities in response to a certain problem, sometimes we go in with a goal, like family planning. We are trying to train people to be more open to defining the problem so they don't enter with the problem already defined or worse yet with the solution in hand.

How do practitioners prevent themselves from over-influencing an individual, organization, or community in the determination of their problems? Disempowered people often internalize a deference to those with education and skills that they themselves do not have. The danger here is that special "expertise" can overshadow the "experience" of the populace. Given Americans' cultural history and their socialization into this culture, it is easy to understand why this is so. There is clearly room for both expertise and experience in the struggle for empowerment. What remains to be seen is the role that each will take and the conditions under which one takes primacy over another.

Sometimes the needs of the practitioner get in the way of individual, organization, or community determination of the agenda.

We set up a series of small, intimate house meetings slowly building support, essentially doing basic educating. We told them of our concerns and that we had a friend who would be coming in to work with the people....We were impetuous. We wanted to change the entire community in a day. We also felt that we knew what was best for the community, which was a big problem. But we felt that we had the radical rap and the radical rhetoric and couldn't understand why they were so slow in adopting this.

Here, this young practitioner was so anxious to use and prove his skills that it clouded his approach to the community. This is understandable, in that practitioners have expertise but in most contexts have little power. Professionals feel pressured at times to validate what they have learned. As a result, they often feel compelled to empower themselves, sometimes at the expense of the individual, organization, or community with whom they are working. Thus academics and practitioners can fall into the same patterns that occur daily in this culture.

As a professional and service-supplier, I struggle with what it means to talk about empowering others. How can we do this without being incredibly presumptuous and self-contradictory? Is there a way to make a living and sustain ourselves which meets our needs for security and safety while maintaining a reasonable standard of living for our families without ripping off, exploiting, and manipulating individuals, groups, and communities?

As noted, most practitioners have needs for security, safety, and maintenance of a reasonable standard of living. There is clearly a relationship between these needs and the danger of empowering oneself at the expense of the people with whom one works. At the conference, the use of language highlighted this problem:

Why are we so abstract in the academic environment? The norm is to reify everything but this actually disempowers some people. We as professionals must question our own language and our privilege, which distances us from those we want to work with and to help. It leads to talking down to people.

...we are used to being powerless as intellectuals and academics. Yet we are knowledge purveyors. We can use language to empower ourselves which in turn disempowers many other peoples, despite our best intentions.

Consequently, one's practice and organizing strategies should be carried out in ways that are mutually empowering and meet the needs of the professional and the individual, organization, or community.

A further dilemma regarding who sets the agenda, raised by several conference participants, is the perceived lack of a critical consciousness on the part of some individuals, organizations, and communities.

I know it sounds elitist to think that people have problems that they don't recognize but they do. There are thousands of examples of this, the most clear of which have to do with information control and secrecy.

The following statement suggests that practitioners must educate people to enable them to develop an agenda and actively participate in the empowerment process.

In some organizations, we have members who do not have the level of sophistication to participate in participatory structures. One of our goals must be to raise members' level of sophistication to get them to the point where they can participate.

Compounding this problem is the sense of frustration experienced by some professionals who are working with single issue organizations that demobilize after accomplishing a specific goal. Professionals are often frustrated with their inability to sustain movement and a continuing commitment to change.

Coming from the perspective of an organization that tries hard to empower its members, it gets very frustrating getting people mobilized around an issue. How does one motivate them to do the things necessary to turn things around? How do you sustain this level of responsibility? Why do they run out of gas after getting their stop-sign so that they don't see the next step or choose not to take the next step?

Thus, practitioners need to decide to what extent they should address only the problems that the people identify or whether they should invoke a different agenda, or whether they should engage in consciousness raising activities regarding issues people are not even aware of yet. If the practitioner does set the agenda and is the catalyst for change, it was clear from the conference that it must be the community members who own that change. If they do not, then the practitioner has failed to empower the community members.

If a client comes in and thanks the social worker, claiming that she could have never done it without her, then we have failed to empower them because they see you as the mechanism through which they have come to be empowered. It is when they come to you and say that I want to thank you because I had not understood how I could go about doing what I have done. Then, you leave them with the skills that they can use in the future that will not leave them dependent on you.

Clearly people working in this area feel that the mobilization and empowerment of individuals should lead to empowered organizations, which in turn should lead to empowered

communities, and ultimately to an empowered world. Given this commitment, it is at times difficult for professionals not to try to determine the agenda of the individuals, organizations, and communities with whom they are working.

The tension between allowing individuals, organizations, and communities to do what they think needs to be done, even if it means single issue campaigns, when the practitioner sees the "bigger picture", is an issue that merits further discussion. How to convey the necessity for people, organizations, and communities to move beyond single issues to develop critical consciousness is a related issue for further discussion.

THE ROLE OF THE PRACTITIONER: ORGANIZING AND/OR PROVIDING DIRECT SERVICES?

An important issue that was addressed during the conference was whether practitioners should provide direct services, organize community organizations, or try to do both. Some participants advocated either providing services or organizing, but felt one person could not do both. Others advocated roles which combine the two strategies. Yet others talked about creating organizations where both activities were occurring simultaneously but were provided by different people.

The following participant was clearly struggling with his role as a service provider. He was aware of the necessity of providing services yet he knew that by simply providing food and shelter he was perpetuating people's powerlessness.

In my organization, we see hundreds and thousands of people coming through our doors asking for food and shelter who are suffering from emotional distress. They don't want to hear bullshit about empowerment. They want food, rent, and access to health care. There is a difference between empowerment and providing assistance. I recognize that by handing that person a bag of food, I am perpetuating their powerlessness. But they don't want to hear about it, they want a bag of groceries and to be left alone. I struggle with this everyday. How can we empower in a practical way to address these issues on a daily basis?

And in response:

That is why it is so hard to do both organizing and social work at the same time because you are torn.

As was mentioned earlier in this report, providing services does little for empowering the recipient, but it may allow practitioners to empower themselves.

There is an important point which has been made here which has ramifications for all of us. In the union movement there is a concept of juxtaposing organizing unionism and service unionism. Service unionizing is a service type of organization. Organizing unionism encourages workers to form their own work groups and try to take advantage of some of the work organization that has developed because this contains the power of the people. This has all got to be sorted out. The point is that this has ramifications for the professional. Do we want to have a more empowering form of work organization? If professionals view the world in a service mode, they get a sense of instant gratification, they can practice what they have been taught, and they have a margin of power, if only over the client, but they aren't empowering their clients. So this is a fundamental problem and something we are going to have to pay a lot of attention to.

Thus, it was suggested that this is why it is necessary to engage in organizing strategies in conjunction with providing service. Without the services, many people will not even be in a position to organize. However, organization only begins the process of addressing the roots of the problem. Hence both areas must be attended to.

The conference participants were in agreement that both providing services and organizing were necessary. However, they were split over whether the same person could do both. Some noted it was impossible, without significantly reorienting priorities or creating new models of social agencies, because service providers are already overwhelmed by their case loads and have no time to develop organizing skills or the time to use them.

In many cases our providers are overwhelmed just trying to keep up with the requests for assistance. So the question is: do we withdraw services to redirect our energies towards more politicizing and organizing?

The need is for both. The issue being raised is: how can you expect the same staff that is spending all of its time doing one of these to add something else? I think this is the current model. Our job is to integrate the two approaches.

The poor service providers, who are already overwhelmed, have been instructed by their boss that they have to do organizing on top of everything else that they do. They physically can't do it, so they have to find a balance. Every time I find people trying to do both, I find an incredible tension.

Consequently if a practitioner is working in an organization that is under-funded and overwhelmed with caseloads, acquiring and utilizing new skills or devoting energy towards new areas such as organizing is problematic. Other conference participants noted that if a practitioner cannot do both, organizers and service providers need to work closely in concert.

It is a serious mistake separating social services or any kind of services from a political activist model because political activists don't have access to the people and the service deliverers do. So until we are able to merge into our service delivery system some options for working with people in those ways, we are not going to reach our goals of empowerment.

We have found that we are constrained in our attempts to empower by forces in the larger society. We must address and incorporate the gap and injustice between the have's and the have not's. We must simultaneously challenge the structure which creates such conditions while tending to the wounded until we can stop the war.

As a way of bridging organizing efforts and service provision, several examples were provided. However, it is important to note in these examples that one person is not fulfilling both roles.

(In one project), they were developing a community mental health center that had two departments. One was an individual counselling department and the other a community organizing, activist department. The goal was to move from the individual level to the activist level. Both levels were operating simultaneously. So there are several models that can bridge the dichotomy between the micro and macro levels.

As an example of a way to combine these two, in Chicago where we were setting up (a project with) seniors, it was the agency who understood the need for organizing. The heads of the nutrition site gave us access to the seniors at the site. Then all we needed was a couple of people to go there and do organizing. Some providers understand this need and others don't.

There are problems associated with this solution as well. For instance, practitioners can feel threatened by or mistrustful of other organizers or practitioners' actions, as the following statements demonstrate.

People need to trust that if they are not doing it, there are others who can and not screw up. So how do you develop a network of services where people feel comfortable doing what they do best and have enough confidence in others that they will allow them to provide parallel services without feeling like they need to intervene in others' work? In social work it seems that workers are so disempowered that when a sexy new technique arises, everyone wants to have these skills because they will lead to prestige and power. Each of us must accept our limits in skills and find where we can fulfill our role best.

It is a problem. In fact organizers and social workers aren't working together, both are suspect of the other. In practice, it is very hard to be both an organizer and a social worker.

It was also noted that the question of where to place priorities is valid on the individual level but is more problematic on the organization or community levels because of the dependency a organization or community has on the larger system.

The question of services versus organizing is very important. We have been talking about it because we are currently focusing on the individual. But at the community level, we still have this contradiction. We can prevent the dependency of clients by helping them take over and deliver their own services, but at some point these people become so dependent on the broader system to keep alive the community controlled institution that they cannot as an organization take on the broader system that we have, in theory, given them the space to empower themselves to change. On an organizational level this contradiction, how the space of alternative service delivery creates space for broader change, is an important one to discuss.

How this issue operates on the different levels of empowerment and the contradiction inherent in being a part of a system while simultaneously challenging that system are two issues that merit further discussion.

As can be understood from the above discussion, conference participants expressed a variety of roles. A conference participant provided perhaps the best summary of the discussion on this topic:

...the conclusion is that there is not a single way to do this, but many models. We must continue to expand our models and continue to experiment.

DIFFERENT CONCEPTIONS OF CONTEXT AND ITS IMPORTANCE

The importance of being sensitive to context was an overarching theme in the conference because of its effect on empowerment efforts. There are numerous spheres in which context is important: first, there is the setting in which one is working, such as neighborhoods, organizations, or communities. Second, there are the larger structures in which the neighborhoods or organizations are nested within, such as cities or larger bureaucracies. Third, there are the settings and structures to which professionals are responsible, such as universities and agencies. Finally, there is the historical context. Professionals tend to operate in multiple and dynamic contexts. Context sets the parameters within which one works. It can either constrain or enable people to act. Hence, attention to each of these different contexts can increase one's effectiveness.

The discussion at the conference was that if practitioners are going to be able to work effectively with individuals, organizations, and communities, they should be sensitive to the particular cultural context in which they are working and should alter their models to fit the setting. They should not impose their models upon an individual, organization, or community.

We teach our people that when you are in a community, you must tailor your approach to the values of the community and the members working with them. Sometimes this means starting (sessions) with the Pledge of Allegiance and sometimes it is a prayer.

One of the things we were wrestling with, but which I haven't heard today, is the cultural relevance of empowerment. How does one take general notions of empowerment and develop them into culturally unique approaches in working with communities? I think there is very little literature in the field other than Barbara Solomon's work. So we were wrestling with how do we translate these principles into culturally viable, culturally appreciative postures for community development. Looking, for instance, at kinship patterns: how would that affect our approach?

It is nice that some of us have rediscovered the community and given up on our global models.

The issue is the hierarchical structure which is shoved down communities throats under the guise of being liberating. Context, then is most important. These models work very well in context, but...(as one participant) was talking about a different context, about cultures which don't share our jargon, our values, our perspectives. We must reach out to these other communities as well as recognize our limitations to working with them. There are things we cannot do with these communities because we are not a part of them.

The larger structures in which individuals, organizations, and communities are nested are also important contexts, especially because of the constraints that such environments tend to place on professionals. Consequently, larger structures or environments can affect the work of a professional especially where the change strategy goes against the norms of the larger structure.

We (members of a university unit or school) have some serious constraints within which we operate and in which we pursue a decision making and empowering process that is not normative within the larger university. So the rate at which we can move is severely compromised and the ways we move are deeply influenced.

(One delinquency program) has brought representatives of police departments from all over the state for workshops and seminars. Faculty from different departments and schools were asked to address the group. The idea was to sensitize the officers so that they would understand the cultural diversity and as a result they would be more humanistic in their response. When we did an evaluation of the (program) after several years of operation, it was fascinating to me to find that almost invariably their behavior had not changed. They would tell us that they intended to change but when they returned to their department, the reward system worked against behavioral change. The officers realized that if they were going to have a career, they were going to have to act like their fellow officers. Perhaps the only way a program such as this would work would be if it included the entire police department. Having representatives from the police department had no impact, the whole organization and its value orientation needs to be changed. It is really critical, as has been raised earlier, that the entire organization be understood as a unit. If we view it as different constituent groups acting independently, we miss that piece of it.

For more on the impact of the environment on organizational change, the reader is referred to Jim Crowfoot's case presentation on page 30.

Similarly another context that is important to acknowledge is the structure to which one is responsible such as the university or an agency. As indicated below, these structures can impose limitations on the extent to which practitioners are able to facilitate empowering processes.

I think it is extremely difficult if not impossible to be an empowering person in many of our human service organizations.

We need to go back to creating empowering practitioners rather than agency enforcers. Through this we will be providing our clients with better service.

I don't think it is fair to look at practice outside of the context of institutions. We need to understand that the helping industry operates within the context of society. In fact we have a human services industry that has to speak in terms of production, where our services are judged in terms of unit cost analysis and where professional social workers are forced into roles similar to professionals in factory settings. So it may be that we can't ask professional social workers in traditional social work settings to do empowerment work, but we could conceivably allow for those who are empowerment professionals to work side by side with social workers.

We see ourselves as suffering under the constraints of the organizations we work under. We go along with it although if allowed to, we would do it very differently.

Historical context is important and is noted in several places in this document. In order to facilitate meaningful change, an appreciation for the history of the individual, organization, or community must be gained first.

There is a history in every community of people struggling so we must first discover that each time we enter a community.

In summary, practitioners must be sensitive to the wide variety of contexts within which they operate. Different contexts are going to provide different challenges and require different models and strategies for facilitating empowerment. Context tends to constrain professionals, hence, the appropriate role for the practitioner needs to be determined in each of these settings as well as how the setting affects the empowerment process.

EMPOWERMENT FOR WHAT? AND THE IMPORTANCE OF VISION

We must ask ourselves, empowering for what? Are we empowering so that people have power? What constitutes power? What characteristics does a powerful person have? Specialized resources, control of knowledge, control of the media, etc?

One must ask, empowerment for what? For competence, assertiveness, resource allocation, group mobility, altering the structure?

The question of: "empowerment for what?" although addressed at the conference, was not answered fully. However, there were numerous important points regarding it that came from the discussions. When one examines "empowerment for what?", the issues regarding the role of the practitioner, the model of empowerment, the tactics to use and the goals become more clear. This question also alerts professionals to the need to think through the process of empowerment before they begin to act. This then leads to the issue and importance of vision. Vision provides a "mental map" of both the goals of empowerment work *and* the process through which these goals are obtained.

The theme of vision came up frequently over the two days of the conference.

It makes a great deal of difference in these situations whether or not there is a potential for a shared vision among the people in the organization. If there is a fragmented vision, then it is a very difficult situation. However if there is a coherent vision, it makes a great deal of difference. This vision should go beyond collecting a paycheck or getting tenure to try to make a real difference in the lives of the members and the people they care about. So the potentiality of a shared vision is very important in empowering organizations.

Vision is important because it forces the professional to carefully think through the process and ramifications of empowerment activities. As the following statement indicates, developing and pursuing a vision can help practitioners avoid costly and unanticipated consequences of their efforts.

We overlooked the fact that we had developed, over the years of segregation, some community coping strategies and styles which bound our communities together. We didn't take care of these and as a result some of our communities were destroyed...What we learned was that in the process of reaching one goal we should have looked at the other parts of the system to see what the ramifications would be. We needed compensatory mechanisms. In some social action movements, then, we need that kind of comprehensive view.

Conference participants noted that this vision must recognize both the future and the past as the following comments indicate.

We must be clear where we are coming from. We must be responsible to the past and to the cultural heritage and the spirit of those we are working with and for.

We must pay attention, both backwards and forwards, to the stream of history. The things we have been talking about have, at different points in history been called different names and have looked very different. We can talk about the Union movement, the Civil Rights Movement, the development of community colleges, and the decentralization of community efforts. It is a long history although the names and the players have changed. If we pay attention to this long history, we have a better chance here of figuring out what the next set of themes is.

It seems to me that if we are going to look backwards historically, it is equally important to look forward because conditions have been fundamentally altered. The entrance into the world economy has changed conditions and made the impact of these changes that much bigger.

So vision which incorporates historical elements while looking forward can enhance empowerment efforts. It can also provide individuals with support as they seek to understand their place in the stream of people working toward similar goals over time.

However, professionals must be cautious of the ideological nature and partisan use of vision.

In terms of vision, I think there is a vision that is peculiar to this country which involves the Pledge of Allegiance and other ideological components that we have absorbed. We operate under a belief that we have a good government and fine ideals. So do not think in terms of becoming, instead we believe that we have arrived. So the challenge of moving towards these ideals and making them reality is very scary.

This statement sensitizes professionals to how an ideology can be used to coopt visions and use them in the service of contradictory objectives. The current dominant ideology suggests that Americans have arrived at a relatively good society with attainment of many of their ideals. However an alternative vision of empowerment as a process suggests that people interested in empowerment have not yet reached their goals.

In sum, "empowerment for what?" is a question that was discussed throughout the conference. Asking it raised a host of issues and sensitized participants to numerous points including the importance of vision in empowerment work.

DIFFERING MODELS OF ACTION: ALINSKY AND FREIRE

As part of the conference, two different models of action were discussed. In the model attributed to Alinsky, through their participation in social action, people may learn how to think and may develop a critical consciousness as a result. So for Alinsky, reflection comes after social action. Counter to this is Freire's conception that by teaching people how to think, they will determine how to organize. Education leading to critical consciousness, then, is among the most radical transformational approaches to empowerment. With Freire, reflection comes prior to action.

Freire and others have said that if people are going to act as creators of their own destinies, they must also develop the knowledge that they can act.

According to Freire, both reflection and action are necessary to be empowered.

Freire's model is appropriate where knowledge is being controlled because it helps people transcend the restrictions of official knowledge. It sensitizes one to the struggle over knowledge as an important part of the empowerment process.

As organizers, I think we've often thought that the focal point is political power and we tended to stress action. We tended to ignore culture and socialization. So I think Freire's model of power sensitizes us to the struggle over knowledge as an important part of the empowerment process.

It was suggested that one of the limitations of the Alinsky model is precisely its lack of sensitivity to this issue.

Jackie (Kendall) noted in her presentation that when people know there is a problem, you can start determining how to address it. But what about situations where people have a problem but they don't know it is a real problem? I know it sounds elitist to think people have problems that they don't recognize, but we do...So you can't start talking about organizing to overcome the power...until you start talking about dealing with the consciousness of what the problem was in the first place.

There are other limitations to the Alinsky model as articulated by conference participants:

The difficulty of sustaining heightened action in the community is that it is such an intense, peaked experience that to maintain that level on an ongoing basis for a week or a month is almost impossible. You have to have fresh troops. But for a brief series of confrontations, say one to three times, it is very helpful.

There are organizations that Alinsky organized where people were trotted out for social events but had no idea what was happening, and nothing changed. When this occurs, I think that is bad.

What happens in the Alinsky model is that you get people out and you get them working for a traffic light and all of a sudden they understand the whole process with a global view. But it didn't happen that way, once people got the light they went back home, so a new tactic was needed to get them out. So I agree that by trotting people out we aren't empowering them.

There is a tension within Alinsky's model where people can be mobilized to act but in ways which are not empowering.

The experience of some conference participants was that being mobilized for action did not generally lead to the development of a more critical consciousness, although sometimes it did. Instead, participants have experienced single issue organizations that effectively used Alinsky-like tactics but that did not develop an on-going organization or address other problems. In the worst cases, the only roles for the people were as "the masses" who deferred to the experts, hence not an empowering process.

Freire's model also has its limitations according to some participants:

...in Freire's model, it is possible to have critical consciousness but not be able to see how to act. It is a fallacy to believe if you have critical consciousness and you act, you are empowered because you can act at the wrong times and places. Thus you can actually retard rather than advance your goals.

These models are competing in some respects, but also complementary, as the following statement indicates.

Highlander is patterned after Horton who emphasized that you "teach people how to think and they will figure out how to organize". Midwest (Academy) more closely follows Alinsky's belief that you "teach people how to organize and they will learn how to think". The two have to go together. So it is more of a question of starting point and also which language you are using as a starting point...It is crucial that we not say that one is better than another but rather look at them as options at different points in time.

At different times, different emphases are necessary so the approaches are more complementary rather than conflicting.

One participant found the two models to be very complementary, provided that the education to develop a critical consciousness came first and the training followed it.

If we understand education for empowerment as helping people gain the skills to do analysis and to create a response, then training provides the skills to implement that. If you (just) do training,...you teach people skills without the ability to develop critical consciousness...Vice-versa if you develop critical consciousness without training you can create a much greater sense of powerlessness because of the inability to act. I think a lot of this goes back to the classical debates over what education is: liberal arts or vocational...I think it is very important that we speak of education for empowerment, not just training for empowerment.

As noted earlier, context is also one of the factors which will affect the model that is used.

The community organizing model has grown most strongly in urban situations. In our rural area, a lot of alternative models have evolved. There is now a (southern empowerment program) which trains organizers within a southern, rural context. They felt a need to develop something more culturally and regionally specific. Similarly (a southern leadership program) comes out of a certain context. I think these contexts are crucial, thus I agree that there is no model that is going to work in every context.

Perhaps the differing agendas lead to different conceptions of empowerment and different strategies.

Some participants argued that one should be trained in multiple methodologies so that the practitioner could be situation-driven rather than single method-driven.

The training for that moment (in a situation where one needs to act) is based on multiple methodologies, not just a single paradigm or approach. What is wrong with practitioners' education then, is that it trains them in one method which they then apply even if it is inappropriate. I think empowering education must involve various methodologies.

CASE PRESENTATIONS[3]

The following are summaries of case presentations that addressed: empowering individuals, empowering organizations, empowering communities, and empowering education and training.

EMPOWERING INDIVIDUALS

Barbara Solomon is Dean of the Graduate School and Professor of Social Work at the University of Southern California.

Very often, the standard theoretical model professionals use and the solutions which emanate from that model do not fit individual communities. In trying to develop an approach that made the powerless part of the solution rather than the problem, we developed the following requirements for a new model. They are:

1. Clients must become peer collaborators. Their expertise is vital as we seek to solve the problem. Similarly, practitioners must not see themselves as superior or hierarchical to the client.
2. It is important to establish a relationship based on trust so clients will allow the practitioner to be a force in their lives.
3. The focus must be on putting power in the hands of clients. Thus they must "own" any change that occurs and feel that they don't need the social worker to create further change.
4. Ideally this is done within a cohesive and supportive community which helps sustain the change. The practitioner is responsible for facilitating the development of this cohesive community.

This model was tested and further refined during a three-year project funded by the National Institute of Mental Health. We placed full-time, social worker staff in Black, inner-city churches so that they were part of the indigenous structure of the community. We

3. These case descriptions are conveyed in the first person to reflect the original presentation as closely as possible.

thought that unserved and under-served people could be helped this way. The services were actually provided, however, by the staff of a local United Way agency located at the church site.

To reinforce the collaborative nature of the process, we had counselling groups meet in a room set up like a living room. The idea that they had expertise and that the practitioners were collaborating with them was continually reinforced. Additionally, the clients were told that no other questions would be asked except those related to their problems. This put the power in the hands of the individuals. This model is still in practice today.

EMPOWERING ORGANIZATIONS

Jim Crowfoot is Dean and Professor in the School of Natural Resources at the University of Michigan.

Note: Appendix 5 contains handouts pertaining to this presentation.

The ideas I'm sharing with you have come from my work as a consultant for small, voluntary organizations: some are collectives, some are cooperatives, and some are more hierarchically organized. Over a period of 10 years, primarily during the 1970's, I was working with these organizations trying to achieve democratic management. These ideals have been sorely tested as I have moved into a management role within the School of Natural Resources at this University, attempting to continue some kind of commitment in both spirit and behavior to democratic management.

It is difficult to maintain one's commitment to empowerment and democratic management when one is operating within a bureaucratic organization which is nested in a larger hierarchical and complex structure.

Empowerment of organizations or within organizations requires attention to six areas:

1. Empowerment of individuals must occur concurrently with the empowerment of the organization. The commitment to individual empowerment must be embedded within the norms and practices of the environment. There needs to be meaningful models, a

meaningful climate, meaningful rewards and meaningful norms that support and enhance individual empowerment in the course of empowering the organization itself.

2. The organization must be understood as a total system embedded in a larger system, that has power within the larger system, and that has the ability to share power with its members. As one thinks about a total system, one needs to think about how the system is defined and managed. One needs to think about the fundamental stated purpose of the system and how that purpose was arrived at.

   The most important conception here is a democratically managed organization. By democratic management I am talking about systems where members design, implement, and control processes and structures to achieve members' goals. The goal is an organization which reflects the goals of the members, where they control or at least influence the design and implementation of these processes and structures within the confines of internal and external opportunities and constraints.

3. The opportunity for every member of the organization to democratically participate in the decision-making process is essential. One exploitative process that occurs in bureaucracies is the concentration of information and the way in which it is controlled. Another common exploitative practice occurs when authorities consider themselves, and are considered by others, as superior to their subordinates.

   A great deal of work needs to be done addressing how authority is exploited in organizations. How does authority function to exploit people in organizations? In my work I have set out what I think are the fifteen most exploitative practices (included in Appendix 5) and I have made an effort to identify how one might transform or rehabilitate hierarchies.

4. Formal sub-units within the organization must be recognized and incorporated in the management of the organization. Broad participation among members of the sub-units should be encouraged rather than having single sub-unit representatives.

5. Status groups within the organization should also be recognized, organized, and incorporated into the management of the organization.

   A lot of work remains to be done among organizational status groups if we are seriously committed to empowerment in our organizations. These collectivities need to have an organizational identity, they need to understand where the decisions are made, how their well being is affected by decisions that are made, and how they can get a piece of the action.

6. Attention must be paid to organizational interest groups. These are the groups within the organization that reflect differences in class, race, gender, age, etc. They come from larger, societal role identifications. There needs to be a way for these interest groups to be able to identify their stakes and organizational rights and move to act in ways that meet their self-interests.

To pursue the empowerment of organizations demands attention to all six levels. Obviously this is very complicated, there are no simple formulas where one can mix and match these levels. There is a lot of room for thinking on this particular topic. The literature is thin, the research is rather elemental, especially when compared with the complexities of these six differing arenas of action and change.

EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES, CASE ONE

Eugenia Eng is Assistant Professor of Health Behavior and Health Education at the School of Public Health at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.

There are two current intervention paradigms in Public Health. One operates on affecting change at the individual level while the other works on affecting collective change through social networks.

The first step in the individual model involves assisting a person to evaluate perceived risks and benefits of taking individual action. On the basis of this evaluation, the person is then helped to formulate a behavioral intent or decision leading to health-seeking

behavior/change. Ultimately when health-seeking behavior change is sustained, improved health will be achieved. For some people, the individual approach is effective to stop smoking, lose extra weight, etc. If one has the resources, this will work. Yet a healthy lifestyle is not a top priority for many people in the world, particularly for those who have less access to resources.

The second paradigm focuses on collective change through mobilizing networks. Everyone belongs to social networks, be they based on ties of kinship, friendship, neighborhood, etc. In many rural communities, individual identity is less important than identity established through family, church, or geographic proximity. Networks also play an important social support function in terms of linking individuals to people they trust who can help them to make a decision.

The approach of training community health workers, which has been used extensively in developing countries, is based on finding key persons in these networks. These people have the influence to be able to provide social support on an interpersonal basis and to mobilize members of their networks to work collectively to improve their health. In the United States, this model is often referred to as the lay-helping model. Some of the models within the social network paradigm specifically focus on how these lay helpers can act as gatekeepers or links to the service delivery system so that collaboration between lay and formal caregiving occurs.

In practice, then, the social network intervention model begins with a search for the community leaders whose networks are extensive and who have influence with other members of the community. These persons are recruited and trained to become lay health advisors, who can go out into the community promoting behavioral change and providing social support to reinforce change. This social support has dual outcomes: it enables individuals to act on the basis of perceived needs and activates the process of community participation that leads to community competence. A competent community is able to generate and provide the conditions necessary for its members to identify and undertake

collectively felt problems. Community competence in turn leads to community development which in turn leads to community empowerment. The assumption is that one cannot improve the public's health without community development and empowerment.

I am currently using the social network model in three separate projects. In our project in the Mississippi Delta, we began by meeting with members of community organizations and service providers within a county and asking them as a group how they defined community competence and to rank existing communities according to the criteria they defined. With this information, the project was not only able to identify communities not found on maps but was also able to elicit from people a dialogue about their vision of a competent community. This vision serves as the ultimate project goal.

Communities with a middle level of community competence were recommended as starting points because they offered the greatest learning opportunity for the project. We then went into these communities seeking influential network persons and recruited them for our program. Thirty such persons went through ten weeks of training conducted by local service providers in community settings and became lay health advisors. Through the training, the service providers began recognizing the lay health advisors as valuable resources. As a group, the lay health advisors formed an association targeting five areas for action including health fairs, a community clean-up campaign, and the development of a shelter for families who had been burned out of their homes. The lay health advisors wrote the county commissioners and received permission to use an empty school as a food pantry. They now monitor the community to determine other need areas and continue to provide interpersonal health counselling to individuals in need. Recently they have been recruiting businesses to the area seeking to reduce unemployment.

One question I continuously encounter from health professionals about community based projects is: community participation and empowerment are nice, but does it really improve health? Trying to measure the health effects from social support and community competence

is very difficult. We are working on this now with the assistance of the lay-helpers, who have been actively involved with designing the instruments, collecting the data, and interpreting the findings.

EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES, CASE TWO

Felix Rivera is a Professor of Social Work at San Francisco State University.

This presentation is based on work I did in the late 1960's in a Spanish-speaking barrio in Berkeley, California. At the time there was a movement building based upon *Razalogia*, essentially a belief that 'yes it can be done, yes we can do it'. We were initially drawn to the community after working with a community outreach specialist investigating the high rate of Latino push-outs in the school system. It became apparent that the Latino community was withdrawing more and more into the barrio and becoming an invisible minority.

We were wrestling with how to use the general conceptions and models of empowerment and mold them to fit our specific cultural context. We had to incorporate kinship patterns, leadership styles and charisma among other things. We found it very helpful to look at the community as a psychological entity and we paid attention to its particular history.

We identified several goals including developing bilingual bicultural social service agencies, improving relationships with the school system, and initiating community development activities. We began community social therapy which was introduced by Martin Rein in a very important book: Social Policy.[4] It is a simple concept: when something happens in the community or when you as an organizer cause something to happen, you act on it. When something has occurred in a community, often a tragedy, it crystalizes the community. It galvanizes people into a group thinking process and alters personal suffering and personal identity. This gets people thinking: what are we going to do about it? This was essentially an Alinsky model with cultural relevance.

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4. Martin Rein, Social Policy, New York: Random House, 1970.

We set up a series of small, intimate house meetings slowly building support, essentially doing basic educating. We told them of our concerns and that we had a friend who would be coming in to work with the people. One of the dilemmas we faced was the pressure for immediate rewards and immediate solutions to the winnable issues at the expense of the long-range issues and problems. We were impetuous. We wanted to change the entire community in a day. We also felt that we knew what was best for the community, which was a big problem. But we felt we had the radical rap and the radical rhetoric and couldn't understand why they were so slow in adopting this. So this process was painfully slow from our point of view. Although it was working, it was never fast enough for us.

We did a census of the area, which had never been done. We then engaged in a series of confrontations with the Board of Education in which our demands were eventually met. Because of this, our support base grew. As the successes spread through the community, we decided to attempt other issues. Although the community was in agreement the issues were worthwhile, there was also some hesitancy, the feeling of *no se*, "I don't think I can do it." In our culture, the concept of respect and humility often leads to the point of almost inaction. It is not that we aren't political or that we don't have a sense of what the concerns are, but it is like you don't wish to offend anyone. This was especially true with the women, they didn't want to rock the boat. It was even worse with the seniors of the community who were the most conservative. However, the young people of the community weren't a problem in this regard.

We pressed on and received Office of Economic Opportunity money and used it to open a multi-service storefront in the community. The seniors provided most of the volunteer staff. We made several mistakes including hanging posters of Emilio Zapata and Che Guevara. It indicated how little we knew about the community but also showed us that they were comfortable enough to confront us. We started fund-raising activities which raised a few eyebrows in some places of the community. We weren't aware of one family in the community which was both wealthy and powerful. They began giving us a hard time, we

tried to appease them. We scheduled community meetings to neutralize their concerns about us being in the community. Eventually this family organized enough people who exercised their empowerment and we were asked to leave the community.

The most important lessons learned from this experience are:

1. Cultivate the uniqueness of your community and dovetail your plan to meet the community.
2. Get to know the community you are working in very well.
3. Be patient and look to the long term in addition to the short-term goals.
4. Seek to develop a sense of critical consciousness and community.
5. Seek to establish informal rather than formal contacts with the community. These include contacts through culturally based activity groups, community based organizations and other social activities. These informal ties facilitate trust and rapport much quicker.

EMPOWERING EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Jackie Kendall is Director of the Midwest Academy in Chicago, Illinois.

The Midwest Academy was begun in 1973 and was patterned after the Civil Rights Movement's Freedom Schools. The goal was to preserve and build on the lessons learned during the Civil Rights Movement. Consequently, our model is a composite of other models and is continuously evolving with the task. We call the model "direct-action organizing". It is flexible in that the tactics depend on the issue. This presentation is just one example of training activities done in our one-week sessions at the Academy.

There are two main concepts associated with this model:

1. One must understand one's own power, the power of others, and be able to convey that understanding of power.
2. One must be able to think strategically. Activists cannot wait for things to happen. Movements can occur using formal or informal strategies.

During training, these two ideas are conveyed through discussion, role playing, and exercises. Participants are given case studies and asked to work in small groups to develop tactics and plans. These are then shared among the class and critiqued before the real life example is introduced.

There are three principles of Direct Action Organizing. Many people do one of the three, but few accomplish all three. The principles are:

1. Win real victories/improvements.
2. Get people to develop a sense of their own power and build on this sense. One of the most important things we do is to train other organizers to return to their groups and train their membership.
3. Alter the relations of power.

There are also three levels of Organizing Consciousness. The role of the organizer is to move people along levels of consciousness from #1 to #3. The levels are:

1. Issue: the goal is to accomplish one, finite task. Very often this is the consciousness level of the group.
2. Organizational: the goal is to develop an ongoing organization.
3. Political/Ideological: the goal is real social change.

Empowering Tools of the Learning Process are self-evident and simple but they must be used systematically. Tactics must be tailored to the problem at hand. In addition, organizers must stress creativity and inject fun into the process to take the edge off of issues that can be life-threatening. The following is an example of a planning activity that participants work through at the Academy:

1. Goals: The group must begin by determining its broad, long-term goals. From this list, short and medium range goals that lead to the long term goals are developed.

The group must ask itself: what is possible? What procedure or basis (often procedural) can be used as a fall back position? Finding answers to these questions gives the organizers time to organize.

2. Organizational Considerations: A brutal assessment of the organization is needed. The following questions must be answered: What does the organization look like now in terms of leaders, money, staff, speakers, reputation, and ability to get press? What should it look like at each stage? Should new leaders be developed or old leaders retained? How much money is needed and how will it be raised? What are the problems with the organization including internal, external problems, and conflicts among the staff and leadership?

3. Constituency: The following questions must be answered: Who cares about this issue? List everyone. Who is needed to win this issue? What type of organization is needed (this will depend on whether it is an issue organization or not)? How can secondary targets, people who have access to the primary target, be used?

4. Target: Ask the following questions regarding the target: Who can give what is wanted? Be sure to personalize it. Who has power over the target? What strengths and weaknesses do they have? Are they appointed or elected? How many of them (for instance city council persons or legislators) are needed to obtain the goal?

5. Tactics: These are many and varied. They are a function of what needs to be done to organize the constituency. These must be within the experience or understanding of the people working with them, yet outside the experience of the target. They should be creative, geared to the community, and be capable of gaining media exposure for the cause. Changing tactics through the course of the struggle is important because it keeps the target off balance.

We encourage organizers to think through this entire process and to then do a time line. The goal here is to use time efficiently and effectively while avoiding conflicts caused by poor timing. To be most effective, this should include and/or address:

1. Organizational Issues: outlining what needs to be done to perpetuate the group.

2. Levels of Government (local, state, federal): making sure activities are scheduled when government is in session and at times when action would be most effective (such as prior to primaries or elections).

3. Fund Raising.

4. Other: determining what events are scheduled within the community and how these events can be exploited.

ACTION AND PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH

John Gaventa is Director of the Highlander Research and Education Center located in New Market, Tennessee and Assistant Professor in the Department of Sociology at the University of Tennessee.

I want to begin by reflecting on the theory of power that I developed in my book, Power and Powerlessness,[5] and how participatory research fits into that theory of power. Then I would like to present one case of a community struggle over toxic waste. I will use a video called *You Gotta Move* and I will let the people in the video speak for themselves.

We should never devalue people's capacity to learn things and to cut through our jargon. The community I worked in while writing the book was able to take this model and the chart of the model from the book and use it to determine the target's next steps and their response. So they were able to cut through the jargon, which I had a hard time doing myself. There are three models of power discussed in the book which imply different models of empowerment with different implications for empowerment:

Model One: historically the definition of who has power within the classic, political paradigm is those who win the key issues in decision making arenas. Within this framework, non-participation or empowerment is not an issue because it is assumed to be an open system where everyone participates. The participation of the people is limited to fund raising to hire

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5. John Gaventa, Power and Powerlessness, Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1980.

experts who act as their advocates on the issue. We accept the split between experts and lay persons and between experts and experience. The goal is just to win the issue so there isn't much worry about the knowledge matter.

Model Two: could loosely be called the "community organizing model". In order to overcome barriers, mobilization is stressed. Less emphasis is placed on what people think than on what they do. We hope that by acting, people's consciousness will be changed. This reinforces the expertise versus experience split because people are treated as the "masses". It de-emphasizes knowledge and emphasizes people working in concert. In this model, the key role of power is to exclude certain issues from getting on the agenda altogether. Therefore in order to understand power, we need to know not only what makes it onto the agenda but also what does not. We need to look at the barriers that keep key actors and constituencies from reaching the agenda.

My work has extended this notion by acknowledging that this is an important piece of power, but that the most insidious use of power is that power which keeps us from conceiving of what the key issues are in the first place. It sounds elitist to think that people have problems that they don't recognize but there are thousands of examples of this. Generally they are caused by information control and secrecy. For instance, the medical profession knew for over 40 years that miners got black lung yet they withheld this information. The miners' consciousness of their grievance was therefore affected and controlled. So one can't start talking about organizing to overcome the power of the doctors or the industry until s/he starts talking about dealing with the consciousness of what the problem is in the first place. This leads us to the third model.

Model Three: is the participatory model. It highlights the minds and the knowledge of the people. Freire and others have said that if people are going to act as the creators of their own destinies, they must also develop the knowledge that they can act. People must reclaim the knowledge that dominant elites have taken from them. The limitation to this reclaiming is that you can only popularly reclaim the knowledge around the questions and issues that the

officials have decided are important. What about all those things that have arisen from people's experience, the people's knowledge, which hasn't become part of the official view? This highlights the importance of a popularly created, people's knowledge which is apart from official knowledge.

Thus we need to expand our notion of power and therefore empowerment to include the struggle over knowledge, socialization, internalization of myths, and control of information. As organizers we generally focus on political power and consequently stress action. We tend to deemphasize culture and socialization. This model of power sensitizes us to the struggle over knowledge as an important part of the empowerment process. We must resensitize ourselves to these issues as we work to empower people.

Perhaps the Women's Movement is the best representative of this model. Prior to the movement, who defined the position of women in society and to what extent was it internalized by women and men? The Women's Movement drew upon women's intuitive and experiential knowledge and changed these conceptions.

Hence, empowerment entails helping people develop a critical and collective consciousness where indigenous knowledge is as valued as "expert" or "authoritative" knowledge. Once people have this consciousness, they are in a position to challenge the authorities and the experts thereby gaining more control in their lives.

To reinforce these points, I would like to share a story about a friend who has lived in the mountains all his life. Although he doesn't have a high school degree, he has an intuitive knowledge of the mountain geography and the surrounding environment. He noticed that muck from the strip mine was going into the creek behind his house and he knew that this violated the law. He knew he had the right to have the inspector come out. The inspector was a college graduate but he alleged he couldn't do anything because the creek didn't show up on his maps. The official view was that there wasn't a problem because technically there wasn't a creek, but the people knew differently.

This raises several issues: who taught that expert to believe the map rather than his physical experience? What is the role of universities in conveying official knowledge? My friend trusted his popular knowledge but there are many instances where people have accepted the official view even though it contradicted their personal experience. That is what this videotape is about.

The videotape *You Gotta Move*, centers around five people in five different communities who have worked with the Highlander Center over the last fifty years. The segment of the videotape that I will show begins by focusing on two women who were active in organizing a rural mountain community. It ends with them discussing how their lives have been affected by their attempts to organize others around this issue. However, before showing this clip, some background information on the community is needed.

In the 1950's the community contained an illegal strip mine which was later used as an illegal toxic waste dump-site. One old mountain man knew that there was something wrong with the dump-site. When he tried to tell others about his suspicions, they didn't listen to him and instead trusted that the authorities would notify them in the event of any danger. They had been educated away from indigenous or popular knowledge to put their faith in the knowledge of the experts. Even as evidence came to light, the people continued to trust and rationalize what they were seeing. It was only when a washout occurred that the learning process started. Hundreds of people turned out spontaneously to block the trucks' access to the dump. The people in the community thought that it would be a 1-3 day battle, they had no idea that it could draw on for so long.

In the video, these community members speak of their experiences gaining expertise and knowledge and fighting to close the dump-site. From the video, one can see several stages of personal, organizational, and community empowerment.

When the two women began speaking out they encountered questions such as: "Why don't you just move away?" Ideology was used to control both the debate and the people involved in the debate. From the outset while working to build a sense of community, the activists had to confront the philosophy of individualism, where everyone minds their own business.

Highlander didn't enter the community until after community members had tried to close down the dump-site. We provided a leadership training project. In the course of that we created a literacy model to help them master difficult technical data about these chemicals. They learned how to read and use the most technical expert documents and reports.

We first came into contact with this community when we did a very non-Highlander type thing. We applied for National Science Foundation (NSF) funding to hold a workshop in that area on environmental health. We brought in experts because it was an area with a heavy concentration of the chemical industry and where there wasn't very much citizens' activity that we could draw upon. The chemical industry boycotted the conference and hired a private investigator to trace the people who came. They went through the public information file and the reports that we had filed with the NSF and got the names of participants. They took out radio and print ads that said in the 1950's, the McCarthy era, the Highlander Center was investigated by the House Un-American Activities Committee for being communist. These ads questioned Highlander's current interest in this issue. This was clearly an attempt by these companies to squeeze people's knowledge, belief, and legitimacy into the old paradigm of trusting the "authorities" while down-playing self-knowledge and experience.

The video excerpt was shown here.

WORKING GROUPS

In the afternoon of the second day the participants divided into small working groups to discuss in more depth questions and issues that arose during the course of the conference. The working groups then came back and reported the content of their discussions to the larger group. The following is a description of the questions that each group addressed and a summary of the discussions.

Question: Group 1
Can academics do participatory research from within the University? If so, how can they do it?

Discussion:

Five Important Points Related To This Issue:

1. Academics need to understand the obstacles within the university to such work. They are a perceived threat to the current alignment of power. Community groups often receive that power. There is also a lack of funding support (governmental and university) for this kind of research. The power structure looks on it as investigative research and does not value it.
2. Academics should continue to develop the participatory research paradigm. They need to develop standards against which they can measure and delineate steps to be taken.
3. Academics need to seek funding for work that will help in systematizing the development of this paradigm and to support small scale projects from which a base can be developed.
4. There is difficulty in action or participatory research being accepted at the University. Academics need to empower people who are involved with it.

5. Academics may need to find other forms of institutional support to provide funding for this kind of work. This may mean an alternative type of structure. They may also need to establish a journal as an alternative for publishing their research and process. This would allow them to share while they are publishing.

Question: Group 2
Can people interested in empowerment affect change on the local level without addressing structure/global issues? Is affecting change on the local level enough?

Discussion:

In order to affect change, one should link the local and the global levels and look at all levels of the problem. One should also look at the long and short term.

Question: Group 3
How do empowerment-minded professionals determine the criteria to use to decide whether or not they have been successful in the empowerment work that they do?

Discussion:

In measuring empowerment, success should be measured in the long and short term. So change should be measured in multiple time frames and on multiple levels. In the long term, one should look at the situation 20 years down the road to see what happened to the individuals who were involved. A change in structure is also important to look for. Building a lasting organization is another criterion. The arena is critical for developing organizational skills. Values are also implicit in empowerment on both the individual and group levels.

Question: Group 4
How do empowerment-minded professionals think of themselves as empowered individuals and what can they do to empower themselves and others within their specific situation, workplace, or profession?

Discussion:

Professionals' roles are powerful but they cannot work alone, they should collaborate. Power means a responsibility of service. Professionals should produce an organization which

extends beyond their peer group. They should also acknowledge their prior socialization as rebels. Academics have survived in universities as rebels. This brings with it a tremendous responsibility too, such as being smart and being articulate.

Professionals should consider their relationship with the community which alternately dissipates power and fuels and re-energizes them. They should be community grounded.

Modeling is important in that how one acts is a way of empowering others and a way of conveying hope. Professionals should believe that it can work and trust and believe in other people just as they should believe in themselves. They have choices but they should exercise power within external constraints. They can ally with subversives when they are feeling powerless. Anticipating consequences and corresponding strategic action/planning are also important.

Regarding collaborative effort, professionals should share and use our resources wisely. They should think beyond getting to yes, to actually winning.

Question: Group 5
What are the similarities and differences between empowerment in an adversarial model and in a collaborative model?

Discussion:

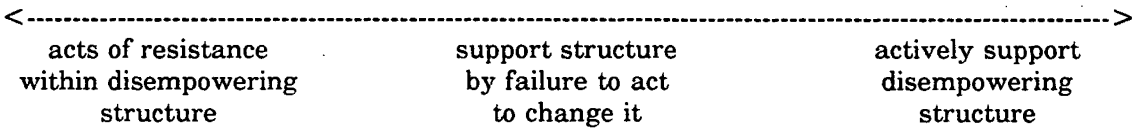
The adversarial model of empowerment assumes that the issue/problem is more defined and also assumes that there is more of a community to draw on. The collaborative model of empowerment is closer to locality development and may be a precursor to the adversarial model. Goals and tactics of the movement/group will influence the choice of the model. Either of these models can fuel the other so they are not necessarily incompatible.

Question: Group 6
Can empowerment-minded professionals do this kind of work in the community if they are not addressing these issues in their own organization?

Discussion:

This kind of work can be done in the community even though professionals are not addressing these issues in their own organization. However, one should ask the following questions of her/his organization: Who defines the agenda? Who controls the resources? Who takes on what roles?

Those who do not feel empowered can still feel like they are empowering others. It is a matter of degree. Professionals should be aware of the contexts in which they have power and act in these contexts to change their own organization. It can be thought of as a continuum:



In order for professionals to be efficient at creating change they should choose the arenas in which their power is greatest and where they have hopes of creating real change. It is apparent that this is contradictory, although it is a realistic approach given the contexts of power and powerlessness.

QUESTIONS AND ISSUES FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION

Numerous questions and issues emerged from the conference that merit further discussion. Some of these were briefly addressed by the Working Groups and the content of the discussion is reported in the previous section. However, others were not and are worth highlighting again. They are introduced here as a way of keeping these issues and questions in the forefront of discussion and research.

1. How can one think of empowerment on a global level and link this to the other levels so that empowerment of an individual, organization, or community does not contribute to furthering the disempowerment of another individual, organization, or community?
2. Similarly, is it possible to develop institutions, organizations, and structural relationships which are mutually empowering rather than competitive?
3. How can one transfer the knowledge gained in one arena to other struggles? In addition, how can people link issues together so they are dealing with them in a more comprehensive manner? What is involved in developing a broader sense of political consciousness and activities? How does organizing in one area of life get broader so that it becomes truly revolutionary or contributes to larger scale social transformations?
4. What are the limitations of the empowerment process? Is there a threshold beyond which empowerment can occur but short of, empowerment is impossible? Are some people so destitute that empowerment means nothing to them until their basic needs are being met? How does one worry about the organizational, community, and global levels when one is dealing with something so immediate as the personal survival level?
5. How is empowerment defined, operationalized, and measured? How does one evaluate programs in terms of their effectiveness?

6. What empowerment model is more useful in different situations? In what contexts is one level of empowerment more important than another?

7. Is empowerment an objective or a relational concept? Can people be empowered in different spheres of their lives without being totally or absolutely empowered? What are the ramifications of being empowered in some contexts and disempowered in others?

8. How can professionals develop practices which are sensitive to context while at the same time addressing the different levels of empowerment?

9. Can one provide services while also engaging in organizing activities? Should one try to fill both roles? Under what conditions should one be emphasized over another? What are the role limitations?

10. How does one define a person who is an empowerer? How is this different from being a change agent?

11. How do gender, race, and class differences affect empowerment and the empowerment process?

12. What are the limitations to the empowerment process caused by lack of time and how can these be overcome? How can the need for immediate rewards and solutions be balanced with the need to develop long-range solutions?

13. What is the effect of being an insider or an outsider when one works for empowerment?

14. If empowerment is defined, in part, as acting in socially acceptable manner, who defines what is socially acceptable and what is not? What are the ramifications of this on our attempts to define empowerment?

15. Is empowerment a process, an outcome, or both a process and an outcome?

16. How can practitioners resist the "expert" role in which they try to influence the agenda of the individual, organization, or community with whom they are working? How does one involve individuals, organizations, and communities in moving beyond single issues to develop critical consciousness?

17. What is the appropriate role for professionals in each of the contexts that they work in and how does the setting affect the empowerment process?

CONFERENCE CRITIQUE

At the end of the second day of the conference, time was spent critiquing the conference process and content. It was clear from the comments that most participants found the conference very stimulating and thought-provoking.

I felt privileged being a part of this. The diversity and richness of the people and their experiences, while still having common bonds, creates confidence and hope.

Being an outsider as an academic, the conference was very beneficial. There are parallel paths, different processes with different names but the similarities abound.

However, it was also apparent that the format had not worked as well as anticipated. Dividing the group into core participants and audience participants clearly left some people feeling disenfranchised and underutilized as the following statements indicate.

I wonder why I was invited if I wasn't going to be utilized.

Diversity and interaction are most productive when there is maximum interaction. A barrier was created by the core group-audience distinction.

I share the concerns about the conference model, I felt more comfortable when the whole group was included.

Thus for some, the experience was disempowering. This clearly contradicted the anticipated process of the conference and was obviously not the intent of the organizers.

A second concern centered around the lack of time available to participate and to pursue issues in depth as the following quotes indicate:

I was frustrated by the time constraints. There wasn't enough opportunity to speak. I wished there was more discussion and debate.

More time was needed to deal with this, yet the conference was too task oriented.

In part this dynamic is caused by the complexity of the issue of empowerment and the short time frame of the conference. However, the organizers also realized in retrospect that the focus could have been more limited.

A third concern addressed the split between academia and practice. Clearly the following person did not feel there was an appropriate balance between the two:

I felt the conference was too academic although it promised to be practice-based. The field offers a lot and it wasn't exploited as much as it could have been.

Although this was the experience of at least one participant, as the content of this report depicts, there was considerable discussion of issues of particular relevance to practitioners. The conference was successful in bringing together persons engaged in both academic and practice endeavors. However, the extent to which their individual and mutual perspectives were shared in a balanced manner remains a matter of different interpretations.

Even though the conference planners were pleased with the level of discourse and the enthusiasm expressed by conference participants, they shared many of the concerns mentioned above. In subsequent discussions critiquing the event, the PCMA faculty analyzed the strengths and limitations of the "retrieval conference" format. One most important recognition was that at each of the two previous retrieval conferences, the entire group of participants did not exceed fifteen to eighteen persons. As a result, there were only a few people present who were not members of the "core" group. The conferences were held in relatively small meeting rooms, and there was no real sense of an "outsider" audience. Thus, there was considerably more time for in-depth discussion, retrieval if you will, among all participants. In planning the empowerment conference, numerous persons from the area were identified who would be interested in and could contribute to the topic of the conference. Hence, the decision was made to invite a larger number of participants. Unfortunately, the idea and format of a retrieval conference was set in place, and little consideration was given to the limitations of the design as a result of the larger "audience". Given the richness of the experience and expertise represented by the participants, a much more effective format would have included more time for small group discussions.

CONCLUDING COMMENTS

The purpose of this conference was to raise important questions and to further the dialogue about empowerment. It is hoped that the high quality of the content and issues that were addressed at the conference, as reported in this document, will serve as a catalyst for ongoing dialogue and research. What better way to close than with the words of two participants:

At some point we have to develop a transcending ideology. What holds all of these efforts together is a belief in the capacity of people to direct themselves and to help build that capacity...The globalization of the economy presents totally new challenges to that belief. But as we confront this, we will create new models and these models will be very different from the community organizing models of the Sixties, or the labor models of the Thirties, or the Civil Rights models of the Fifties and Sixties. But empowerment is not a fad that will come and go with changing decades.

Empowerment is not such a mystery. We must be motivated to change ourselves and to give and be unselfish even when we don't want to be. Experience shouldn't be reduced to empirical models. Don't lose the feeling for reality.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: CONFERENCE QUESTIONS

CONFERENCE QUESTIONS
MEANS OF EMPOWERMENT IN
INDIVIDUALS, ORGANIZATIONS, AND COMMUNITIES
KUENZEL ROOM, MICHIGAN UNION
May 8-9, 1989

Perspectives on Empowerment

(1) What is meant by empowerment? What are its components or determinants at the individual, organizational, and community levels? What are the criteria or indicators of successful empowerment?

(2) What are some strategies and skills for empowerment? What are the phases of developing an empowering process? What are the roles of key participants in the process?

(3) What internal and external conflicts can we expect to develop during a process of empowerment?

(4) What are some case examples of past or present empowerment? What lessons can be learned from them?

(5) What are some innovative or exemplary means of empowering traditionally oppressed people? What is the role of conflict escalation in the attempt to increase individual or collective empowerment?

Strategies and Structures

(6) Individuals: What are the characteristics of an empowered or empowering individual? How do individuals, especially those from traditionally oppressed groups, get control over their lives?

(7) Organizations: What are the characteristics of an empowered or empowering organization? How do organizations become influential in the community?

(8) Communities: What is community empowerment? What are the characteristics of an empowered or empowering community? How do communities empower people to participate in the institutions or decisions that affect their lives?

(9) Action and Participatory Research: What are the characteristics and means of an empowering approach to research?

(10) Education and Training: What are the characteristics and means of an empowering approach to education and training?

(11) Consultation: What are the characteristics and means of an empowering approach to consultation?

Directions for the Future

(12) What are some actions that could empower traditionally oppressed individuals, organizations, and communities in the future? How could or should empowerment be strengthened in the years ahead?

(13) What are the directions for the future? What are the implications for future, practice, education, and research?

APPENDIX 2: LIST OF CONFERENCE PARTICIPANTS

Core Participants

Barry Checkoway is Professor in the School of Social Work at the University of Michigan. His work focuses on community organization, social planning, and urban neighborhood affairs.

Mark Chesler is Professor of Sociology at the University of Michigan. His work focuses on reducing racism and sexism in organizations and educating and mobilizing constituencies of families of chronically ill children to gain more control in their interactions with the medical care system.

Jim Crowfoot is Dean and Professor in the School of Natural Resources at the University of Michigan. His interest is in advocacy and organizing and the relationship with environmental issues and multi-disciplinary problem solving and the uses of conflict for solving complex environmental and natural resources problems.

Eugenia Eng is Assistant Professor at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill in the Department of Health Behavior and Health Education. Her research interests are community based intervention in health in the Third World and the rural south.

John Gaventa is Director of the Highlander Research and Education Center located in New Market, Tennessee and Assistant Professor in the Department of Sociology at the University of Tennessee. His work focuses on participatory research, power, and the changing economy.

Lorraine Gutierrez is Assistant Professor in the School of Social Work at the University of Washington, Seattle. Her research centers on using the empowerment process with Latinos and women of color.

Barbara Israel is Associate Professor in the School of Public Health in the Department of Health Behavior and Health Education at the University of Michigan. Her work takes a community orientation to health and focuses on community participation and empowerment.

Jackie Kendall is Director of the Midwest Academy in Chicago, a training school for community leaders, paid organizers, and volunteer leaders. She has worked extensively with seniors, students, and citizen action organizations.

Edith Lewis is Assistant Professor in the School of Social Work at the University of Michigan. Her work focuses on using the traditional strengths of communities of color to help families in these communities and the communities themselves.

Felix Rivera is Professor of Social Work at San Francisco State University. His research interests include community organization, social planning, policy analysis, social research, and race relations.

Barbara Solomon is Dean of the Graduate School at the University of Southern California and Professor in the School of Social Work. She has written the very influential book, Black Empowerment.

Audience Participants

Seth Borgos, Michigan Employment Opportunity Center, Detroit, Michigan
America Bracho di Carpio, La Casa Family Service, Detroit, Michigan
Bunyan Bryant, University of Michigan, School of Natural Resources
Ann Marie Coleman, The Guild House, Ann Arbor, Michigan
Michael Cross, Detroit Urban League, Detroit, Michigan
Hemalata Dandekar, University of Michigan, Department of Urban Planning
Libby Douvan, University of Michigan, PCMA, Department of Psychology
Susan Gold, University of Michigan, PCMA
Alison Hine, WAND, Chelsea Community Hospital, Chelsea, Michigan
Chuck Keiffer, SOS Crisis Center, Ypsilanti, Michigan
Hyman Kornbluh, University of Michigan, Institute of Labor and Industrial Relations
Joyce Kornbluh, University of Michigan, Institute of Labor and Industrial Relations
Shimane Kumalo, National Institute for Crime Prevention and Rehabilitation of Offenders, Soweto, South Africa
Jim McNeil, UAW, Local 600, Dearborn, Michigan
Kristine Nelson, University of Michigan, School of Natural Resources
Ruth Parsons, University of Denver, Graduate School of Social Work
Rosemary Sarri, University of Michigan, School of Social Work
David Schoem, University of Michigan, College of Literature, Science and Arts
Amy Schulz, University of Michigan, PCMA, WAND
Sue Schurman, University of Michigan, Institute of Labor and Industrial Relations
Ed Schwerin, Volunteer Mediator Project, University of Hawaii, Department of Political Science
John Slater, Community Resource & Assistance Center, Detroit, Michigan
Julie Steiner, University of Michigan, Sexual Assault Prevention and Awareness Center
Abbie Stewart, University of Michigan, Department of Psychology, Women's Studies Program
Zulema Suarez, University of Michigan, School of Social Work
Helen Weingarten, University of Michigan, PCMA, School of Social Work
Ximena Zuniga, University of Michigan, Inter-Group Relations Program
Ruth Zweiffler, Student Advocacy Center, Ann Arbor, Michigan

Recorder
Thomas J. Gerschick, University of Michigan, Department of Sociology

APPENDIX 3: CONFERENCE AGENDA

CONFERENCE AGENDA
MEANS OF EMPOWERMENT IN
INDIVIDUALS, ORGANIZATIONS, AND COMMUNITIES
KUENZEL ROOM, MICHIGAN UNION
May 8-9, 1989

MONDAY, MAY 8

8:30	Arrival and Coffee
9:00	Welcome and Introductions Barbara Israel and Barry Checkoway
9:30	WHAT IS EMPOWERMENT? Facilitator: Barbara Israel
11:00	Break
11:15	EMPOWERING INDIVIDUALS Presenter: Barbara Solomon Facilitator: Barry Checkoway
12:30	Lunch
1:30	EMPOWERING ORGANIZATIONS Presenter: Jim Crowfoot Facilitator: Mark Chesler
3:00	Break
3:15	EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES Presenters: Eugenia Eng & Felix Rivera Facilitator: Lorraine Gutierrez
5:00	Evaluation & Closing of Day One Barry Checkoway and Barbara Israel

CONFERENCE AGENDA
MEANS OF EMPOWERMENT IN
INDIVIDUALS, ORGANIZATIONS, AND COMMUNITIES
KUENZEL ROOM, MICHIGAN UNION
May 8-9, 1989

TUESDAY, MAY 9

8:30	Arrival and Coffee
9:00	Welcome and Introduction, Day Two Barry Checkoway and Barbara Israel
9:15	EMPOWERING EDUCATION AND TRAINING Presenter: Jackie Kendall Facilitator: Edith Lewis
10:45	Break
11:00	ACTION AND PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH Presenter: John Gaventa Facilitator: Jim Crowfoot
12:30	Lunch
1:30	WORKING GROUPS
3:00	SYNTHESIS SESSION Barbara Israel and Barry Checkoway
4:00	Evaluation and Conference Closing Barry Checkoway and Barbara Israel

APPENDIX 4: WHAT IS EMPOWERMENT? PARTICIPANTS' PERSPECTIVES

The following is a summary of the different positions that were expressed in answering the question: What is empowerment? Each point represents one person's perspective.

1. Empowerment is a dual process: A) where people change their beliefs and assumptions of how the world operates and B) where people gain the ability to act on these new beliefs and assumptions to increase their self-efficacy. It occurs best as a collective effort and within a community, whether it is a geographical or spiritual community, because this provides support and consequently sustains change. The goals must be generated by the community, not by the practitioner. When practitioners' needs and assumptions are different from what the community wants to do, the community's needs must take precedence.

2. Empowerment involves both process and outcomes. It is important that people have control over their lives and the outcomes that result from their decisions. People must be able to satisfy both their basic material needs and their other needs as well. Empowerment must also involve socially acceptable behavior.

3. There are multiple levels of empowerment. One is individual efficacy, where a person feels s/he can accomplish something. The second is organizational development, and the third is community change. Ultimately all three levels are achieved because of the positive impact on the wider community, however it is possible only one level will be achieved.

   Achieving one level is good, two levels is better and three levels is best. It is not good or bad empowerment but good, better, best.

4. Practitioners must ask themselves: Empowerment for what? What characteristics does a powerful person have? These questions sensitize us to the different situations in which we intervene. Empowerment must occur in a horizontal mode rather than in a vertical mode.

5. Empowerment is a process. Everyone has power in situations. The key to empowerment is to determine the form that power takes, the power others have over us, the relationship between the two, and how we can alter the dynamics of this interaction. The process of organizing addresses these issues.

6. Social change and empowerment are not the same thing. Empowerment can occur without social change just as social change can occur without empowerment. As Freire noted, empowerment means both individual empowerment and redistribution of resources.

   Empowerment must also occur at the global level. It is not enough to empower oneself or a community if that means disempowering someone else or another community in a different part of the world. Local issues must be understood globally. Context, then, becomes paramount.

7. Power is the central focus of practice and alerts us to what we should be focusing on and how to help communities and people gain power, as opposed to the illusion of power. Focusing on power moves us beyond perception to action. Empowerment also occurs in different spheres.

   We must take political and social spheres into account in addition to individual spheres. Empowerment is also a continuous process throughout one's lifetime.

8. We cannot "give" people power. Rather we can transfer skills and tools which can be used by individuals to gain power over their lives.

9. Empowerment is a process of using conflict to overcome violence. The matter of violence is central to the topic of empowerment. Separating them fails to come to terms with the roots of what we are dealing with. Failing to empower all people has awesome consequences for their life-chances, it literally means sacrificing some people.

Empowerment is impossible without conflict. It is an integral element. The blocks of power necessary to overcome violence are pivotal because they are rooted in the oppression of women, women of color, poor people, gays and lesbians, and children. This couldn't be possible without the oppression of children. This is the base that all other forms are laid over.

An additional outcome of empowerment is spiritual resources: the deep connectedness we have with all forms of life. We can't come to terms with the violence that is epidemic among us without first coming to terms with the unique means of solidarity we have with all life's processes and with each other.

10. As informed by Freire, empowerment incorporates three primary dimensions: A) the development of a more powerful and potent sense of self, B) construction of more critical comprehension of the web of social and political relations which comprise one's environment, and C) cultivation of functional competence for efficacious attainment of personal and collective goals. Hence, empowerment is the process of developing participatory competence.

Following the core participant discussion of "What is Empowerment?", the discussion was opened to the larger group. The following points came from the large group discussion. Each point represents one person's perspective.

1. Educators must train people to integrate the different levels of empowerment and train them in the different models of empowerment. Too often, programs teach only one method.
2. The gap between educators and practitioners must be bridged. In addition, agency-based social workers and community-based organizers must make greater efforts to work together.
3. In order to create effective change, actions must be appropriate to the context.

4. Empowerment also means knowing when to restrain your own power to allow others space to act. Someone who is empowered does not need to dominate others to feel powerful.

5. A new conception of power must be developed which transcends the coercive, patriarchal conception of power that we currently use. This new conception should be democratic, sharing, and responsible.

6. Empowerment must become part of the national/public dialogue. People need to be sensitized to these issues so that they will become involved.

7. A historical dimension needs to be included in any discussion of empowerment, yet we must question whose history is used and who has defined the concept of empowerment. Now that we have a new word for it: "empowerment", it doesn't mean that this hasn't been occurring for a long time. We must place this within the historical struggles of the people themselves and not simply in intellectual concepts.

8. You can't have a powerful organization without people in that organization feeling empowered. There are organizations that act very powerful, yet the organization members feel disempowered.

9. We need to pay attention to the process of socialization into roles. Males are often socialized to feel aggressive and to violently express their status. This is learned behavior. The socialization process must be changed to reflect different expectations of people as well as to address the more pathological expressions.

10. One of the meanings of empowerment is the ability to meet one's basic needs in ways that are socially acceptable. We know from humanistic psychologists like Maslow and Fromm that we all have needs for identity: to know who one is and to know that one is a worthwhile individual. There is also a need for relatedness: so that one knows whom s/he is related to and belongs to. One gains power by knowing that s/he is a part of the collective and that the collective is supportive of her/him.

APPENDIX 5: EMPOWERING ORGANIZATIONS: JIM CROWFOOT'S PRESENTATION HANDOUTS

TYPICAL DEFINITIONS OF MANAGEMENT OR ADMINISTRATION

Administration is "the universal process of efficiently getting activities completed with and through other people...A review of the administrative literature lends support to three commonalties for any comprehensive definition of administration. These are goals, limited resources, and people" (Stephen Robbins, The Administrative Process: Integrating Theory and Practice, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1976, p. 15).

This author goes on to give a more specific and detailed perspective of administration as a process. He says, "it is the planning, organizing, leading, and evaluating of others so as to achieve specific ends" (Robbins, p. 15).

1. "Administration...is the complex process through which administrators try to guide the activities of people in an organization toward formulating or achieving some accepted pattern of purposes.
2. The purposes of an organization are multiple, are given different degrees of emphasis by different members of the organization, and are constantly changing in response to new situations.
3. The formulation and achievement of such purposes are blocked by conflicts, obstacles, or changing circumstances within the organization or in the relations between the organization and the environment.
4. To achieve results, both organizations and their administrators try to cope with this blockage through the development, maintenance, and use of power, or influence, with varying degrees of authority and responsibility.
5. In dealing with the members of an organization and with the external environment, administrators engage in or make use of the following:
   a. the broad processes of making decisions and communicating information
   b. the fundamental administrative processes of planning, activating, and evaluating
   c. various technical administrative processes relating to production, budgeting and accounting, personnel, distribution of output, general internal services or research" (Bertram Gross, Organizations and Their Managing, New York: The Free Press, 1964, p. 38).

Management is "the design and implementation of processes and structures to achieve organizational goals given internal and external constraints and opportunities" (James Crowfoot, "Accommodating Growth in Democratically Managed Organizations," *Moving Food: A Trade Journal of the Cooperating Food Distribution System*, March-April, 1981, pp. 40-43).

"Management can be defined as a process, that is, as a series of actions, activities, or operations which lead to some end...the managerial process can be subdivided into three major functions: planning, organizing, controlling" (James Gibson, John Ivancevich, and James Donnelly, Organizations: Behavior, Structure, Processes, Dallas, Texas: Business Publications Inc., 1979, p. 40).

DEFINITIONS OF DEMOCRATIC MANAGEMENT

Democratic management is "member controlled design and implementation of processes and structures to achieve the members' goals given internal and external opportunities and constraints" (James Crowfoot, ibid.).

> The key member controlled processes of management are: planning, decision-making, training, implementing, and evaluating.
>
> The key member controlled structures include: roles and rewards, groups and boundaries, technology, and rules and procedures.
>
> The internal and external opportunities and constraints consist of resources controlled by the organization (e.g., knowledge, money, member commitment, etc. and external pressures coming from other organizations, laws, community values, etc.).

"There are no precise formulas for developing a self-managed firm...but there is a broad guiding principle of democratic control by working members on the basis of equality...This guiding principle, in turn, clearly implies the right of workers in a self managed firm to democratic and cooperative control over the conditions of work, the product of work, and the income and profits generated by the enterprise" (attributed to Ira Brous, source unknown).

"...in the beginning groups whose members are inexperienced in collective decision making are best advised to seek some direction from members with more experience, while explicitly encouraging the building and sharing of those skills by all members" (attributed to George Bennelo, source unknown).

EMPOWERMENT IN ORGANIZATIONS REQUIRES THE FOLLOWING FOCI:

1. Total organization as a system (i.e. an entity having power and sharing power) {e.g., School of Natural Resources}.

2. Authority system providing for governance and performance decision making and implementation {e.g., total faculty as academic policy making unit, and faculty-student standing committees, and student policy advisory committee; Dean, Associate Dean, Program Chairpersons, business manager, coordinator of research development, and coordinator of academic programs, and staff advisory committee}.

3. Sub-units (formally constituted task groups) {e.g., research division, undergraduate program, and graduate program subdivided into three concentrations}.

4. Organizational status groups {e.g., students, staff, and faculty}.

5. Organizational interest groups {based on societal interest groups as defined by class, race, gender, age, etc.}.

6. Individuals.

EXPLOITATIVE PRACTICES ASSOCIATED WITH ORGANIZATIONAL HIERARCHIES

1. Subordinates have no influence over who occupies authority roles.
2. Selection of authorities influenced by racist, classist, sexist, etc. practices.
3. Authorities considered by themselves and others as superior to their subordinates.
4. Authorities' roles rewarded disproportionately relative to subordinates.
5. Authorities' roles monopolize information and skills. People in these roles often do this on their own initiative.
6. Authority roles control standards used to evaluate subordinates.
7. Behavior of authorities is not subjected to subordinates' review and evaluation.
8. Subordinates tend to be frozen in their jobs with limited access to the positive rewards and skills of people with authority over them.
9. Subordinates and others think of themselves as inferior to people in authority roles.
10. Authorities' behavior trigger painful experiences of exploitation and oppression.
11. Communication between different hierarchical levels is limited due to restrictions on information, exploitative power relationships, fear, self-images of people involved and surrounding norms and structures.
12. Authorities and subordinates alike often believe that the power of the authorities is justified by attributes such as years of schooling, etc.
13. Working conditions experienced by subordinates are often not experienced by authorities.
14. Authorities often make seemingly arbitrary decisions which affect the subordinates' lives both at work and at home.
15. When sacrifice is called for, authorities extract the greater portion from subordinates and contribute less than their own share.

REHABILITATING/TRANSFORMING HIERARCHY

1. Authorities' roles carefully defined--emphasizing coordination, constructive criticism, skill sharing, support, control in relation, or organizationally approved policies and plans.

2. Subordinates influence selection of authorities and make selection anti-racist, classist, sexist, ageist, etc.

3. Authorities and subordinates supported and criticized with regard to their own concepts of good performance.

4. Rewarded authorities and subordinates justly. Reduce differentials.

5. Separate status from role; recognition is based on performance of one's own tasks, not position held.

6. Structure openness of information and evaluate authorities and subordinates' openness.

7. Involve subordinates in determination of standards by which they are evaluated. Provide for an appeal process.

8. Subordinates participate in review of their superiors.

9. Provide subordinates opportunities for superior roles, e.g. rotation, create new organizations, etc.

10. People work to overcome restimulation of past experiences of exploitation by authorities.

11. Work to promote high quality communication among hierarchical levels and take special time periodically to evaluate communication.

12. Be conscious of language which reaffirms the legitimacy of hierarchy.

13. Extend civil liberties equally within the organization.

14. Share sacrifices proportionately and in recognition that people with greater compensation levels and discretion usually can give up more absolute value than people at the lower compensation levels.

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