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As happens so often when we have some single-theme TIPS issue, we then have to bring one out that lacks a single major theme, in order to catch up with miscellaneous things.

In our herculean efforts to get the last TIPS issue out, we forgot to mention that as voluminous as that issue was, we managed to include only about half the material that would have been relevant to the issue. Many other signs of the times sub-topics were omitted, hopefully to be included in a future issue.

Miscellaneous Human Service News

*According to the (somewhat outdated) 1989 Chart Book of the US National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research, there were in the early 1980s about as many people in mental "hospitals" as in mental retardation facilities, but almost 3 times as many as these two combined in nursing homes, not counting people in residential facilities serving both the elderly and the mentally retarded. However, the chart book's information is quite outdated.

*The US government used to keep and publish annual statistics on institutional demographics, but ceased doing so under the Nixon administration. Since then, it has contracted out collection and analysis of such data on a somewhat unstandardized basis to other bodies, such as universities. One such report published by the U. of Minn. in 12/89 reports on the demographics of mentally retarded people in state-operated residential facilities for the year ending in 6/88. A few interesting tidbits from this report follow.

The total number of retarded persons in institutional settings hit its peak in 1967, and then declined very slowly by a few thousand every year. In 1967, there were 195,000 people in public state institutions for the retarded, versus 92,000 in 1988. In addition to these, several ten thousand people who used to be in state mental health facilities are no longer there. While this decline has been quite slow and gradual, one has to keep in mind that the US population has continued to increase, and therefore, the decline is much more dramatically visible in the rate of institutional residence rather than in the numbers. The 1988 rate per hundred thousand population was about 37, versus the 1967 rate of about 99. However, these rates do not include the private institutions in either year, nor the number of residents in community residences run by non-state agencies.
All states still had at least one larger institution in 1988, but most of them did not themselves operate small facilities with less than 16 residents. The single biggest exception by far is the state of New York: it operated 67 large residential facilities, and 469 with less than 16 residents, but most of these as large group homes with between 7-15 persons. Years ago, New York State made the insane decision of trying to not only operate its state institutions but also community group homes all over the state—with disastrous results, because so many small community services simply cannot be operated in a centralized fashion.

In 1950, the average annual per resident expenditure in state MR institutions was $746, and in 1988 it was $57,221. In terms of constant dollars, this was a 15-fold increase. In facilities with 15 or less residents, the average daily cost per resident in 1988 was $131, versus $157 in residences of larger size. We also learned that as of 1988, there really were very few publicly-operated residences for the retarded that were not certified under the ICF/MR (nursing home) category, and that almost all of these had more than 15 residents! There were only 3,500 beds in ICF/MR residences of 15 or fewer residents, but over 100,000 in bigger ones. Strangely enough, the bigger ones were almost 50% more expensive. It also became clear that there was a very high relationship between size of residence and severity of retardation, in that the larger facilities were much more oriented toward the more severely retarded, and the smaller ones to the less severely. The average difference in levels of severity looks to be more than one, and possibly even close to two, levels.

*According to the 3/89 Chart Book of the US National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research, 21% of all non-institutionalized persons aged 15 and over in the US have a "physical functional limitation." This includes difficulty in reading because of eyesight problems, hearing problems, lifting or carrying things, going up stairs, walking a quarter mile, etc. Fourteen percent, or roughly three-quarters of the above, have what was called "activity limitation." Of all functionally limited people, 36% were deemed to have a "severe" limitation, but the vast majority of all the functionally limited people did not need personal assistance, while 4% did. Not surprisingly, functional limitations were highly correlated with age, but women were more likely to have such a limitation than men. There also was a strong correlation between poverty and functional limitation, which is probably the result of a vicious circle as poor people are more apt to become impaired, and impaired people are more apt to become poor. The above analyses did not include 2 million people or so with functional limitations who were living in institutions.

*In Canada as in the US, homeless people are often denied benefits because they do not have an address. For the first time in Canada, this procedure has been set aside in Montreal, which has more than 27,000 homeless people (Globe & Mail, 9 Nov. 89; source item from Rob McInnes).

*The one-day human service history slide show which the TI occasionally gives has much to say on the history of begging. It was not until roughly the 1500s that authorities began to wage war on begging and beggars. In 2/90, a US federal court ruled that most of the manifestations of begging are a form of free speech and cannot be forbidden. We would add that the imperial powers would very much like to pretend that there are no problems, and one way to do this is to make sure that there is no begging that might remind people that something is not going right. The issue is being appealed, and may go to the US Supreme Court.

*An Australian (1990?) film, entitled "Riders on the Storm," is a black comedy set in a sheltered workshop for handicapped adults, some of whom are mentally retarded. In this respect, it is very similar to the 1972 English play "Creeps," by David Freeman. Four Australian governmental departments and several major organizations in the handicap field tried to prevent the film from being
made, to have the script changed, or to have it banned. The film apparently shows agencies in a bad light, and some human service workers were rankled by the fact that the handicapped actors in the film were paid up to $250 a day. (Source clipping from John Pitchford.)

*The 1988-89 annual federal Medicare-Medicaid review of the performance of more than 15,000 US nursing homes found some very systematic inadequacies. Hygiene was deficient in 25.5%, drug administration in 24.2%, infection prevention techniques in 20.8%, 19.8% failed to have proper routine care where urinary equipment was needed, and 36.3% had unsanitary conditions related to food (UPI in Daily Gazette, 24/5/90; source item from Linda LeTendre).

*On 19/3/90, NBC TV news began to run a special series on physical and chemical restraints. It said that 50% of the 1.6 million people in US nursing homes are on at least one of these restraints, and 41% on physical restraints. It underlined that this was done primarily for management convenience, that it contributes to the death rate, and that it is tax and government money that largely pays for these atrocities. In an endless spiral of mutual disablement, all this is now leading to federal rules which will soon require that all nursing homes prove to their accrediting agencies the necessity of physical restraints. Of more than 16,000 "long-term care" centers (essentially nursing homes) in the US in late 1989, only about a dozen were restraint-free. Among these are several Quaker nursing homes (mostly in Pa.) that have always been restraint free! (NY Times, 28/12/89)

*The NY state Department of Health found that in one nursing home in Manhattan, 68% of residents were restrained, 36% had contractures, and 30% had bedsores. For helping to initiate this state investigation and publicizing the findings, the nursing home sued Friends and Relatives of the Institutionalized Aged (FRIA) for millions of dollars of damages for libel, fraud, trespass, misrepresentation and interference with a contract. In response, FRIA took out a full-page ad in the NY Times (18/12/89), warning the public of the disastrous consequences of such a suit succeeding. (Source item from Peter Millier)

*On 13/3/90, yet another major article in the Australian Advertiser newspaper spoke about the grim stories of severe neglect that have emerged from inspections of nursing homes and similar facilities in recent years, but noted that even pretty awful conditions can exist without "evil intent." (Source clipping from Peter Millier)

*We learned that some health insurance firms will only pay nursing home costs if the client uses specifically-named nursing homes. For instance, 7,000 elderly people in the Indianapolis area have health insurance from MetroCare, which requires that only the Americana Midtown nursing home be used by them—yet a public hearing in early 1990 brought forth many complaints about neglect and poor service at the facility. (Source clipping from Joe Osburn)

*Many of us have thought that locked wards were pretty much a thing of the past in "psychiatric centers," but a New York State Quality of Care Commission study reported that during the fall of 1989, most of the wards in most of the 23 state psychiatric institutions were locked, and 90% of the wards were locked in 6 of them.

*The president of the Greater Omaha Association for Retarded Citizens reflected in 1990 (GOARC Gazette, 2/90) on her 24 years as a parent activist. Starting in 1966, she joined the successful parent activism for the provision of community service. They got the services they fought for, but "now we have come full circle. We need to fix the services that we fought so hard to get. As parents, things have gotten away from us. I personally have been fighting for over 20 years and I am mad...and I don't even know who to blame. Services in Nebraska once were a model to the world and now we are plagued by financial instability and lack of quality services." The TIPS editor remembers warning parents of this since the early 1970s, including the very parents speaking and being spoken to above. But it seems that every time the TIPS editor turns out right, he declines further in credibility and esteem.
*In January 1990, a mother of a 10-year old child with brittle bones said that even though her family qualified for Medicaid, many of the public services for her son were "confusing, inaccessible and unreliable" (Syracuse Herald Journal, 24/1/90). We should note that these three descriptors are actually relatively mild. They might be used by people who basically still have faith in the service agency super-system, and that bits of improvement in clarity, accessibility and reliability might be possible, and do the trick.

*It may only take 2 minutes to prepare and administer a flu shot, but an additional 20 minutes to do the paper work for Medicare reimbursement (USN & WR, 19/3/90).

*The New York State Department of Social Services and the State Office of Mental Health each operated a residential treatment facility for youths at the Hawthorne Cedar Knolls Center, not far outside New York City. After a homicide of one teen resident by another in 7/89, an investigation found that even though these programs were supposed to serve very dysfunctional youths, the children were commonly unaccounted for for extended periods, "routinely" engaged in drug use, sexual activities, theft and vandalism, and frequently assaulted one another--among other things. Sadly, the mental health component of this center had been set up in order to be more "normalized" than the available alternatives, and this was only one of a number of such settings across the state (QOC Newsletter, 1 & 2/90).

*After 4 years of investigation and court trial, it was determined that 110 clients of the Anneewakee Psychiatric Treatment Center for Adolescents in the Atlanta area had been mistreated and/or sexually abused at the facility, and they received $34 million as part of the settlement, giving each, on the average, a quarter million dollars. The Atlanta Business Chronicle (23/4/90) rejoiced greatly because this was a greater boon to the Atlanta economy than even such a big-time thing as the 1988 Democratic National Convention. Because these awards go to relatively young people who often are still limited in their competency, each recipient was counselled by at least one person representing each of the following 7 categories: banks, investment firms, annuity services, real estate brokers, insurance agencies, educational advisors, and psychological counselling facilities. A total of 16 such bodies were involved in these 7 categories. Patricia Powell, who sent us the clipping, commented that we may see the birth of a whole new service category of "lucky plaintiff counselors" (LPCs) with potential subspecialities of very LPC (VLPC) for judgments over a million dollars, merely LPC (MLPC) for awards between .5-1.0 million, and semi-LPC (SLPC) for anything below that that is still big enough to elicit the interest of vulture parties.

*Amazingly, no statistics are kept as to how many people receive electroconvulsive shock treatments (ECT) in the US, but estimates run to about 200,000 a year. Professional statements and even research conclusions to the effect that ECT has no negative after-effects are just plain brazen lies, and the classification of shock machines by the US Food & Drug Administration as "safe" is laughable. The unbelievable history of cruelty and brutality of ECT can at least partially be found in The History of Shock Treatment by L. R. Frank, obtainable for $7 from him at 23 Webster Street, San Francisco, California 94115. (The above note was prompted by an information flyer distributed by John Allen.)

*We were told that in 1990, a handicapped teenager in Alberta was lobotomized.

*It has long been customary for courts to ask, or require, that a person accused of a crime be examined by mental health experts in order to determine the sanity of the person. However, an increasingly common practice has been for courts to order people convicted of crimes to undergo psychiatric counseling or other treatment. Such a development once more underlines that the difference between treatment and punishment has become eroded.
*In 1988, a survey was done of staff turnover rates in community group homes for retarded people in Chester County, Pennsylvania. It found that there were group homes that had had 100, 150, and 200% turnover within only one year. In one instance, there had been 36 staff people cycled in and out of just one home within 3 years. The "best" of these group homes had a turnover rate of "only" 56% (submitted by Ed Cohle). We have also heard of group homes that had 400% turnover in a year.

*The April 1990 issue of Mental Retardation, published by the American Association on Mental Retardation, and apparently the most widely-read mental retardation journal in the world, published a symposium of 7 articles in which, for the first time to the TIPS editor's knowledge in the professional mental retardation periodical literature, the bankruptcy of one entire service sector, namely state- or agency-operated residences for the mentally retarded, was addressed in anything that remotely approached an explicit and systematic fashion. (Of course, there had been address of these issues before in various workshops such as those given by McKnight and the Training Institute, and in isolated publications by McKnight and Wolfensberger.) Even though this is a development to be hailed, it suffered from some grievous shortcomings. One of the overarching shortcomings was that all the disfunctionalities that were named and discussed were framed (a) in terms of "rule-governed behavior," where the rules were interpreted almost entirely in terms of those emanating from the legal/regulatory process and its associated funding requirements, and (b) in terms of the behavioristic paradigm of contingencies (in essence, rewards and punishments) imposed on agencies, administrators, and program personnel. Absolutely and totally ignored were the higher-order overarching sources for the disfunctionalities, which include—but are not limited to—what in the symposium were called inaccurate and ineffective rules. And of course, these overarching sources are our society's value system of modernism, and the post-primary production economy realities. Not surprisingly, the bankruptcy of the MR residential service system was in no way related to the realities of other service domains. Therefore, no other service domains were mentioned as bankrupt, and certainly not the prevailing service paradigm.

While the institutional system ruled, there was never ever any admission—systematic or even non-systematic—in the professional forums that the institutional system was bankrupt. At least selected portions of the above symposium implied that the current MR residential scene is bankrupt, though it does not put it in such strong terms, and still holds out hopes for it, which we consider to be entirely false. Considering that the TIPS editor has been proclaiming the bankruptcy of the contemporary human service paradigm overall since the late 1970s, it is gratifying that at least one of the authors quoted him (twice) while the others studiously avoided conjuring up the ghost of Wolfensberger, and nobody cited McKnight's work. This is very troubling to the TIPS editor because it may mean that McKnight is more up-to-date than he, insofar as the people who are the most right about a disfunctionality are the least cited while the disfunctionality reigns.

*The sad state of relations between valued and devalued people, and the tremendous formalization and bureaucratization of human services, was captured in a remark by a friend of ours on the difficulties encountered by advocates in visiting an institutionalized handicapped person. He noted that soon, visiting a person in institutional settings will constitute civil disobedience.

*The appliance repair division of the Training Institute recently ran across an appliance repair analogue to human services that was very instructive. A radio was submitted to us that had begun to disfunction, and trying to repair it, we discovered that it had not merely been screwed together like most radios, but also glued together. This was an insuperable obstacle to repair operations, but we were unable to find a home willing to accept a radio that came on and off, or that started drifting across stations. We thus concluded sadly that the only way to fix the radio was to destroy it. We were, however, much consoled in the
knowledge that this happens in human services all the time. We might only contemplate what happens to people who come to shrinkery complaining of jerky faces. They are immediately put on very powerful drugs whose major effect is to produce jerky faces on a permanent and irreversible basis. And as we have often noted, about 100,000 people a year die from the results of psychoactive prescription drugs given to them in efforts to fix them. As we said, all this gave us much consolation as we smashed the housing of the inaccessible radio in our fixing efforts before we threw it out. However, as in human services, all was not lost, as we "harvested" the power cord, the buttons, the speaker and a number of screws.

*A news columnist in Australia somehow got the package of flyers for the Wolfensberger workshops scheduled there for summer 1989. He was greatly amused by some of the phrases, such as the full name of the Training Institute and the term Social Role Valorization, and he thought that model coherency had something to do with becoming a (fashion?) model. However, he brilliantly translated the workshop title "Preventing Excessive, Abusive or De-Dignifying Use of Human Service Technologies" into "How to be a Social Worker Without Being a Shit" (Weekend Australian, 22/7/89).

*A grant from New York State has enabled the development of an alarm button that is worn like a wristwatch which, when pushed, sends a signal to a near-by monitoring post. Unfortunately, this device is being used experimentally at the Gowanda Psychiatric Center in New York State by ward attendants, who will push the button when they feel themselves threatened by clients, or believe that client violence is about to erupt. The alarm signal is monitored by the institution switchboard which then announces throughout the institution over the public address system, "code green on ward so-and-so," and, as with the life emergency code in a hospital, whoever is close at hand will rush to the ward to assist the person in trouble. One attendant said proudly that soon after getting one of these buttons, she had sounded the alarm several times. (Technology that is available will always be used.) Of course, all this contributes to the menace-imaging of clients. Also, clients themselves are not permitted to wear such an alarm to summon help whenever they are being abused by a human service worker (5/89 clipping from Linda LeTendre).
In 1986, the US federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP) opened a high-security unit for women at its prison in Lexington, Kentucky. This new unit was totally underground, the walls were all painted white, there was 24-hour camera and personnel surveillance of the women, 24-hour-a-day light, "fake" windows, and the women were isolated from each other. For instance, although there was a dining room, the women had to eat in their cells. They were woken up during the "night" every two hours or so by guards shining a bright light into their eyes, and they were subjected to daily and brutal strip searches, as were their lawyers. The first three women incarcerated here were political prisoners or prisoners of conscience--the kind of prisoner that the imperial powers have always detested, and even feared more than any other lawbreakers, including those guilty of the most heinous crimes of violence. This hatred was also demonstrated by the severity of the women’s sentences, e.g., 58 years for a crime that did not involve violence; another was convicted of a crime which was committed when she was not even in the vicinity. In 1988, Amnesty International said that this prison unit was "deliberately and gratuitously oppressive," and a federal judge ruled that the treatment of prisoners there "skirted elemental standards of human decency." As a result of these rulings, the unit was closed and the women were sent to other prisons in New York, Washington, and California--the last site placing that prisoner over 2,000 miles away from friends and even her legal counsel. However, she explicitly stated that even this would not break her will.

At about the same time, the BOP was constructing an entire prison using these practices and principles in very isolated Marianna, Florida. An appeal of the federal judge's decision ruled that it is legitimate to take a prisoner's political beliefs into account in sentencing and housing that person, which means that the new Florida prison is apt to be where many political prisoners will now be sent.

Filmed interviews with the women who had been incarcerated in Kentucky showed what we have always said, namely, that not even brutal treatment can break people of great inner strength and conviction—which is the main reason that the imperial powers so vehemently hate, fear, and persecute such persons, and will do everything to keep them separate from the rest of the prison population.

Nothing but the darkest evil can engender such BOP practices. And like so many evil patterns, it is recruiting many people (guards, administrators, sentencing review board members, etc.), probably thousands, into soul-destroying evil.

Interestingly, the US apparently learned many of these brutal practices in the Vietnam war, where the Vietnamese commonly put POWs into underground (and underwater) prison cages—thus illustrating once again how violence begets violence, though often in a disguised form.

We see this whole incident as a glimpse into our totalitarian future, and the degradation of social structures. (Several sources, including Common Cause, 5 & 6/90, and film "Through the Wire" on PBS, 6/26/90)

*A Quebec youth court judge publicly criticized certain youth care facilities in the Montreal area, whereupon the director of one such care center lodged 10 complaints that the judge had violated a judicial code of ethics, and the judge was indeed summoned before a disciplinary committee. However, many citizens were elated about the judge bringing these things out into the open, and hundreds of them sent her flowers (CP, in Globe & Mail, 1 May 90).

*Most people of professional status in MR, if they have ever had a course specifically on mental retardation, have probably had it in graduate school. The TIPS editor himself had his first such course when he was well past the master's level. Yet an analysis of the 10 most widely used introductory text books on mental retardation (MR, 4/90) found that none of them had a reading difficulty level commensurate with graduate education, with all 10 falling only within college level difficulty.
*In Nevada, prostitution is legalized, and bordellos are treated like any other business. If any of them get into financial trouble, it is mostly due to personnel cutbacks in nearby military bases. A number of them have recently sought shelter from the federal government and creditors by filing for bankruptcy and reorganization. In one case, a court-appointed lawyer studiously examined the operations of such a bordello and concluded that it was financially viable and should be continued.

*In Syracuse, a man operates both a funeral home and a dating service. As one wit put it, that not merely covers cradle to grave, but erection to resurrection.

*The US Capitol is equipped with ramps and elevators for people in wheelchairs, but for good PR in support of the Americans with Disabilities Act, dozens of handicapped people in 3/90 staged a crawl-in up the front steps (Time, 26/3/90).

*Radical homosexual activists have developed a new strategy called "outing" or "ripping people out of the closet," which is the intentional exposure of people who are secretly homosexual. On the one hand, this is directed at homosexual people who are publicly and stridently hostile to homosexuals, and on the other hand, it is apparently sometimes maliciously inflicted on people who are not homosexual but whom certain homosexual circles want to punish (Time, 29/1/90).

*In our teaching, we make the point repeatedly that it is absolutely essential for people to become personally and even intimately involved in the lives of devalued people in order to truly identify with them and their plight, and to experience the world the way they do "from the bottom up." Professional and paid service simply erect too many barriers to such identification. This was eloquently attested by a letter we received from a friend who, with his family, had taken in two handicapped young boys: "It has been really wonderful to have the boys in our lives...I must say, I never really understood a good number of SRV (ed.'s note: Social Role Valorization) components as I do now...Not my professional life...nor even Citizen Advocacy impacted in the same way. It is so clear how our boys really need to be protected from the system designed to manage them..." This excerpt also shows that even such noble engagements as citizen advocacy may not help this understanding in the same way as intimate and ongoing living together.

*The idea that informal relationships and helping forms may be effective in addressing all sorts of problems of living, and may even be more effective than formal and professional helping forms, is an extremely threatening concept to many people in the service structure. This is exemplified by a 1989 study by a Canadian professor of psychology (Gottlieb), Social Support and Mental Health, in which he concluded that high priority should be placed on research devoted to examining the limits of informal support, and the occasions when it fails to materialize. The book emphasizes that social support is a fragile resource whereas basic health and welfare services are universally available. This academician has probably never been in a situation where he had 300 different human service workers dance in and out of his life in the span of a few months.

*The (US) Association For Persons With Severe Handicaps received a federal grant about which we have some reservations. Across the US, 9 locales will be designated as special sites where two trainers each will be trained by "national experts in the creation of peer social networks for individuals with severe disabilities." These local trainers in turn will be expected to both create social supports for selected working adults, and train other people to create similar such support systems.

We are always concerned when highly formal and structured programs by formal or even outright imperial organizations are established in order to promote highly informal, culturally normative and possibly communal human helping forms or relationships.

*We are told that one of the latest community perversions is that people tell retarded persons that they themselves should simply form a "circle of friends" so that their problems can be solved. When the handicapped people somehow don't manage to implement this advice, the advisors can get very irritated. (Source information from Wayne Marshall)
PERVERSION ALERT -- To the previous perversion alerts on this issue, we now report that some people have made the term "life-sharing" into a verb, lifesharing, which quite logically has yielded such peculiar expressions as "the person I lifeshare with." Also, people who live with handicapped people are beginning to be called "lifesharers." Further, life-sharing is being interpreted as something that implies only sharing the same abode, and that is applicable only, or at least especially, to more mildly impaired people. Also, in one city in Wales, life-sharing has become a "scheme." It sounds to us like a classical effort--even if well-intentioned--to take something that requires an informal context, and co-opt it by the imperial powers, perhaps even by promoting it with an expectation that paid service workers need to engage in it as part of their being paid service workers.

*At the 1989 annual (and 30th) convention of the German Cerebral Palsy Association, association members were somewhat unexpectedly confronted by handicapped people of the radical independent and self-help groups, and the encounter was very wrenching. The president of the association, who is a parent himself and a pioneer in the association, noted sadly that the most impaired and dependent handicapped persons have no advocate among the "autonomous" ones, whose ideology is composed primarily of resentment and demands. Even open-minded and conciliatory members of the organization had a hard time communicating with the radical confronters whose discourse seemed often marked more than anything by anger, or even despair (Das Band, 12/89).

*Between 1981-1988, the percentage of the population aged 18 and older that did volunteer work dropped from 52% to 45%, and for women--who had commonly volunteered more than men--the drop was even bigger, namely from 56% to 47% (National Catholic Register, 25/3/90).

*The literature has been giving us conflicting information about the degree of volunteerism by Americans. On the one hand, we are getting reports from some sectors of catastrophic fall-offs in volunteering, and on the other hand, we are told that the indices of citizen involvements are holding up or even increasing. We believe that we have the answer to these contradictions. We appear to be witnessing a shift from altruistic citizen involvements toward narcissistic and more self-serving ones. Thus, people who used to join in order to work and give are now joining in order to receive. This is most dramatically underlined in the explosive growth of so-called support groups which people generally do not join primarily in order to support others, but in order to find support themselves, though mutual support is a common benefit.

*According to a "60 Minutes" investigative TV program episode in 2/90, the American business world, and the employment agencies that serve it, use code phrases such as AA which stands for "All-American," and means as much as blond Caucasian blue-eyed. Good-looking Caucasians in general are coded as "corporate," i.e., meaning that corporations will hire them rather than others. "Front office" types refer to very good-looking Caucasian young woman.

*A Massachusetts psychologist gives leisurely 2-day workshops on children with "attention deficit hyperactivity disorders" and "defiant children," for $379 and some reductions for early registration. The discrepancy with TI workshop fees is enormous. Apparently, there is a certain type of workshop that appeals primarily to highly credentialed participants (such as people with doctorates) that usually sends out very slick brochures and includes very slick handouts in their very high fees, though nowhere near enough to account for the cost difference. (Source material from Guy Caruso)
*In an old psychiatric nursing text, we found the song below sung by inmates of a mental institution, to be sung to the tune of the "Prisoner's Song." The term "psychopathic" in the song had then more the meaning of being psycho, rather than sociopathic.

**The Psychopathic Blues**

First Spasm:
It was not so long ago—before I wrote this song,
I was told they'd either kill or cure,
After sev'ral weeks—with the other freaks
I'm supposed to leave here clean and pure.

Second Spasm:
Oh, I wish I had someone to tell me—
That it's plain, I'm as sane as can be;
'Cause there isn't any doubt, once you're in you don't get out,
And the thought of staying don't appeal to me:

1. Now I don't see striped lizards crawling on the wall each night—
   If I did, I'd cut their gizzards out and hide 'em out of sight,
   And I'm nearly worried crazy 'cause I fear that I'm not right—
   I've got those Syncopated Psychopathic Blues.

2. Now "isms," "oses," "ities," I haven't one they say,
   Oh, the spirit of St. Vitus is what makes me act this way,
   And it breaks my little heart because I can't go out and play—
   I've got those Syncopated Psychopathic Blues.

3. It's only since I came here that I'm in an awful fix—
   The nurses all decide that love and business shouldn't mix—
   Not only I'm in love with one but really five or six—
   I've got those Syncopated Psychopathic Blues.

**Service Brokerage Sanity & Insanity**

While we have instituted a perversion alert mechanism, we have not (as yet) instituted a craze alert, though the idea certainly beckons. One difficulty with such a thing would be that virtually everything being done in human services nowadays is based on crazes, and a good part of TIPS would thus be nothing but one craze alert after another.

The service brokerage concept began to be promoted during the 1980s, first out of British Columbia (Canada). It is a poorly conceived, poorly described, but euphorically promoted scheme that we would put into the category of administrativ-fiscal enabling mechanisms, as well as into the craze category.

In essence, it strikes us as yet another desperate scheme to try to squeeze some functionality out of an imperial service system that simply no longer is functional; and like so many of the schemes that are in the coordinative/managerial domain (as is this one), it would add yet another layer of bureaucracy and functionaries (in addition to case manager, advocate, individual program plan-makers*, the service itself, etc.) onto the system, namely, supposedly independent brokerage service agencies.

Of course, the concept of service brokerage itself is an old one. After all, the entire California mental health and mental retardation system has been based on a form of brokerage concepts since the 1960s. Ideas like these keep appearing in cycles, each cycle taking on a few variations that are purported to overcome previous shortcomings or problems. But what is relatively novel about this scheme is that the service brokerage function would be supposedly independent of the service system in order to be accountable primarily to clients (the promotional

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*In the documents explaining brokerage, individual program plans are mysteriously distinguished from "general service plans."
literature says "controlled by the consumer") rather than the service system, though it is difficult to see how it can be a great deal so as long as it is publicly funded.

The brokerage would be provided by an agency that employs brokers and economists sophisticated about service costs. The literature promoting service brokerage also assumes that all advocacy is or needs to be unpaid, and that brokers cannot be advocates because they are paid. This is not correct in that there are several major types of paid advocacy, legal aid and (legislative) ombudsman systems being merely two obvious examples. In fact, many kinds of paid advocacy may have more independence from the service empire than the paid broker would, except for the relatively rare cases where clients have enough independent private money to hire their own brokers themselves.

The broker scheme also stipulates that brokers only pursue what clients want. Little is said about what should happen when clients are not competent to "want." Apparently, the broker would then be responsible to the family—but it is not clear what happens when there is no family, except that "networks" are mentioned as alternates. Nor is it clear what a broker is to do if client, family or "network" want things that are insane, destructive, or evil, or even what to do if the "network" is divided on an issue. Are brokers to be hired guns, so neutralized in their own opinions and moralities as to pursue a person's suicide, or a person's killing, on demand of his/her family or "network"?

Things get even more problematic when one learns that a broker should organize a "network" where there is none, and become a community organizer if need be. If a broker has to organize a network for someone who has no one, how and by whom did the broker become recruited in the first place?

The funds for the services requested via the broker would come (in the form of "credit") from the brokerage agency that, in turn, is supposed to have gotten it from a "funding body." This is really no more than money being allocated to clients rather than to service providers—long a darling concept of conservatives and laissez-faire market ideologues. But even this presupposes that some authority decides who is to be eligible for how much credit, or what limits there are to the purposes to which funds (credit) are allocated.

The brokerage literature says that brokers are to be paid by "an organization directly controlled by the people using the brokerage service." To be an option for more than people who are rich or have a lot of friends with money to donate, brokerage would ultimately have to be paid by public money, which in almost all cases means government—the same people who fund almost all the services being brokered.

Reading the brokerage promotion literature, one finds described a broker paragon of knowledge, skill and wisdom—who will do what s/he is told. Yet in today's service context, one can hardly even find people with the most basic modicum of common sense, and mastery related to service is not only extremely rare, but not even considered a legitimate concept any more. Thus, the more one reflects on the brokerage scheme, the more impractical it can be seen to be—by those who have enough wits to qualify as brokers as described.

Because of its historical baggage, the brokerage promoters do not like the idea of "follow-up" after a service arrangement has been made and they thus use euphemisms such as "remaining generally informed," "maintaining active involvement," and "continuing to liaize." Come on, you can't have it both ways, as CBS-IV commentator Andy Rooney would say.

Brokerage or client-funding schemes are well-known to negate any service system planning, as we have always pointed out. This scheme too would remove its funders from any planning process. True, such planning is largely a joke anyway in the service system today, but there is a difference between delegitimizing planning altogether, versus recognizing the widespread failure to plan the at least theoretically planable. Thus, the government is expected to pay multi-billion dollars without a say where it goes?
The scheme is unfortunately suffused with language and slogans that obscure rather than clarify how it would function. And as Michael Kendrick has pointed out, much like other brokerage concepts, this one assumes that the needed services of a proper quality are somewhere out there, and can thus be obtained or purchased. But we believe that the best that brokerage functionaries can be expected to accomplish is to negotiate some form of "least worst" arrangements for their clients, and that, as we said, at the cost of another layer of bureaucratism and people to deal with, which means that by contributing to yet further complexity, a brokerage scheme would also, and indirectly, contribute to yet further quality decline.

An inkling that this scheme cannot possibly be a very good idea derives from the fact that the idea has spread like wildfire among many people, and has already been pushed toward implementation in part of Australia, even before its functionality or limits have been demonstrated—in Canada or elsewhere; and there have been workshops on it in England.

What adds hope but also confusion to the brokerage concept is that in the province of Alberta, a scheme has grown in recent years that calls itself brokerage, but is apparently very different from the one described in the brokerage literature, as sketched above. As it was described to us, anybody in Alberta can set up as a broker, and therefore, brokers are mostly people with human service backgrounds who are free-lancing. Usually in close consultation with, and with the approval of, a mentally handicapped person's parents or guardians, a broker writes a proposal for some kind of service program for that person that will cost money. The proposal is then submitted to the government. If approved, monthly checks are sent to the client (which usually means the client's parents or guardian), and this money is used to purchase the service at issue. The proposal has to be resubmitted, or a new one submitted, every few months, which of course means a great deal of work for the brokers. How are the brokers being paid? They only get paid if their proposal gets funded, and they get a fee that was written into the agreement to begin with. Thus, it is difficult to claim that the broker is truly independent since the broker's livelihood depends on writing successful proposals, whereas a truly independent party might deem that alternatives other than those requested by parents, guardians or the handicapped person are superior, or should be offered. After all, parents and guardians have sometimes wanted their family member institutionalized or made dead, and if such "services" were brokerable, brokers would undoubtedly make money off them. It is almost impossible to get correct descriptions—much less analysis—of issues such as these in the brokerage literature and debate.

The whole problem of course is much more complicated when a mentally handicapped person is involved, because then, the additional layer of another responsible agent on behalf of the person comes into play. This would of course not be the case where a person is handicapped but mentally quite competent.

We are informed that in Alberta, it is theoretically possible for people to by-pass brokerage and submit their proposals to government directly, but apparently too few people are or feel qualified to do so. Perhaps they do not even have an incentive to do so because the brokers do all the work, and insofar as the broker fee is built into the agreement, there is no incentive for them to try to save the government money.

According to Aldred Neufeldt, there were about 170 retarded adults in Calgary, Alberta, alone who were "individually funded" as of Spring 1990 by the provincial government, apparently most or all of them via brokerage.

At least the way it works in Alberta, the arrangement does give handicapped people a great many individualizing and more social role-valorizing options, because they can use the money to make their own private arrangements, thereby either bypassing the service system altogether, or retaining enough control over their service so as to command some respect from service providers. For instance, if one needed personal attendant care at home, or let us say a companion to assist with community activities, one could hire suitable people on one's own initiative, whereas under the normal service system arrangement, one would have to go through intermediate agencies such as home health care ones.
For people who can use services which are thusly available (which probably would not always be the case), the additional layer of processes and costs introduced by the brokerage system would be offset—and probably more than offset—by the bypassing of the service agency system and its costliness.

We have several conclusions to offer.

1. Brokerage as practiced in Alberta seems to have much more promise than the way it is proposed in the major brokerage documents. Among the benefits that one could expect especially from an Alberta-type brokerage scheme are the design of more individualizing and more creative options on behalf of specific persons. After all, there are innumerable misfits between what people need and what agencies offer, and to the degree that a suitable individual arrangement is in fact implementable via money, brokerage may provide a dramatic shortcut and facilitation.

2. Brokerage should never be prematurely trumpeted as a major systemic solution, or be implemented suddenly on a grand scale. Instead, it should be implemented gradually under close scrutiny, with ongoing discussion of its strength and weaknesses. The main brokerage model seems to need even more precautions than the Alberta one.

3. Brokerage models have a much better chance of being adopted (ignoring for a moment whether successfully so or not) under governmental systems where there is a great deal of discretion for case-to-case decision-making. In turn, this means that it is more feasible under Canadian and perhaps other governmental forms with relatively powerful and unilateral decision-making capacities which often work as much against as for people in need of service. Many parliamentary systems fall into this category. The largely rights-based objectifying way in which public processes are structured in the US makes it difficult to envision that the brokerage model could work there.

4. Ultimately, brokerage can only obtain whatever funders (usually government) are willing to fund.

5. People are apt to mistakenly equate clinical problem-solving with service brokerage—that is, some mechanism of making available a service that a person says he or she wants, and/or providing a person with the money to purchase the service that he or she needs. Of course, providing a person with needed service may indeed solve his/her problems, but this is not at all the same as examining and analyzing the sources of a person's clinical problems, and trying to identify and devise service measures that might address these.

Strangely enough, there are some handicapped groups opposed to brokerage because they believe that brokerage just might meet the needs of handicapped persons, and "satisfied individuals...see no reason to develop a powerful collective voice through strong organizations of our own" (VIA, spring 90).

Environmental Health

*National Geographic (2/90) ran a lengthy article on the gradual drying out of the formerly very large Aral Sea in southern Russia, as a result of the diversion of the rivers that feed it. The fishing industry of the lake has died out, and there has been desertification of a large area affecting about 35 million people who are mostly not ethnic Russians. Every year, more than 40 million tons of salt- and poison-laden grit get driven around by the winds, some of it for thousands of miles. On top of it all, harmful pesticides are used where the water is employed for irrigation. A major portion of the population is now sick, aggravated by a new wave of poor nutrition. One result, as we are seeing in other parts of the world, is the devastation of reproduction, and of the health of children. Infant mortality runs 60 per 1000 births, and the infants that do survive are unhealthy or unsmart.

*How many hazardous waste sites there are in the US is unknown, but 31,000 had been identified as of late 1989. Only 1,224 of these had been given a high priority for cleanup, and in only 561 of these had anything actually been done to them (Science, 9 March 90).
As early as 1951, the US Atomic Energy Commission knew that radon gas in uranium mines caused radiation damage to the miners, and could have been extracted from the mines. Yet it did nothing for 20 more years, letting the miners die of lung cancer. In 1990, when Congress tried to appropriate $100 million in compensation to miners and their families, the Justice Department opposed it on the grounds that this would amount to a costly "entitlement program" (Time, 26/3/90).

In Britain, the powerful poison dioxin was found to be present at 100 times the level considered safe in mothers' milk. A senior officer of the health ministry argued that the advantages of breast-feeding outweighed the harmful effects of the poison, which is a most curious public health argument (SpeakOut, 4/90).

The US press gave little coverage to the fact that in Spring 1989, national air sampling revealed that air pollution was 30 times greater than the previous estimates which were based on reports from chemical companies themselves (Daily Mail, 27/1/90, in Speak Out, 4/90).

In 1988, dozens of genetically altered pigs in Australia were slaughtered and sold for consumption to an unsuspecting public. There was heavy university involvement in this arrogant caper. It took two years for these facts to become known, and they precipitated a big outcry and added to the distrust of many people toward the biotechnology sector.

We continue to report that every year, micro-organisms that are found in foods become more resistive, and therefore, various forms of food poisoning continue on the increase, with several million cases now every year, causing about 9,000 deaths in 1989. Seafood, meat, poultry and salads are the most susceptible, but almost everything else edible is vulnerable (AP, in SHJ, 25/2/90).

One of the many subtle ways in which developed cultures devastate native ones has occurred in American Alaska. In 1971, a settlement package to open up oil drilling gave the natives almost a billion dollars and a great deal of land—but they had to incorporate in order to take possession. All this was quite foreign to the natives and undermined their way of life, resulting in unemployment, bankruptcy, alcoholism, and the rapid collapse of their culture. About 80% of the natives who drink alcohol use it destructively, and death rates among young adults are high. Also, the native population has now one of the highest rates of so-called fetal alcohol syndrome, with 25% of newborn babies being affected, and generally permanently impaired. Many of them die early (National Geographic, 290).

An article in AJMA of 8 Dec. 89 raises the possibility that women who have multiple male sexual partners may develop immunological reactions to male sperm, with one of the possible negative results being (pre)eclampsia, which involves high blood pressure, kidney disease and seizures in pregnant women.

Often, people have high blood pressure because of an unhealthy lifestyle, but once they go on anti-hypertensive medication, they are now being told that they should continue these drugs for life (e.g., Health Gazette, 3/90).

Few people realize that eye drops can have a very powerful effect on body organs other than the eye. For instance, many glaucoma medications also produce all sorts of deleterious mental symptoms, among other things (Health Letter, 3/90).

It has always been known that when people drink too much too long, their brain goes. This condition has now achieved acronym status in the phrase "alcohol-related brain injury" (ARBI). Some authorities now believe that it is not so much the alcohol that does it as the lack of vitamins, because as people drink a lot they eat less. Accordingly, some alcohol experts have been calling for the addition of thiamine to beer and bread, as is reportedly already done in some countries (Age, 20/5/90; source item from Michael Steer).
*A woman in her 80s found the poem below somewhere and showed it to Doug Mouncey, who gave us a copy.

A SENIOR CITIZEN'S LAMENT

Thought I'd let my doctor check me
'Cause I didn't feel quite right.
All those aches and pains annoyed me,
And I couldn't sleep at night.
He could find no real disorder,
But he wouldn't let it rest.
What with Medicare and Blue Cross,
It wouldn't hurt to do some tests.
To the hospital he sent me,
though I didn't feel that bad.
He arranged for them to give me
every test that could be had.
I was floroscoped and cystoscoped,
my aging frame displayed,
Stripped upon an ice cold table
while my gizzards were X-rayed.
I was checked for worms and parasites,
for fungus and the crud
While they pierced me with long needles,
taking samples of my blood.
Doctors came to check me over
probed and pushed and poked around.
And to make sure I was living,
they wired me for sound.
They have finally concluded
(Their results have filled a page)
What I have will some day kill me,
my affliction is old age.

Medical Care

*Since 1950, the proportion of the US gross national product devoted to personal health care has nearly tripled, and is estimated to rise to 15% by the year 2000.

*It is estimated that $600 billion was spent on health care in the US in 1989, which is a higher percentage of the gross national product than for any other developed country, and more than is spent on "defense" and education combined, and yet 37 million Americans (including 9 million children) had no health insurance, and an additional 20 million were underinsured (Health Letter, 3/90).

*The US is #1 among nations by a long shot in the area of high-tech medicine, but when it comes to keeping newborn babies alive for a year, it is in 20th place (Health Letter, 3/90). It is anticipated that health care costs will continue to rise without any overall population health improvements.

*In 1940, over half of American babies were born at home, but by 1988, at more than 100 American hospitals, 35% of babies born were delivered by Caesarean section (Evans, 1989). At the same time, the maternal infection rate attributed to the C-sections was between 7-20 times higher than in natural birth, and maternal death was 26 times higher for Caesarean than for vaginal delivery. In addition, Caesareans have higher maternal risk rates for urinary tract or bowel injuries, blood loss, blood clot formation, blood vessel obstruction, plus higher risks to the baby, including respiratory distress, surgical injury, and other stresses. The costs of Caesareans in 1988 totaled $1 billion, and kept women in hospitals an extra 1.1 million days.
According to Evans (1989), at least in the US, women have been systematically conditioned to agree to hysterectomies when there are only minimal indications for such drastic surgery, as for instance to allegedly reduce the risk of uterine cancer, even though this risk is lower than from dying of a hysterectomy.

*A 1989 study found that women who used birth centers rather than hospitals did as well as in hospital deliveries, provided that they belonged to low-risk groups, and that there existed a ready mechanism for transportation to hospitals in case of complications. Birth centers seem to be particularly appropriate for women who had already had a baby.

*An article in US News & World Report (30/10/89) concluded that a lot of pregnant women are better off with less rather than more medical care, though this applies to healthy and privileged women rather than to the poor.

*The good news is that there is a movement to promote natural childbirth, but the bad news is that "new age" cult elements are strongly involved in this movement (FT, 6/90). Also, many of the proponents of natural childbirth are in favor of killing those of the unborn one does not want to deliver naturally.

*Everyone knows that hospital records are in chaotic condition and commonly get lost. We may have discovered one of the varied causes for this. In New York City, a retarded woman who cannot read is employed as a hospital file clerk (LA Times, 21/2/88; source item from Christopher Ringwald).

*A study of the use of medical services by retarded people living in Pennsylvania community residences found that they were sent by staff to doctors and physicians so often that one might think that they were seriously ill—even though they were not. Such medical use far exceeded that of retarded persons living with their families. The result of being sent to medical services so often was that medical care was poorly coordinated, quite costly, and 51% of the clients ended up having psychoactive drugs prescribed for them. If these people were not very medically fragile, then why were they being sent to medical services with such frequency? The answer is that residential staff sent clients to medical services, upon even the slightest suspicion or health complaint, merely as a defensive measure, in order to avoid sanctions or legal liability if the handicapped person should turn out to be truly ill or suffer damage. A very sad situation of what we call mutual disablement. (Source item from Ed Cohle.)

*The bad news is that in 1988, medical malpractice claim settlements amounted to $4.2 billion. The good news is that this is $100 million less than in 1987 (Time, 31/7/89).

*Because surgeons like to lighten their load between the Thanksgiving weekend and New Year's, hospitals are not full during these 6 weeks. At least one Chicago hospital was caught offering its surgeons free portable telephones or fax machines if they would increase their surgery during these 6 weeks (Health Letter, 3/90).

*The average income of physicians in the US in 1988 was $132,000, with orthopedic surgeons topping the list at $217,000 (USN&WR, 4 Dec. 89).

*A rather ominous development to us seems to be school programs that take children to hospitals where they assume the patient role as part of their "preparation for life." The stated rationale is to teach children that going to the hospital need not be a scary experience, which is of course a colossal lie these days when becoming a hospital patient for any reason whatever is risking one's life. We also see all this as yet one other substrategy of medicine trying to extend its dominance throughout all of society.

*Johns Hopkins University gave President Bush an honorary doctorate in 2/90 at the same time as Bush's administration continued the governmental policy of health havoc.
In southwestern France, there is a tourist town called Condom. Despite the fact that it has 200 births a year, it has not been able to find a gynecologist/obstetrician willing to practice there. Unfortunately, the plight of the community was described in an article headlined "Condom desperately seeking a gynecologist-obstetrician" (Le Petit Bleu, 15/Nov/89)—quite an amusing image association.

(Source item from Jacques Pelletier)

Human Identity

Scientists have now produced calves that have a human hormone gene, so now there is a whole barnyard of domestic animals with human genes. Soon, the animal rights people will indeed be able to claim close kinship. Who would want to kill and eat a calf that has their grandmother's genes?

In some species, the human apparently included, males seem to possess spatial skills superior to females. Recent research suggests the possibility that this difference may develop in polygynous species where active males try to find and recruit multiple female partners, because this requires much greater activity in, and adaptability to, the environmental (spatial) field (Discover, 4/90). A critical test of this hypothesis would be to identify animals where active females recruit multiple male sexual partners to see if such females also possess superior spatial skills.

Recent medical studies suggest that women are constitutionally less able to process alcohol in their systems, therefore get drunk on much smaller doses of alcohol per body weight than men, and also are more at risk of developing alcohol addiction (Time, 22/1/90).

Roger Penrose (1989) has written a seminal book on the nature of human mentality, entitled The Emperor's New Mind. While the book addresses the question whether a computer can ever do what the human mind can do, it goes far beyond that. In essence, Penrose argues that computers function algorithmically, and are better than humans as long as these function algorithmically too. However, Penrose claims that the human brain, as he put it (we would have preferred mind), functions basically non-algorithmically, and almost mystically. The book has drawn wide attention, and it will probably elicit years of response by others.

A Few Tidbits of Social Role Valorization (SRV)

At a recent discussion with several people very active in SRV training, the point came up again that so many people think of SRV as being relevant mostly to formal human services, such as operated by agencies. This is of course not the case, nor was it ever the intention. SRV has implications on the societal level above any particular agency, as well as in the ordinary lives of citizens, both in the way in which they interact with devalued persons and in the way in which they may interpret them without interaction with them. This note is intended to draw attention to the fact that the application of SRV outside of service agencies would lend itself very well to being written up as an article, and perhaps even in something as substantial as a master's thesis.

There are people who have begun to give presentations on SRV, and even to sell videotapes on it, who are quite unqualified to do so. Some such people have apparently never been to SRV workshops, are apparently very poorly familiar with the SRV literature, but may with great earnestness invoke Dr. Wolfensberger's name. A qualified SRV trainer who recently watched one of these video tapes judged it to be mostly confused, definitely wrong in spots, and a poor service to SRV.

The good news is that the recent film "Mac and Me" is based on a family that has a 12-year old child with spina bifida in a wheelchair who is positively presented. The bad news is that the family is engaged in an interaction with another family of aliens from another planet. This news item was brought to us in the News & Notes newspaper of the American Association on Mental Retardation under the headline of "realistic portrayals of people with disabilities featured in major media productions" (1 & 2/90; source item from Milton Tyree).
A middle manager in an Australian human service proposed that his agency buy him a luxuriously-appointed stretch limousine which would not only meet his needs for business transportation, but which would also be image-enhancing for the clients (Wolfensberger was invoked in support of this argument), and could generate income during off-hours by being leased out, for instance, to Japanese tourists. While this may be a spoof, one can certainly not be sure these days, since reality so commonly overtakes one's most insane fantasies.

We have heard of a so-called supported employment program that must look impressive to a lot of people, but that nonetheless scored abysmally low, around -500, on a PASSING evaluation. So far, there has been very little public recognition from within the supported employment craze of the many perversions one encounters under that flag, and as far as we know, no systematic analysis thereof at all. Some of the perversions of supported employment have led some people to call it the vocational equivalent of residential dumping.

The adult services committee of the Pennsylvania Developmental Disabilities Planning Council adopted in 11/88 the following goal statement: "To enable people with disabilities to have the full range of valued roles which are available to other people through: valued social participation, personal social integration, personal control over one's life." This is a splendid example of the endorsement of SRV. In this instance, it is not merely rhetoric since the council has put its money where its mouth is, which is most unusual.

The United Methodist Church in the US is promoting the formation of Gateway Clubs whereby, under adult guidance and supervision, handicapped and non-handicapped youths get together once a month on a parish level around a program of religious and social activities. The concept is said to be built on one that originated in Britain some years ago. For more information, call 913/682-8517.

Since the early 1970s, the TIPS editor has warned that the only way that one could achieve complete deinstitutionalization was by providing not only a large number, but also a very wide array, of community residential types. While there has been a dramatic increase in the quantity of community residential places, there has been relatively little variety in types, and this has led not only to model incoherency, but particularly in the mental health sector, to dumping. This explains at least to some degree why there has been an increase in homelessness in apparently all western countries: they all have moved toward deinstitutionalization, but apparently none of them have provided the full breadth of diversified types of residences.

Based on extensive observation, Bogdan and Taylor (1989) claim that people tend to perceive others (especially handicapped persons) as human if they perceive them in the following four ways: (a) as thinking creatures; (b) as having individuality; (c) as having a "social place," which is akin to what we call a valued social role; and (d) as being socially reciprocative. They show how other people help a handicapped person to be perceived in these four ways by enhancing the personal appearance of the handicapped person, talking about the handicapped person in a positive way that emphasizes his/her uniqueness, and similar measures which help non-handicapped people to identify with the handicapped one, because these are the kinds of things that non-handicapped people value for themselves.

By and large then, these observations are concordant with SRV and with what we have been teaching for years, and carry the following implications, among others. (a) Consistent with the principle that one should make it easier for others to be good, it is important to evoke from, or project onto, societally devalued people those qualities which in turn are more apt to elicit positive behavior from others toward them. (b) Even though the above four attributes may greatly help to define someone as human in the eyes of many observers, we must maintain our awareness that humans are humans are humans, even if they are not thusly perceived by others, and even if they are not able to emit those behaviors which make them more likely to be so perceived by others.
Since 1968, and despite its indisputable benefits, the Special Olympics scheme had been strongly marked by age-degradation and trivialization of retarded participants. In more recent years, there has been a parallel movement among handicapped persons and their advocates to promote athletic activities which emphasize the opposite and positive poles of these dimensions. Faced with the prospect of being swamped or co-opted by these developments, Special Olympics International has finally begun to move in the same direction, under initiatives named Sports Partnerships and Partners Clubs (OSERS News, Spring 90). However, once having let in clownery on a big scale, the above efforts may never be able to get rid of it.

We commented before on the fact that there was a hard-core punk band named Down Syndrome (which is just one more reason to call the syndrome Down's). Their arrival was announced by means of posters that portrayed an evil and deviant-looking person, though fortunately not one who seems to have Down's Syndrome. When they showed up in Saskatchewan in 1986, through the alertness of the local association for the mentally retarded they were asked about the significance of their name. They said they chose the name because "they stand for social change."

An educational newsletter for children, called the Weekly Reader (of 29/9/89), included a vocabulary-building quiz that had several items having to do with "the disabled" and "a person in a wheelchair." Among the multiple-choice items from which correct answers were to be picked were these entries: handicapped, dead, gone, impaired, damaged, sick, illegal, gun, dagger, knife, danger, criminal, police, and lawbreaker. This was one of the most unremittingly bad verbal deviancy image juxtapositions we have seen in a long time. (Source item from Milton Tyree)

A rather sizeable headline in the 20/1/90 Hastings (Minnesota) Star Gazette was "Abortion, Garbage May Top Legislative Issues." (Source item from Susan O'Connor)

A 1990 fund-raising mailing of the Easter Seal Society in Canada included an envelope colorfully illustrated with an Easter motif by a child showing a little girl pushing around a wheelchair that has—a chicken in it. Furthermore, the arms of the chicken, which are actually its wings, look distressingly like the congenitally incomplete upper extremities of the little girl artist who painted it, who is prominently displayed on an accompanying solicitation card (Source material from Barry Wever)

We were most amused to learn that the Easter Seal Society started its 19th annual telethon in 1990 the same week that Lent began. They should have called it the Lenten Seal Telethon.

Ackerman, D. (1990). A natural history of the senses. New York: Random House. In many ways, personal appearance can be likened to a commodity, but disregarding the more variable appearance elements for the moment (such as attire), the genders differ as to what their most valuable appearance commodity is. For women, it is largely prettiness, and that in turn is perceived largely as a matter of facial prettiness. For a man, the major non-variable appearance commodity that generally elicits positive responses from others appears to be height, at least on a probabilistic basis. A very dramatic study reviewed in Ackerman started with a group of men in prison who had scars, deformities, or other physical defects. These were divided into three groups, one receiving cosmetic surgery, the second intensive counselling and psychotherapy, and the third nothing. After they got out of prison, a follow-up discovered that those who had received the cosmetic surgery had the best adjustment and the lowest recidivism. We are not mentioning this is order to advocate a rush to the cosmetic surgeon, but to underline the role circularity that is implied in this finding: the men in this group must not only have received better treatment, but must also have responded more positively to the better treatment that they received.
*Pitsounis, N. D., & Dixon, P. N. (1988). Encouragement versus praise: Improving productivity of the mentally retarded. Individual Psychology: Journal of Adlerian Theory, Research & Practice, 44(4), 507-512. This article is significant for both SRV and a humane approach to pedagogy in general. It makes the point that praise is very much along the lines of positive reinforcement in behavior modification theory, and is administered after a person has emitted a desired behavior. On the other hand, encouragement can be given any time, even when a person has failed. Encouragement is aimed at stimulating, supporting, instilling courage and confidence, and inspiring with spirit. It may include exhortations to keep on trying, expressions of confidence that the person will be able to achieve the next objective, etc. The authors make the point that encouragement is particularly important with retarded people who may have poor motivation, and where there may be relatively little to reinforce with praise. We would add to this that encouragement as described by the authors may at times actually violate behavior modification dictates, but may nonetheless be more effective because of its concordance with cultural norms and the strengthening of a positive relationship between learners and encouragers, who would commonly be the teachers/trainers.

*In 1709, LeSage wrote a satirical romance on the intrigues of love, and on arranged marriages, entitled Le diable boiteux. "Boiteux" means lame, halt or crippled, and sure enough...the devil (diable) in the play has to be presumed handicapped because he walks on two crutches. The play was adapted to English by R. B. Peake, and named The Devil on Two Sticks. This English version was first performed in London in 1836. However, no explanation is given in the text, or in the various character descriptions and stage directions, as to why the devil has crutches, or is crippled. One possibility is an unconscious demonization of handicapped people. The cover of the 1836 English script depicts a scene from the play where the devil appears as a dwarf, gesticulating with one of his two crutches. Such a picture would further serve to strengthen viewers' image associations between handicap and devilry.

*Louisiana has long had the only leper colony in the continental US, in Carville, north of New Orleans. The facility was established on a former slave plantation in 1894, after the neighbors had been told that it was going to be an ostrich farm (images of heads being put into the sand!). Today, the area where Carville is located is called the "cancer corridor" because of the large number of nearby petro-chemical plants spewing pollutants into the air and water. Rather conveniently (for deviancy-imaging purposes), the facility is located next door to a prison. In 2/90, it was announced that the colony was to be converted into a hospital and nursing home for federal prisoners. The 130 residents with leprosy still there would be allowed to remain, presumably in order to maintain a suitable deviancy image for the prisoners and vice versa. (Atlanta Journal and Constitution, 22/2/90, from Georgia Advocacy Office; Toronto Globe & Mail, 10 Feb. 90, from Mike Kendrick)

A Few Signs of the Times

*In 1990, a prime-time TV cartoon series entitled "The Simpsons" became simultaneously a hit, and the focus of concern by teachers, clergy, and others. The program is about a blue-collar, working class family where all members are negatively depicted. The eldest child and only son, Bart, is infamous for his wisecracks, nastiness to his sisters, always being in trouble at school, and rebelliousness against both parental and other authority. Bart's likeness has been appearing on all sorts of merchandise, including T-shirts, the most infamous of which says, "Underachiever, and proud of it!" Soon, the Simpsons may replace the Peanuts and Disney characters as models, and a controversy centers around whether the Simpsons are a bad influence on children. Even Time magazine went
so far as to call the program "anti-family," but those who defend it say that the Simpsons are much more like real people than the idyllic portrayals of family life that characterize most other TV programs. This implies that (a) if an ideal is unrealistic, one should do away with the ideal rather than make greater efforts to live up to it; or that (b) if an ideal is neither realistic nor good, then one should substitute for it "reality," no matter how crude and ignoble it is, rather than search for a better ideal. The program's defenders also claim that because children realize it is a cartoon, they do not take Bart seriously. Of course, even if the claim were true, it implies that one is not influenced by anything one does not take seriously.

Unfortunately, those opposed to "The Simpsons" have generally pursued not the most adaptive strategies, such as banning from schools the particular T-shirt deemed offensive, rather than trying to structure children's schooling so as to make fewer underachievers (proud of it or not) rather than more, as our schools today do.

*Advertisements generally use positive imagery, and in their ads, they present human figures that potential buyers would want to identify with. It is certainly a sign of our times that a full-page ad in Time (16/4/90) showed two pretty yuppie-type women where one tells the other, "He's crazy about my kid. And he drinks Johnny Walker." The message is that the young woman has a child that she is raising alone, either having born the child out of wedlock or having been divorced, and that is now the role model with which one appeals to yuppie women if one wants to sell them something.

*Having sex in rapid succession with multiple partners, but never with more than one at one time, has now come to be called a form of monogamy, namely serial monogamy, even outside of marriage (SHJ, 18/11/89).

*In Australia, women who rent their wombs have formed the Association of Relinquishing Mothers (Age, 9 May 90; source item from John Annison).

*Wallerstein is considered to be one of the leading experts on the psychology of divorce. Her 1989 book, Second Chances, reports one of the apparently few genuine long-term follow-up studies on the impact of divorce on the men, women and children involved. Probably quite contrary to the author's expectations or hopes, these outcomes are largely devastating, and especially so for the children. The saddest finding is that virtually all children of divorce are deeply wounded, apparently for life, and many turn alienated, rebellious, promiscuous, and to drugs. In a non sequitur, the author tries to salvage some positive arguments for divorce, as by proposing that if it were only undertaken "thoughtfully and realistically," it just might be an educational experience for the children.

*One Christian author has proposed that marriage vows include passages on mutual non-violence, and that baptismal ceremonies include parental vows against child abuse (Horton & Williamson, 1988).

*We now have a peculiar social situation where it is easier to get rid of a spouse than to fire an employee, and an incompetent one at that.

*In New York City, there are support groups for women who claim to have been captured by aliens and surgically impregnated, only to have the baby (often called UFO babies) disappear either during pregnancy or after a phantom birth. The surgical impregnation that they describe resembles so much an abortion that some people have raised the possibility that these women have actually had an abortion and have converted their craziness about it into this peculiar form of insanity (FT, 6/90).

*Some people are saying that if there is such a thing as a "right to die," and doctors can be demanded to satisfy this right, then there should also be a right to sex, and doctors should satisfy this right by either providing or prescribing sex to patients on demand, if the latter suffer from a "low quality of sex life" (CRTIR, Spring 90).
One of the latest sex-promoting gurus is a Dr. Roger Libby who has been a professor at the University of Massachusetts, the University of Georgia and Syracuse University, and who has a PhD in sociology and—not surprisingly—also a specialization in family violence. He is also a member of the International Academy of Sex Research and a member of the American College of Sexology. He goes around on campuses and TV shows and promotes things such as National Orgasm Week (the first week of Spring), and generally encourages people to have all kinds of sex as often as possible—as long, of course, as one uses condoms. A professor of physiology and health science at Teachers College in Indiana similarly promotes unrestrained sex to students (source clipping from Joe Osburn). At one time, the single most visible public promoters of wanton sex were clowns. It is pitiful that licentiousness, lasciviousness, perversity and fornication now sail with great esteem under the flag of the social sciences and academia, and that these clowns have replaced the real clowns in this regard, but certainly no one should be surprised. These people are also the proverbial false teachers. They remind us of the false teachers of the '60s who told young people to get into drugs, and millions of them did, and hundreds of thousands had their lives ruined, and tens of thousands of them we still see today as mind-blown street people.

According to the New York Times (29/1/90), there is a dramatic increase in interest in sexual studies in China—which we take as a sign that Communism is crumbling there too. (Source item from Peter Millier)

According to Time (12/6/89), by age 16, a child has seen 200,000 acts of violence on television. Much of the rock music that is a dominant part of the teen culture contains incitement to violence—much of it sexual. Not only are the lyrics of the songs utterly explicit as to degrading sex and violence, but so are the names of the record albums. In comic books, scenes of bondage and torture are standard fare. Many boys now have their first sexual experience while watching sadistic slasher films at so called gross-out parties. Slasher films are widely shown on cable TV, and video shops do a booming business renting them, including to very young children. In some fraternity houses on college campuses, pornographic films or slasher movies play continually.

It is also amusing that some of the experts think that individual and group therapy for offenders is the answer. Imagine that! All the social glues in our society are falling apart, and shrinkery offers shrinkery as the answer. And that is largely the answer given by a lengthy cover story on the topic by Time itself (12/6/89), together with "improved sex-education programs," and that more money should be poured into day care and education, as if bought day care workers could make up for disappearing families. At the same time, Time claimed that removing sex and violence from the media would hardly make a dent in teen crime.

We have commented before on the violent youth gangs in Los Angeles. As of 1989, there were estimated to be 750 such gangs with a staggering 80,000 young members. They increasingly use automatic weapons in their warfare. The US Army is now sending its physicians to train at a hospital in the Watts slum area of Los Angeles because it is the best available practicum for combat-like wounds. So far, all the indices point to things getting worse rather than better (SHJ, 23/11/89).

Some people say that the San Fernando High School in Los Angeles may be the one with the most dysfunctional pupils. As of early 1990, it had 9 security guards, two of them armed with pistols, though this made hardly a dent in the problems of the school (Time, 30/4/90).

Often we are told that youths who have committed crimes were model youngsters before that, but more and more it is being discovered that this simply is not true. When false, these stories are commonly cover-ups by the youths or their families, or reflect the families' own deeply distorted way of interpreting reality.
People of wisdom should note that three of the major socializing institutions—home, church and school—are simply not present to various degrees to many children of modernism. Often, there is only one parent, and/or the parents are themselves on alcohol and drugs. As we noted before, more and more children are being raised by incompetent and disturbed parents.

Crime experts say that crimes are taking on a peculiar new twist. Burglars used to rob a house and then try to make their getaway, but nowadays they are very apt to urinate and defecate all over it, and perhaps set it afire as they leave. Muggers used to hold up people and make off when they got what they wanted. Now, they like to beat up on their victims as well, and perhaps rape and murder them. Adolescents are responsible for a big part in the upsurge in the more violent types of crimes. Also, when youths nowadays feel frustrated, they may simply go out and look for anybody to beat up or kill. Girls are beginning to participate in the kinds of crimes that were formerly largely a male province. When they get caught, many of the perpetrators show neither remorse nor conscience, but brag instead and show indifference to the pain, suffering or ongoing impairment of their victims. Often, it is only their bragging openly that leads to the crime getting solved.

As happens all the time, so many experts are looking for chemical and genetic causations of these crimes, which at this point is a mixture of the stupid, absurd, ridiculous, funny and tragic.

Quite appropriately, the US capital in 1988 became the murder capital of the US with 372 slayings, the rate still being dramatically on the increase (Time, 13/3/89). At the same time, Washington continues as the nation's leading consumer of alcoholic beverages, with 4.78 gallons of spirits, 6.41 of wine, and an unspecified amount of beer per person of all ages in 1988 (Time, 13/3/89). It is rather appropriate that the mayor over all of this stands revealed as lecherous, venal, and long addicted to drugs.

The weekly US News & World Report is a very imperial news journal, and whenever possible, tries to convey the impression that the imperial powers have things under control, and that things are going well. However, even it finally admitted (8 Jan. 90) that in certain cities, such as Detroit, the "local public sector today is failing to perform the most basic services." In many parts of the city, citizens make fortresses of their homes, and carry guns when they go out. Each year, dozens of children and teenagers are killed or wounded by stray bullets, not to mention those killed on purpose. Hundreds of fires are set every Halloween. A spring 1989 count showed that there were over 15,000 abandoned houses city-wide, and that government could not tear abandoned properties down fast enough.

Between 1980-1988, there has been an increase in NYC about disturbed people. The police believe that there are not only more emotionally disturbed people, but also more people disturbed because of drugs (SHJ, 3/11/89).

A New York City newspaper has been preparing a guidebook for potential workers that contains the following advice: "Don't stop to talk to anyone who approaches you. Don't make eye contact with passersby. Try not to look lost, even if you are." "Don't frequent restaurants in close proximity to the office" or "hangouts traditionally populated by journalists." Two things are ironic about this. Firstly, the paper has been pretending that New York is a wonderful city, and secondly, a spokesperson for the paper claims that these suggestions are "general safety tips that you would use in any big city, and nothing more than that." (Time, 7 May 90)
An article in a 1989 issue of the American Lawyer charged in effect that the American criminal justice system has virtually collapsed, and one result is that criminal defendants—including those who have committed well-witnessed acts of violence against innocent non-armed people—have become utterly contemptuous of the American court system. A guest editor in Newsweek (21/8/89) called it a scandal.

In the US itself, places like the burnt-out Bronx or East St. Louis may characterize our future. Civil authority in East St. Louis has totally broken down, almost all the buildings are falling down and are being looted of everything of value, and public services are breaking down, such as utilities, garbage collection and policing. There may be months without garbage collection. Even the broken bulbs in the traffic lights do not get replaced (Time, 12 June 89).

Given the trends toward decadence, and with the criminal justice system simply unable to cope with the rising tidal wave of violence, we may very well see our future in what happens in certain other countries such as Argentina and Brazil. In Brazil, off-duty policemen reportedly often kill persons suspected of common crimes, and there has been widespread public support for this because of the high urban crime rate (CM, 16/3/89). Argentina once was one of the world's wealthiest countries, and let it all slip away into social chaos.

The winter 1990 issue of Spinal Network (provided by Guy Caruso) carried an article on the fact that there are a lot of dissocial or outright anti-social young males with a history of drug abuse who are getting paralyzed, often from gang-related gunshot wounds. Nasty violent people who become paralyzed usually become nasty violent paralyzed people. Often, such individuals are deeply uncooperative with any treatment efforts and rebellious against all rules and policies of the agencies that serve them or upon whom they depend. Often, the bulk of their nastiness becomes focused in their speech which they cast aggressively upon those around them. Since most people will not stand for this very long, this means that by and by, paid agency people, including rehabilitation nurses, become something like a societal rear guard in contact with such persons. Thus, even the people who have to be around them because they are paid may either detest them and/or avoid them. Not surprisingly, some of them eventually return nastiness for nastiness. Very sad.

A rather remarkable article in early 1990 in the Wall Street Journal claimed that despite overwhelming support by parents and legislators, teachers nonetheless do not want to teach morality to their students, and when they are required to do so, will often find ways of avoiding it. In fact, 35% of teachers participating in a research project on the effectiveness of values education were not implementing any part of the mandatory program, even though they had to confer twice yearly with the researchers and keep detailed logs on their teaching! The teachers resist "one view of morality" as being "dangerous, sad, and boring." Thus, for instance, American children now learn that the Pilgrims who came to America in the 1600s from Europe were not seeking religious freedom but were "people who take long trips." We have commented before that these days, just about the only morality that is not permissible to teach in the schools is the Judeo-Christian one.

The US Pentagon specifications for the purchase of fruit cake run 18 pages (USN&WR, 12 Feb. 90).

As of 1990, there were 5.7 lobbyists for every state legislator in the US (AP, in SHJ, 26/6/90).

Miscellaneous

Is it possible that there is any other periodical in the world in which so much interesting, esoteric, often funny, simultaneously useful, information is transmitted as in TIPS? We would have to see it to believe it.
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