THE IDEOLOGIES OF SOCIAL WORKERS AND VOLUNTEERS:
AND THE EFFECT OF THESE ON SERVICES OFFERED TO
CLIENTS OF SOCIAL WORK DEPARTMENTS

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To the memory of my parents,
Daisy and Jim Humphries,
and for Marion.

L.H.N.L.
Declaration

This thesis is entirely my own work
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ABSTRACT

THE IDEOLOGIES OF SOCIAL WORKERS AND VOLUNTEERS: AND THE EFFECT OF THESE ON SERVICES OFFERED TO CLIENTS OF SOCIAL WORK DEPARTMENTS.

This is a qualitative study based on a period of participant observation in two Scottish local authority social work department area teams, and on semi-structured interviews with 31 social workers in the two teams, and with 42 current-and 24 ex-volunteers associated with one of the teams. The research approach views concepts such as professional knowledge and skills as socially constructed rather than as objectively determinable attributes, and attempts to describe how social workers employ such constructs to facilitate the passage of work and to control their operations as professional people. It also aims to show where volunteers see themselves in that process.

The different cultures in the two teams are compared and the empirical analysis describes ways in which each attempted to implement social policy initiatives, and their negotiations to accomplish professionalism. The study examines the differentiation between teams' formally stated ideologies and informal or empirically derived ideologies, and looks at ways these are used in different contexts to different purposes within the teams.

Questions are raised concerning assumptions in the social work literature which assumes qualitative differences between the knowledge and skills of professionals and those of lay-workers. A discussion on images of volunteers compares social workers' beliefs with those of volunteers and argues that typifications of volunteers are employed by social workers to legitimate their exclusion from certain
areas of work, even though qualitative differences between social workers and volunteers were not as clear as the professional rhetoric suggested.

However on grounds of an expert ideology social workers emerged as the primary assessor of social need and its resolution and volunteers emerged as passive and acquiescent and made little contribution towards defining themselves or their role as volunteers. The argument is advanced that the relationship between social workers and volunteers is one imbued with power in which social workers' ideologies dominated. Finally, links are made between this position of power and privilege and the wider societal institutions.
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PART I.  BACKGROUND
INTRODUCTION

This study is about the social organisation of some aspects of the work of the statutory social services, and seeks to depict the occupational world of two teams of social workers, and the volunteers with whom they work, from the perspectives of those people themselves. The volume of ethnographic research has increased in recent years, and a number of studies have focused on the delivery of the social services, but to my knowledge no previous work of this kind has included voluntary workers attached directly to social work teams. This is not to say there is an absence of research studies on the relationships between professional and lay-workers, and some of these studies will be considered in later chapters. However, the phenomena of interest here are concerned with those professional and voluntary workers who operate alongside each other within a social work agency, potentially with a similar client group, and the study seeks to gain an understanding of how they define and re-define their work, to learn something of the negotiation processes involved, and to discover how the volunteers see themselves in that process. My interest in this topic stemmed from a background as a social worker whose full-time job latterly, was recruiting volunteers to offer support to one-parent families (Humphries 1975). This led to an interest in the ways in which social workers and volunteers perceive themselves and each other, and in the reasons why some volunteers discontinue voluntary work after only a short involvement. When the project on which I worked was started in 1973, the national interest in volunteers was gaining momentum. Yet then, as now, volunteers in social work received little
theoretical treatment. The literature consists mainly of descriptive accounts of the ways in which volunteers operate but seldom has attempted to conceptualize, with resulting and acknowledged confusions.

This is perhaps surprising in view of the fact that in the late 1970s and now in the 1980s, discussion about the contribution of volunteers in the social services has been catapulted into the centre of the political arena. Although the Kilbrandon Report (Kilbrandon 1964) and more especially the Seebohm Report (Seebohm 1968) have much to say about volunteers, none of the 9 regional social work departments in Scotland has developed any policy in this area, as was revealed in my preliminary survey of these departments (Humphries 1981).

It was in the light of those issues that the empirical work was carried out, but the study is timely and significant also as a result of the setting up, in 1980, of the Barclay Committee with its remit to "review the role and tasks of social workers in local authority social services departments and related voluntary agencies in England and Wales, and to make recommendations" (Barclay 1982). The Committee reported in 1982 with its major recommendation that of "community social work" which for Barclay meant "a partnership between citizens and the statutory and voluntary services", with emphasis on the "ideas of equality and participation". The Committee said they recognised a general movement away from centralization and "towards a belief in the capacity of ordinary people", and regarded this as an indicator that a community approach is now possible. The fact that this research concerns an examination of the ways in which professionals already operationalise some aspects of the notion of community participation provides an opportunity to study the process in action. This thesis therefore addresses itself to the dimensions of social policy administration and social work theory with a view to
making a contribution, however small, to the development of thinking in these spheres. In organising my material I have taken the notion of "professional ideology" as central to the descriptive framework, and I shall elaborate on this concept later.

The aims of the study may be crystallised as follows:-

(i) to examine the process by which policy documents concerning the roles of professional social workers and volunteers are implemented through the operation of individual ideologies, how this affects the kinds of services offered to clients and how volunteers see themselves in the process.

(ii) to understand something of the meaning of professionalism for social workers and lay-workers, and how social work is accomplished.

(iii) to contribute to a theory of volunteers in social work.

It is perhaps prudent at this point to define the term "volunteer" since its sense is not immediately apparent and there is a widespread misunderstanding of the difference between "volunteers" and "voluntary organisations". For the purposes of the research I have adopted a definition of "volunteer" as "a person who offers her or his services free of charge (but who may receive expenses), recruited and supported directly by the social work department, to supplement or complement the work of paid staff, by providing a direct personal service to clients of the area teams". This excludes members of committees and work done through liaison with voluntary organisations (who may or may not employ paid professional staff). It is recognised that the definition is a fairly narrow one, and that voluntary work is carried out in a greater variety of ways, both informally by friends and neighbours and by myriad organisations which range from Women's Royal Voluntary Service (WRVS) to those beyond the personal social services such as the
Ramblers Association and the Royal Society for the
Protection of Birds. However, my definition is felt to be
justified in the context of the aims of the study, since it
provides a framework for examining the kinds of relationships
which exist between social workers and volunteers which could
not be made available by focussing on more indirect contacts.

Having outlined the main approach and aims of the research,
and pointed to its subjects, these introductory chapters
continue with a discussion of the present political and
economic climate in Britain as it affects social work.
They go on to look at the literature on the current state
of professionalism in social work, and the history of
volunterism, to examine the relevant policy documents, and
conclude with a description of the methodology of the study,
which includes a resumé of the survey of social work teams
in Scotland which I carried out in preparation for this
study, and which I hope will serve as a "backdrop" against
which the empirical analysis will be set.

The Political Climate

The principle of the voluntary contribution to social action
has been dear to the heart of both recent Governments,
Labour and Conservative, and the present crucial stage in
the growing gap between perceived needs and resources has
resulted in a major public debate on the subject. In 1978
the Times of 1st October reported that the Labour Government
were saying through their Secretary of State for Health and
Social Security, David Ennals, that although the role of the
professional should not be diminished, "our role is to
enable people to see there needs to be a non-professional
element of community support ..." This was in accord with
the report of the Seebohm Committee on local authority and
allied personal social services, that "welfare through
community" was not an alternative to the social services, and that there was no suggestion that volunteers could replace professional workers (para 499). In a major speech on 19 January 1981 to WRVS national conference Margaret Thatcher changed the emphasis on behalf of the Conservatives - "I believe that the volunteer movement is at the heart of all our social welfare provision. That the statutory services are the supportive ones, underpinning where necessary, filling the gaps and helping the helpers". (Mrs Thatcher's speech in parts betrayed an assumption that volunteers and voluntary organisations are synonymous, but the quote conveys her intention). The Prime Minister claimed, on the same occasion, to have the backing of the social work profession in her philosophy of a "stopgap state" -

"I am very encouraged by the way in which local authorities, directors of social services, the social work profession and the specialist press are increasingly determined to shift the emphasis of statutory provision so that it becomes an enabling service, the statutory provision enabling the volunteers to do their jobs more effectively."

With the increase in the numbers of the unemployed and amongst fears of resulting social disorder, suggestions arose from a debate in the House of Commons for a national youth service scheme. In the Times in April 1981, Conservative MP, Sir Hugh Fraser, outlined his idea for the scheme, arguing for a compulsory national youth scheme. An Observer/National Opinion Poll, (reported in the Observer on 26th April 1981) found that 50% of the quota of its interviewees agreed with the "compulsory" element (80% in all were in favour of a national youth service). On 27 July 1981, Sir George Young, Junior Minister at the Department of Health and Social Security (DHSS) presented a package of proposals to the House of Commons to enable the unemployed to do voluntary work without sacrificing their welfare benefits, and announced that talks would be held between the Department of Employment (DOE) and the Manpower
Services Commission (MSC) to discuss ways of ensuring that unemployed people are aware voluntary work is an option which is open to them. There has been a suggestion that volunteer bureaux staff should be placed in offices of the DOE to advise about available voluntary work. The debate has been joined by trade unions and professional associations, concerned that the Government may see voluntary activity simply as a cheap and ideologically attractive alternative to statutory and skilled services in the context of public spending cuts and disappearance of jobs. Mrs Thatcher denied that her enthusiasm for voluntary help is related to the need to reduce government spending: "The fact is that it is as important in times of expansion and economic growth as it is during a recession". In the run-up to the 1979 General Election the Conservative Party gave some indication of its approval of increasing voluntary participation in the social services by the publication of their booklet "We are Richer than we Think", and its emphasis has remained on the philosophical rather than economic arguments. To quote Mrs Thatcher again on the same occasion,

"... that really is a lesson that governments have to re-learn the whole time, because we politicians and adminis-trators mustn't forget that the state has a limited role, yet it is easy for people to expect the state to do more than it ought to do. And there are always very real temptations for politicians to pretend that they're able to do more than is ever possible ... the voluntary principle is important for reasons which are far beyond economics. The willingness of men and women to give service is one of freedom's greatest safeguards. It ensures that caring remains free from political control. It leaves men and women independent enough to meet needs as they see them, and not only as the state provides."

Ministerial statements such as these have been met by disquiet amongst many who organise the efforts of volunteers and their reservations were summed up by Professor Roger Hadley of Lancaster University, at a conference initiated by the Government to discuss voluntary action, and reported in the Times on 26th January 1981:
"The Government's policies on voluntary action are strong on rhetoric, and weak on practical action". The conference was part of a series of modest policy initiatives being undertaken by the Voluntary Services Unit of the Home Office, in its efforts to encourage new forms of voluntary activity in the community. Small grants were made available to help existing self-help schemes in six designated areas of the United Kingdom, and applications were invited from groups with pilot projects which develop voluntarism. In the wake of the summer 1981 rioting in several major cities in England, on 27th July 1981 the Prime Minister announced to the House of Commons the release of an extra £4 million (£400,000 of it for Scotland) to be devoted to voluntary effort, particularly with and involving the unemployed. Since then a bewildering number of projects have been introduced. These moves give some indication of the investment the present Government has in developing this aspect of contemporary British life, and of the topicality of volunteers for a range of people involved in politics, both at national and local level. However Mrs Thatcher's assertion that "the social work profession and the specialist press are increasingly determined to shift the emphasis of statutory provision so that it becomes an enabling service, the statutory provision enabling the volunteers to do their jobs more effectively", masks complex processes, some of which I hope to examine in this study. These issues are concerned with the ways in which social workers view themselves as professionals, and volunteers as non-professionals, and the organisation of their work in the statutory social services. In the next section we shall look at some aspects of professionalism for social workers and consider some of the assumptions made in their training.
CHAPTER 1

THE PROBLEM OF PROFESSIONALISM FOR SOCIAL WORK

Many and varied have been the attempts to define professionalism, and professional authority and autonomy appear to be seen as desirable goals, towards which a number of occupations strive. Carr-Saunders classified four major types of professions in modern society:— (a) established professions, (b) new professions, (c) semi-professions, and (d) would-be professions (Carr-Saunders 1955). Wilensky asserted that any occupation wishing to exercise professional authority "must find a technical basis for it, assert an exclusive jurisdiction, link both skill and jurisdiction to standards of training, and convince the public that its services are uniquely trustworthy" (Wilensky 1964). He claimed that in the minds of both the lay public and professional groups themselves the criteria of distinction seem to be two:—

(i) the job of the professional is technical — based on systematic knowledge or doctrine acquired only through long prescribed training, ("technical" in Wilensky's sense may be scientific or non-scientific).

(ii) the professional person adheres to a set of professional norms.

Wilensky went on to claim that the "service ideal" (which contains concepts such as impartiality, impersonality and objectivity) is the pivot around which the moral claim to professional status revolves. "In short, the degree of professionalisation is measured not just be the degree of success in the claim to exclusive technical competence, but also by the degree of adherence to the service ideal and its supporting norms or professional conduct".

Wilensky attempted to delineate a progression of events in
the development of professionalism in occupations, an approach also taken by Hughes who on page 135 of his "Men and their Work" (Hughes 1958), outlined an accompanying and continuing re-definition of core tasks, resulting in a pecking order of delegation and a sloughing off of "dirty work" to other groups.

Katz, in his discussion of the thrust towards professionalism in nursing described the occupation's attempts to create a distinctive body of knowledge by doing research, and like Wilensky, linked the guardianship of such knowledge to an acceptance of the guardianship by those beyond as well as those within the ranks (Katz 1969).

Greenwood's ideal-type model of professions included such characteristics as:-

(i) a basis of systematic theory;
(ii) authority recognised by the clientele of the professional group;
(iii) broader community sanction and approval of this authority;
(iv) a code of ethics regulating relationships of professionals with clients and colleagues;
(v) a professional culture sustained by formal professional associations. (Greenwood 1957a).

Again Toren agreed that the core characteristics which distinguish the professions from other occupations are that they are based on a body of theoretical knowledge, that their members command special skills and competence in the application of this knowledge, and that their professional conduct is guided by a code of ethics, the focus of which is service to the client (Toren 1969).

Goode allowed concentration on essentially two core characteristics of professions, which are "prolonged specialised training in a body of abstract knowledge, and a collectivity or service orientation" (Goode 1969).
But the functionalism which is expressed by these authors sees a profession largely as a relatively homogeneous community whose members share identity, values, definitions of role and interests. Bucher and Strauss offered some relief to this static view by presenting a process approach to professions which focussed upon diversity and conflict of interest and the consequences of this for change within a profession (Bucher & Strauss 1960).

Here professions are seen as loose amalgamations of segments pursuing different objectives in different manners and more or less delicately held together under a common name at a particular period in history. Bucher and Strauss suggested that members of a profession not only weigh auxiliary activities differently, but have different conceptions of what constitutes the core - the most characteristic professional act - of their professional lives. So here the model is one of segments which develop distinctive identities and a sense of the past and goals for the future, and they organise activities which will secure an institutional position and implement their distinctive missions. In the competition and conflict of segments in movement, the organisation of the profession shifts.

Freidson, in his study of medicine as a profession, did not recognise this diversity, but he did argue that the only truly important and uniform criterion for distinguishing professions from other occupations is the fact of autonomy - a position of legitimate control over work. He insisted that the single zone of activity in which autonomy must exist in order for professional status to exist is in the content of the work itself. Consider this statement on page 82:

"Autonomy is the critical outcome of the interaction between political and economic power and occupational representation, interaction sometimes facilitated by educational institutions and other devices which successfully persuade the state that the occupation's work is reliable and valuable" (Friedson 1970).
Freidson's view was that the occupation's training institutions, code of ethics and work are attributes which frequently figure prominently in the process of persuasion but are not individually, or in concert, invariably or even mostly, persuasive as objectively determinable attributes. He suggested that it may be true that the public always come to believe that the training, ethics and work of the occupation they favour have some exclusive qualities, but this is a consequence of the process of persuasion rather than of the attributes themselves, and the attributes may not be said to be either "causes" of professional status or objectively unique to professions.

One topic of examination in this thesis is social work's claim to professional status and how professional social work is accomplished. The point from which I start is the occupation's attempts to define "objectively determinable attributes" and to suggest that such attempts are particularly problematic in social work. Any claims of social work to exclusive competence are at best tenuous, resulting not only from its comparative newness, uncertain standards and the intrinsic qualitative difficulties surrounding the social and psychological sciences on which it draws, but also from the fact that the types of problems dealt with are part of everyday living. The lay public cannot recognise the need for special competence in an area where everyone is an "expert". Dollard has observed, "the difficulty which has plagued social work in its development as a profession is that the social worker's dedication is to a degree shared by all good men and women ... hence we all resist and resent the notion that the task of the social worker requires a peculiar combination of temperament, intelligence and experience" (Dollard 1952).

In my discussion of the criteria for a claim to professionalism, it will have been noted that common characteristics quoted by writers on the subject have been the possession of a "body of knowledge" with commensurate
"skills". Social work in its development as a profession has accepted these criteria and the social work literature devotes much attention to the place of knowledge in social work and to identifying social work skills. It has been assumed both that theoretical knowledge is essential to competent practice (as opposed to the achievement of professional status), and that social work skills are distinctive, and a "fixed" property of individuals who have undergone training. Examination of some of the literature will I hope help us to look more closely at some of these assumptions.

Knowledge in Social Work

What knowledge ought social workers to use as a basis for activities with clients? Exhortations have come from a variety of authors as to the respective claims different kinds of knowledge have towards creating a viable theoretical structure for the profession. Kahn (Kahn 1954), Greenwood (Greenwood 1957), Kadushin (Kadushin 1959), and Bartlett (Bartlett 1970) agreed that the primary sources of knowledge used in practice are knowledge borrowed from other disciplines as well as knowledge developed in social work. There is consensus among them that social work has drawn in the main from the behavioural and social sciences, with a heavy reliance on psychoanalytic knowledge, though they would assert that the profession ought not to be so dependent on psychoanalytic theory. All these authors express concern over the slow pace at which social work is developing a distinctive body of knowledge and reservations made about what Coyle termed "interprofessional borrowing" (Coyle 1958). Bartlett deplored the lack of adequate words, terms and concepts to represent the important facets and components of the profession's practice as a whole, a situation which has resulted in excessive concentration on a single body of
knowledge until its limitations are recognised and fashion changes. She suggested that social work is moving from a basis of commonsense principles to developing a distinctive body of knowledge through "practice wisdom".

"As social workers observe and listen and intervene in an effort to bring about change, they feel the emotional stress themselves and through this sharing sense vividly the significance of the situation in human terms. Thus through their closeness to a wide range of social problems, their way of relating to people, and their participation in the living experience, social workers have special opportunities for understanding problems of social functioning" (page 73).

Attempts have been made to evaluate social work practice by Goldberg (Goldberg 1970) and Goldberg and Neill (Goldberg & Neill 1972) and Davies (Davies 1977) has argued the potential value of research of this kind. Pincus and Minahan, in presenting their model of an integrated social work practice, emphasised the need for a "social work frame of reference" which would be derived from a "clear notion of the function and purpose of the profession" (page 9). They saw such a framework as reflecting the purpose of the profession and providing it with a unique handle for dealing with social situations, seen as the interaction between people and resource systems and between resource systems themselves, rather than as "problems of people" or "problems of resource systems" (Pincus & Minahan 1973).

Pincus and Minahan stressed the need for a body of knowledge in social work:

"we believe that while love is essential, love is not enough. In order to help others change, we need to combine our creativity, spontaneous feelings, individuality, concern and love for others with a body of knowledge about human behaviour, the social environment and processes of change; with proficiency in using techniques or procedures; and with a method of problem solving that utilizes our knowledge and techniques, and provides a systematic guide for our change efforts" (page 34).

Elsewhere they stated their belief that knowledge, while no
key to certainty, contributes to a more modest goal, namely to increase the frequency of socially appropriate decisions at the expense of the number of inappropriate or erroneous ones. However Pincus and Minahan admitted that human behaviour and the functioning of social systems are complex topics, therefore any one theory cannot be expected to be adequate for all situations. They conceded further, that social work itself holds no unique theories of behaviour and social systems and that the worker must draw on the knowledge base of the social sciences in linking purposes to task. But two difficulties arise here: the first is that the theories are not necessarily compatible with each other and indeed may be conflicting. This leads to the second difficulty, which is that individual workers must make a choice as to which theoretical stance they will adopt. Particular biases affect not only how social problems are defined but also the goals of intervention.

These points are illustrated also by Baker's discussion of the development of generic social work practice. Baker wrote

"... the professional social worker ... functions in such a way as to make a social reality out of the primary values and purpose to which he is committed. The action strategies he adopts are consciously geared to an ongoing assessment of the psychosocial needs of the client, which in turn is based on an amalgam of the knowledge derived from the social and behavioural sciences and experience of assisting people in stress and crisis. In intervening in people's psychosocial systems either on an individual or group basis, he uses an accepted set of general principles, which guide his conduct and take into account the process that is involved when human beings are in significant interaction with each other". (Baker 1975).

A similar difficulty arises here as with Pincus and Minahan. "An ongoing assessment of the psychosocial needs of the client" assumes the employment of a uniform choice of theoretical base for defining client need. Generic training for social work does not dispense with the range of explanatory models which may be brought to bear, but indeed widens
the range so that greater variety in intervention methods becomes possible. Baker noted the absence of specific direction or certainty as to which helping approach is indicated for particular problems, but proceeded to reveal his own preference by outlining a model which is geared to an individualistic, psychodynamic view of clients in a clinical setting. A second difficulty in Baker's thesis lies in his reference to practice wisdom as "an experience of assisting people in stress and crisis". As I have noted, Baker acknowledged that such knowledge is at present not accessible to a coherent presentation, and despite a quote from Perlman which implied that technical know-how is a uniform phenomenon, allowed that the kind of help offered "seems more influenced by the theoretical and method orientation of the helper, his clinical hunches and agency orientation and convenience, than client need". The aspect of agency orientation and convenience is not developed but evidence is growing that this is an important influence in decisions about the kinds of help offered to clients (Barneis 1982). The point is that until it can be demonstrated that practice wisdom can be made "visible" it contributes little to a knowledge base for social work, and in any case there is a need to question the assumption that theoretical knowledge is the primary motivation in social workers' intervention in social problems, and that other factors are passive.

Stevenson also, in her resistance to acquisition of a "body of knowledge" by social workers, and her call for the development of thinking in terms of "frames of reference" for understanding and helping people in difficulty, revealed the general state of underdevelopment in the profession in defining those concepts. She wrote, "we should be masters of theory for practice, this is in the selection and use of theory for a professional purpose". She suggested a back and forward movement from the frames of reference provided by different disciplines in the social sciences, to the use of principles and concepts "of our own, for our own particu-
lar purposes". She advocated that "we draw from anything relevant to contribute to our understanding of the situation ..." (Stevenson 1971). This approach of course begs the questions of what constitutes appropriate "frames of reference" and "anything relevant". It also raises questions about what Stevenson called "concepts of our own, for our own particular purposes" and what Bartlett and Baker referred to as "practice wisdom".

Evans' treatment of the relationship between formal theory and practice wisdom is couched in terms of "the theory of practice" (explicitly theory derived from the social sciences), and "practice theory" (implicitly in what social workers do and how they make sense of their experience) (Evans 1976).

In addition to drawing attention to the empirical problem of "knowing" about practice theory, Evans made a distinction between paradigms and theories, in that paradigms indicate the social location of a science and theories constitute its content and consist of sets of concepts related in such a way as to explain particular natural or social phenomena. He said, "the important point about this relationship is that the assumptions underlying particular theories may be crucially affected by the nature of the paradigm within which the theory is developed". An additional problem for social science, as Leonard indicated, is that "rival paradigms continue to occupy the social science stage" (Leonard 1975).

Evans' allusions to theories as social constructs is supported by Donnison in his discussion of knowledge as power (Donnison 1978). Referring to a body of knowledge as providing one with a potentially infinite number of different ways of seeing the world he pointed out that knowledge firstly confers power on those who possess it; secondly, it presents their perception of the world, suppressing other perceptions; and it is a response to those problems which a society's ruling classes regard as being worth solving. He quoted Kahn's concept of "shared paradigms", by which problems are chosen
and defined to be solvable by the methods in which the profession has been trained. One of the claims of the integrated theoretical position put forward by systems theorists such as Pincus and Minahan is that a range of theoretical possibilities are made available to the practitioner thus minimising the danger of one gaining dominance. But the question which I have already asked arises again, put concisely by Evans - "are our traditional approaches to casework, groupwork and community work compatible with the model?" He suggested that not all social work or social science theoretical positions are compatible with the central assumptions of the integrated model. Indeed, some of them are not compatible with each other, and as Rein has argued, "social science cannot offer a sufficient understanding of the individual person in relation to his life situations. As a result we are impelled to make a choice between personality and social structure although what we require is not a choice but an integrated theory". (Rein 1970). Evans advanced this thought by adding that it is not possible to have an integrated model without an integrated theory.

Although the debate has continued for some time few empirical investigations have taken place to attempt to determine the nature of the knowledge that is used in social work. Karpf in 1931 carried out such a study and concluded that "there is little evidence that the caseworker used any other than the commonsense concepts and judgements relating to the attitudes, emotional states, personality and personality traits of the client ... and a host of other types of important problems and situations". (Karpf 1931).

More recently Carew undertook an exploratory study with a primary concern to find out whether social workers were using theoretical knowledge and research findings as a basis for practice. He reported that few of the responses of social workers reflected the use of theory and research findings,
"... most of the practitioners had a "set" as far as their activities with clients are concerned. They had techniques and procedures that could be used to meet most of the demands made by clients. Simply put, they would get their clients to state their problems, discuss their feelings about them, reflect on the causes and on how the problem could be overcome, and verbalise their reflections. If the problem could not be overcome in this way, the client would be encouraged to ventilate and reflect further. The important concepts that guide this activity are related to relationship, reflection and ventilation. (Carew 1979).

Carew concluded that the primary base for his respondents' activities was either their own experience or advice from their more experienced colleagues,

"... tried and trusted procedures that are passed on from practitioner to practitioner and are reinforced by the agency through the provision of opportunities for supervision, case conferences, and so on".

These practitioners themselves inferred that they internalized certain parts of theories which they had found useful, and Carew suggested that "some of the responses can be traced to a theoretical base irrespective of whether the workers were conscious of such a base or not". It could be enjoined of course that all opinions whether of professionals or others are traceable to a theoretical base. The assumption in the professions is that theories are employed consciously to direct practice. Sheldon, in an article examining this tenuous relationship between theory and practice challenged the "insistence" that those are complementary aspects of the same thing, and suggested that such claims are a "verbal rather than a real tradition in social work" (Sheldon 1978). He argued that there are two sub-cultures within social work, the "theoretical sub-culture" in universities and colleges, and a much larger "practice sub-culture", and that in addition to their institutional separation, the norms, values and established procedures of these two groups differ considerably. Carew complained that

"theories pile up upon theories in the literature, often unrelated to one another, in fact often contradicting one
another, seldom tested and modified in the field".

He concluded that there is something questionable about the whole exercise of theory building in social work, and that it seems to be an exclusively academic exercise.

But Carew also raised the question as to whether it is necessarily a negative if social workers base their activities on "practice wisdom" rather than theory, and suggested that theoretical knowledge is not a necessary trait for its survival whereas practice wisdom is. However where theoretical knowledge is important is in any claim of social work to professional status on the grounds of possessing a knowledge base. As Evans has pointed out, to "know" about practice wisdom presents an empirical problem. One can "know" about formal theories simply because they are codified and written down, and it is therefore possible to be more certain of issues in that area than in the area of practice wisdom, which has not been regularised and codified.

The majority of influential writers in social work have valued the acquisition by the profession of theoretical knowledge, thus the condemnation of for example Brewer and Lait who saw social work as an advisory service and as providing only measurable material assistance (Brewer & Lait 1980). Their somewhat polemic stance was described as "crude empiricism" by Robert Pinker, Professor of Social Work at London School of Economics, in his inaugural lecture.

What is perhaps implied but not made explicit by the various writers I have referred to, is the status and value placed on different kinds of knowledge, and the relative weight given to knowledge developed in other disciplines and to that gathered through direct experience. There is in the social work literature a sense of dissatisfaction with the application of theory from other professions especially medicine upon which most dependence has been placed for a knowledge base for social work, yet knowledge which it might be claimed is peculiar to or generated by the practice
of social work itself is downgraded and devalued and dubbed as "commonsense concepts and judgements", in the words of Karpf. Carew, in describing Karpf's findings, described them as "disappointing".

One of the claims of social work to professionalism is on the ground of its possession of a "body of knowledge" yet there is ambivalence in the recognition that the bulk of the knowledge base is "not its own", and perhaps therefore not ultimately applicable, while at the same time a lack of confidence in the validity (both for activities with clients and as a legitimate tool in the claim to professional status) of "practice wisdom". This central dilemma in discussions of knowledge in social work must contribute to the gap between theory and those activities which social workers apply themselves to in their day-to-day practice.

Skills in Social Work

There is a tendency in the literature to assume that social work skills are readily definable, and that once "acquired", they become a "fixed" property of the individual social worker. Boehm declared that "in social work, technical features, skills and techniques are relatively identified..." (Boehm 1965). This statement needs closer examination and I shall devote this section to looking at the treatment given to the concept of professional skills both by practitioners and by theoreticians.

The Barclay Committee, an enquiry set up by the National Institute for Social Work to look into the role and tasks of social workers, received evidence from a variety of individuals and organisations who purport to speak on behalf of the social work profession. A perusal of some of the submissions points to confusions and assumptions in their notions of "social work skills".
The Association of Directors of Social Services (ADSS) saw the social worker as a professional counsellor "who by dint of training has the skill to apply an enhanced understanding of a client's problems ..." In their view "casework" is still the core of the social work task - "we deplore the denigrating of the casework core of training as we believe it is still essential to one of the main skills of social workers, the skill of counselling" (ADSS 1978). It is their identification of "counselling" as a "skill" with which I take issue. The ADSS do not say what they mean by the term, but I would contend that however it is defined, "counselling" may be a method or an activity of social workers which requires skill, but cannot in itself be defined as a "skill". My argument is not that skill in social work does not exist, but that the concept is problematic in any theoretical treatment given to it. The ADSS's lack of delineation between "skills" and "activities" is further demonstrated in the following quotations from their report, "skills which should be taught include counselling first and foremost, crisis intervention, recognising feelings and how to handle them, assessment, analysis, judgement and decision making", and again "from their knowledge and training they must be able to exercise the personal skills of interpretation, advocacy, mediation, conciliation, communication and persuasion in a positive, controlled and sensitive relationship with the client". What we have listed here is an amalgam of different kinds of ideas, the grouping and labelling of which as "skills" leads to conceptual confusion and inconsistency in definition.

The British Association of Social Workers' (BASW) submission to Barclay (BASW 1981), unlike the ADSS did not commit itself to the same extent to attempting to identify skills, choosing rather to assume them. However, in its discussion of volunteers in social work BASW stepped into the same net - "... the organisation of volunteers can be a separate,
associated skill, rather than one that is integral to social work ..." Here again an "activity" is presented as a "skill". Elsewhere, BASW's report established social work as an autonomous profession whose practitioners possess "a particular combination of attributes which includes the ability to call on a range of social work skills". In discussing the establishment of a General Social Work Council, BASW called for "a clearer definition of society's expectations of social work, and ... much greater public understanding of the skills ..." Yet elsewhere, the document admitted that "... in much of the work (social workers) do the state of knowledge is imperfect and not all practice skills sufficiently developed to accomplish what is desired ..." The complaint is made that the social worker may be seen as a gateway to practical services rather than as one with a skilled contribution to make, with the implication here that knowledge of and access to "practical services" does not require skill, but with no attempt to define what is meant by the term "skilled contribution". The report maintained that "direct practice skills should have much greater parity of status with managerial and administrative skills" and that training for a Certification of Qualification in Social Work (CQSW) is the most suitable form of training to acquire "the full range of social work skills". The evidence distinguished tasks which should be carried out by qualified social workers, and in categorising activities, saw a distinction particularly between "assessment" and "action", with assessment activities seen as having precedence over action. It seems significant that in a document spanning 74 pages and concerned primarily with the role and tasks of social workers, and with strenuous efforts to define that role and those tasks, no attempt except by implication, was made to identify the skills required. Statements which were made regarding skills revealed a fundamental ambivalence in on the one hand categorical statements that there is a range of distinctly professional social work skills, and on the other hand admissions as to their being "insufficiently
developed", and generally a reluctance to identify them.

The evidence to Barclay of a working party of the Joint University Council (JUC), Social Work Education Committee (JUC undated) presents similar confusions and ambiguities. In the first place the JUC suggested that "most of the tasks performed by social workers could, in isolation be performed by individual citizens; and if each one were taken separately or regarded as static, requiring only the repetitious use of uniform skills, then it would be difficult to argue that the social worker has any claim to special competence; but in terms of a sequence of acts in relation to similar problems, or a pattern of acts forming an integrated response to a problem, only a professional is likely to have the opportunity to develop appropriate knowledge, experience and skills". This is a rather convoluted statement which is not easy to disentangle.

The Committee, by allowing that individual citizens could perform "most of the tasks performed by social workers" effectively weakened their subsequent arguments for professional skills. The lack of definition of "repetitious use of uniform skills" and the failure to distinguish adequately between that phrase and "a sequence of acts in relation to similar problems" (it could be claimed that these carry the same meaning) results in an unfortunate introduction to the topic. That the JUC are uncertain as to the role and skills of social workers is confirmed by their call for a radical analysis of the relationship between professional tasks and organisational requirements, which would "... aid in the urgent task of helping social workers to clarify their specific contribution, while appreciating and supporting the work that can be done by a wide range of non-professionals". Yet, despite these difficulties, the paper claimed "this evidence is quite clear that the complexity and responsibility of the task laid on social workers requires the independent judgement of the trained professional".
The JUC did attempt to delineate basic skills for social workers under the headings of Assessment skills, Interventive skills and Evaluative skills. But again there is confusion, since a further list purported to outline the functions of social workers which in fact contained many of the same notions set out under "skills", but rephrased. Both lists contain an amalgamation of disparate ideas similar to those I have pointed out in other submissions to Barclay. Below are examples of the contents of the two lists, designated by the JUC as "Skills" and "Functions".

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skills</th>
<th>Functions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To identify and specify problems experienced by children, adults, families and social and community groups ...</td>
<td>The assessment of need for domiciliary, day or residential care, or for financial, legal, housing or health services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To seek out and recognise the conditions that are contributing to these problems.</td>
<td>Protective intervention in cases of child abuse.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To plan an appropriate programme of intervention.</td>
<td>Provision of advice and information. Introducing individuals and families to sources of voluntary help. Promoting self-help groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To mobilise the client's own resources and those available in the community and in formal organisations.</td>
<td>Counselling in individual and family problems arising from traumata, conflict, separation and loss. Supporting individuals and families under stress.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To engage in direct service through casework, groupwork, community work or residential social work.</td>
<td>Contributing to case conferences and multi-disciplinary teams.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To collaborate with colleagues.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A glance at the above lists illustrates the difficulties which have arisen in social work, among its educators as well as its
practitioners, as a result of failure to differentiate between skills and activities or functions.

The Barclay Committee itself reported in 1982, its main recommendation being a move towards what it called "community social work" (I shall discuss the implications of this more thoroughly in the Conclusion). Introducing their report, (para 18) the Committee argued that what social workers do is of vital importance in our society, "it is here to stay, and social workers are needed as never before ..." (Barclay 1982). Embodied in the report was an assumption that the power and authority which social workers have in relation to their clients generated not from the organisation for which they worked (indeed the organisational aspects were ignored) but from the knowledge and skills they had acquired as trained professionals. The language used by Barclay emphasised clients' powerlessness and vulnerability in relation to social workers, yet the treatment of knowledge and skills left much to be desired. Discussion of clients' rights for example, were hedged around with qualifications which left social workers in a position of ultimate power and projected a negative image of clients. On "confidentiality" Barclay acknowledged professional discretion and added "some clients will for one reason or another not be able themselves to appreciate the implications of a decision one way or the other" (para 10.8), (the suggestion is that all social workers will). On "self-determination", there was a proviso that "(the client's) choice may need to be over-ridden for his own protection, or he may be incapable of making such a choice ..." (para 10.9). Throughout the discussion reference to clients was associated with comments such as "... their views should, whenever they are able to give them, be ascertained ...", and "clients will need to be a party, where they are able, to plans that are made for them ..." (para 10.10). As a result a child-like image of clients emerges, with professionals "making plans for them".
What then of the professional knowledge and skills which were possessed by social workers to afford them such authority? Barclay suggested (para 10.23) that three sorts of skills were required; skills in human relationships; skills in analysis (assessing people, analysing situations and evaluating the effects of action taken); and skills in effectiveness (carrying out action planned).

The first of these skills, those in human relationships which Barclay saw as including an "ability to listen, an ability to respect the other person on his or her own terms, an ability to stand firm where issues of personal integrity are concerned" (para 10.24), were in the main included earlier in the report in a discussion of social work values. Further, Barclay had declared that there was nothing unique to social work in such values, that they were shared by workers in other fields and "by most of us in our private dealings" (para 10.2). In other words the skills in human relationships outlined by Barclay could not be claimed as distinctly professional attributes. The second skill, of analysis, was said to refer to the "gathering of information, interpreting its significance, weighing the pros and cons of alternative courses of action, selecting one of those courses and recording its progress and processes, estimating its effectiveness and modifying the plan or programme in accordance with that estimate" (para 10.24). It is assumed here that the social worker has available to her/him a kind of recipe or formula which may be tried and its ingredients varied. Indeed Barclay implied this "laboratory mentality" elsewhere when it was suggested social workers have "understanding of the way people's minds work". At the same time however, Barclay seemed to undermine what was claimed confidently to be "skill in analysis" by this statement, "(social workers need) ... understanding that all such knowledge rests on evidence that can be differently interpreted from different perspectives, that moral and philosophical or political assumptions underlie all formulations of theory"
however 'objectively' they are presented, and that social workers have both to make choices among courses of action and learn to accept that no one course of action can be guaranteed as infallibly right" (para 10.29). In the light of this then, on what grounds can social workers claim that a "skill in analysis" should carry any greater authority or respect than the judgement of others, her/his client for example?

The third skill, in effectiveness includes "collaboration with social services colleagues, administrators and managers, negotiation with employees of other occupations and organisations for services and resources, advocacy on behalf of clients with a range of public services agencies, crisis and risk management, supporting volunteers or members of the family, or of a community, in direct contact with clients and putting clients in touch with helping networks ..." (para 10.24). The problem raised by this list, and it emerges too in examination of "skills in analysis", is that all the items categorised may be described as activities, but cannot in themselves be defined as "skills". We struck a similar difficulty in considering the evidence to Barclay of the ADSS, BASW and the JUC. Now Barclay by surrounding the notion of professional knowledge and skills with assumptions and unclarity, perpetuates the largely unacknowledged conceptual confusion which exists. The Committee's treatment of the concept of knowledge and skills, however, allowed them to continue their deliberations by referring to it in a "taken-for-granted" manner. Their recommendation for a community approach to social work also called for a "new balance between the skills we have considered ..." One can see how ambiguities and uncertainties are carried into practice, and it is not surprising that practitioners themselves have not dealt adequately with the concept of professional skills.

Stevenson and Parsloe in their study of social service teams, commented (para 5.256) "Interestingly, although our social workers accepted that a considerable amount of indirect work
work on behalf of clients (advocating and negotiating with other resource giving agencies and professionals, participating in case conferences and court proceedings etc), was a central and essential part of their role, surprisingly few referred to the skills required. There seemed to be an assumption that one relied on 'common sense'" (Stevenson & Parsloe 1978). I would take this comment further and say that throughout their study, whatever the form of intervention, few social workers referred directly to the skills required, though they did discuss styles and methods of working.

The respondents in this study emphasised the centrality of "casework" in their job, but a wide range of meanings was ascribed to the concept. Generally however, the authors defined the casework approach as "one which not only recognised multiple causation of problems, but in turn, drew from a number of specific techniques of intervention and cast the social worker in a number of different roles" (para 5.115). This diffuse definition is matched by a similar vagueness in referring to casework "skills". A social worker was quoted as saying "...you need welfare rights and practical skills but also need to use casework skills ... Of course I would consider family dynamics ... use other casework skills where you try and talk through a person's problem without being too heavily intense" (para 5.129). There seemed to be an assumption among social workers as to the nature of casework skills, as they reported for example that the elderly needed less skilled casework help than children in care. Yet many of what the study defined as the more experienced workers said they worked mainly on an intuitive level - "I often feel I'm acting far more from instinct than from knowledge really, or skills ... when I read the book I'm often relieved to find that I've done the right thing" (para 5.262). One conclusion of Stevenson et al was that only a few of the possible methods of intervention were mentioned by the social workers, and their (the social workers') descriptions of these often bore little resemblance to the methods as outlined
in the textbooks. This kind of observation makes it more difficult for social workers to claim the possession of distinctive professional skills, yet such a claim continues to be made. Social work staff in Cambridgeshire for example, in their contribution to Stevenson's study, wrote, "the history of social work training is littered with attempts to set up a body of para-professionals to undertake tasks which did not require the full range of social work skills".

Goldberg and Fruin confirmed "the reluctance of social workers to involve other, possibly less trained colleagues, volunteers or other community resources in situations which appear to be fairly stabilised and not to require the special skills of a trained social worker" (Goldberg & Fruin 1976).

Stevenson and her co-authors themselves appear to share the assumptions and confusions regarding social work skills. In a whole section of their report on volunteers and social workers there was never at any time any acknowledgement that volunteers might possess "skills". Rather the language used in this chapter indicates a shift in the frame of reference from professional norms to "the use" of lay-workers as a resource. Volunteers were seen as providing a service within the context of a "friendly relationship", or used to combat loneliness and isolation experienced by elderly people. For instance it was reported that volunteers trained a mentally handicapped woman in daily living skills (para 11.18), and that volunteers were used in a team's reception area to meet clients coming into the office (para 11.19). There was no mention, unlike those sections of the report devoted to social workers, of relationship skills or communication skills or interviewing skills, all of which it could be argued, are required in the activities described above.

One final comment on Stevenson's study, which illustrates its having fallen into the trap of confusing terms; in a discussion of "in depth work" reference was made to this as "an approach" and as a "method of work". However, Stevenson went on immediately to suggest that some social workers "found that they could only use this skill in
This lengthy treatise on the concept of social work skills is I believe more than a splitting of hairs or a quibbling about semantics. The widespread tendency in social work to view skills as a professional property calls for an identification of and definition of those skills which are specifically "professional". The failure to do this adequately has implications for how social workers go about their job, and, particularly relevant in the content of this thesis, how they relate to "non-professional" workers.

Before I end this section on social work skills, I propose to support my contention further by looking at an author whose work is intended to teach practice skills to social workers, and to examine his treatment of the notion of professional skills. I shall deal with Goldstein's "Social Work Practice: A Unitary Approach" (Goldstein 1973), because it portrays one of the currently dominant theoretic approaches in social work.

Goldstein attempted to cut across the traditional methods of social work, those of casework, group work and community development, and set out to identify common factors in a unitary model of social work practice.

The conceptual framework is organised within 3 major models, a social systems model which depicts the structure of practice and "helps to locate and identify the salient problem or task and the key social units relevant to it", a social learning or problem-solving model which illustrates the logical and episodic nature of learning and change in social work processes, and a process model which he claimed captures the sequence and components of practice through the consideration of the variables of strategy, phase and target in interaction. However in his attempts to outline a conceptual base for social work practice, although Goldstein purported to give the profession "visibility" (ie: delineate
professional actions that are discernible and denotable), the outcome of his efforts presents problems on analysis. At the outset, the reader is told that it is the personal characteristics of social workers which distinguish their profession from other professions.

"... the biological and physical sciences or engineering might rely less on the personal characteristics of the members of their professions than would education, social work and the allied helping professions. In these latter instances, and in social work in particular, knowledge, values and techniques are lodged in the person. Their expression in professional performance is mediated by the personality and characteristics of the individual, who, in concert with like others combine to form the body, the articulation and the identity of the profession" (pages 3-4).

There are several points here which must be challenged. The first is what is almost a denial of the importance of the human element in professions which are related to the physical sciences. If knowledge, values and techniques are not found "in the person" in such professions, where are they to be found? If their expression is not mediated by the personality and characteristics of the individual how else can it be mediated? The assumption seems to be that individual knowledge, values and techniques are less important in the physical sciences than in the social sciences, and that even within "education ... and the allied helping professions" such characteristics are of less importance than in social work. A glance at Pizzorno (Pizzorno 1971) or Bucher and Strauss (Bucher & Strauss 1960) leaves one in no doubt as to the place of knowledge, techniques and particularly values in the field of the physical sciences, or to the ways in which both factions and individuals compete to implement different "missions".

Further, one must also comment on Goldstein's use of the expression that in social work "knowledge, values and techniques are lodged in the person". The employment of
the word "lodged" implies such characteristics are "fixed", the exclusive possession of individuals in the profession, a notion which implies esoteric knowledge, distinct values and specific techniques. As we shall see, the author has difficulty supporting this stand.

Goldstein, by emphasising the personal characteristics of social workers projected such characteristics as the distinctive aspect of the social work profession, and prepared the reader for his attempts at professionalisation of such characteristics in later chapters by stating that social work "is made visible by categorical professional actions" (page 5). So, to recapitulate, Goldstein made the dubious claim that the personality of the individual is more important in social work than in other professions (including other "helping" professions), insisted that in social work there are actions which are "categorically professional" and that these are "lodged" in the person of the social worker.

In the introduction to his definition of the characteristics of the social worker in chapter 3, Goldstein reviewed several empirical studies relative to the attributes of the practitioner. He quoted Reid (Reid 1967) and Schmidt (Schmidt 1969) for example, both of whom found that such categorical factors as diagnostic classification in the work of caseworkers were less important than the "style" of the worker. Mullen's work was also drawn on, with his conclusion that "the social worker is seen more as a person exerting personal influence than as an expert applying techniques, a particular instance of a human relationship" (Mullen 1969). Also referred to is the work of Strupp, Fox and Lessler (Strupp et al 1969) who found a direct correlation between "success" in therapy and the patient's rating of the therapist as "warm, attentive, interested and helpful". In his evaluation of these studies, Goldstein made the point that in much of the research the presence of technical ability was accepted as a given, and that in some circumstances the
studies set out to find how these skills were used selectively. He warned that the findings may be too easily interpreted as evidence that technical prowess and skill are not essential, and concluded that what they point to is the "concept of style - the composite of characteristics, both personal AND technical, in responsive interaction which finds expression in the manner of practice that is generally typical of the social workers' behaviour" (page 59).

Having touched on a crucial point regarding the dangers of assuming technical ability and skill, Goldstein himself attempted to delineate "these personal/professional forces which affect the change experience" (page 60), and in doing so demonstrated the problems inherent in discovering uniquely "professional" attributes. Goldstein's analysis considered three major variables; those of (i) the observing self; (ii) sentient characteristics; (iii) role characteristics (see chapter 3, pages 59-104).

In considering the observing self, which he defined as "those components of personality which impinge directly on the dynamics of practice", Goldstein listed "constitut
tional" factors such as intelligence, levels of energy and "the neurological structure", (ie: intellectual and physical predispositions); he considered "life experiences", "educational experience", and one's "personal philosophy". Sentient characteristics were considered as two orders - the responsive (sensitivity, empathy and intuition), and the interpersonal (the capacity for acceptance and commitment).

After a long discussion of these two of the three major variables, Goldstein continued

"the significance attached to the facets of the professional image presented thus far could well leave the reader with at least vague feelings of ambiguity. The attributes of self and sentience are (i) not peculiarly professional attributes, and (ii) do not denote professional intent, purpose
or objectives ..."

He suggested that in the end, these are contained within the third of the variables, the "professional role". This is defined as

"those recurrent behaviours, normative obligations and responsibilities which delineate status and position and determine the behaviours that are directed toward and responsive to a particular social situation" (page 75).

It is here that Goldstein's arbitrary distinction of "self, sentience and role characteristics" falls into difficulties as it becomes clear that his argument leads to the conclusion that the powers of action and decision placed upon the social worker by the organisation for which she/he works, is the only characteristic which distinguishes her/him from the layperson. Goldstein, like those studies he quoted elsewhere, was forced into the same trap of claiming a special competence for social workers which he had failed to confirm. "... he has been specifically delegated the authority to make certain determinations about (the client). In addition, his education and experience give him a special competence to make evaluations and to intervene in the situation he is confronting" (page 78). Despite this claim, it is the organisational role of power and authority in relation to clients which Goldstein identified as the distinctive feature, and which ensures for the worker the consent of others to the imposition of her/his values and norms. Yet throughout, Goldstein assumed technical skills. Here he discusses professional norms - "Norms bear on the social worker's professional acumen which supports his technical ability. He is not merely a bearer of technical devices; based on the assimilation of knowledge and experience, his technology is rooted in his perceptions and beliefs" (page 81).

An attempt is made to distinguish between power and authority. Goldstein appeared to reject MacIver's definition of power and authority as similar phenomena except for the matter of consent (MacIver 1947). He outlined two cases which a social worker might encounter and concluded, "in the first case the social worker carries delegated power - the right and ability to bring about change through forms of direct control. In the
second, the social worker carries delegated authority - the right and ability to bring about change by the employment of special skills, competences and resources" (page 87).

Goldstein claimed to have enlarged on the concept of the social worker in terms of her/his personal characteristics in combination with her/his technical expertise. What his discussion did demonstrate is (i) the problematic nature of the concept of "technical expertise" or "skill", and (ii) the greater significance in the client's believing that the social worker possesses the competence, the commodities or the services that the client needs, than the social worker's actually possessing them.

Given this ambiguity surrounding the notion of professionalism in social work, compounded by political and economic uncertainties, it is not surprising that the introduction of the concept of voluntary involvement in social work by lay-members of the community, presents difficulties. The next section deals with the literature's treatment of the voluntary contribution, and of the interplay between notions of professionalism and voluntarism in social work.

Voluntarism in Social Work

In Britain the tradition of voluntary action stretches back over two centuries. The Wolfenden Report (Wolfenden 1978) looking at the future of voluntary organisations, identified four main phases in the development of social provision:-

(i) "the last phase of paternalism" (up until 1834)
(ii) "the era of state deterrence and voluntary expansion" (1834 - 1905)
(iii) The emergence of statutory social services (1905 - 1945)
(iv) The consolidation of the Welfare State (1905 onwards).
The years after the second war saw an expansionist phase in British social policy during which there developed a confidence in the feasibility of meeting social need through statutory social services. Voluntary work and volunteers fell into disrepute during this period, but in the 1960s and 1970s there was a resurgence of interest in voluntary activity both of voluntary organisations and of individual volunteers. Since the focus of this thesis is individual volunteers, discussion is restricted to relevant literature. (The Wolfenden Report gives the most up-to-date history and discussion of the place of voluntary organisations.)

The Aves Report (Aves 1969) which will be discussed in more detail in a later chapter, was perhaps the most significant development for the future of volunteers. The Committee was set up to consider the role of the voluntary worker in the social services, and reported in 1969. As a direct result of its recommendations, the Volunteer Centre came into being in 1973 to promote current developments in volunteering and to foster the development of new opportunities for individual volunteers, voluntary agencies and community groups. Since then the number of British publications has gained momentum, issuing both from the Volunteer Centre and from other sources.

The American Experience: However, the Americans had recognised the importance of describing and researching voluntary work as far back as 1957 with the publication of David Sills' classic "The Volunteers" (Sills 1957) which examined the characteristics of volunteers and their relationship to a national voluntary organisation. Since Sills, the US has produced evidence of having used volunteers in imaginative ways, and in spheres where the British have been conservative and reticent, particularly mental health and in correctional programmes for those in trouble with the law. Marie Aubuchon described the role of volunteers in a psychiatric unit, emphasising their being members of teams
each of which included a psychiatrist, a psychologist, a social worker, a therapist and a psychiatric aide (Aubuchon 1962).

Greenblatt and Kantor outlined a remarkable project based on a Boston hospital in which student volunteers organised activities for patients. The authors attempted to obtain a picture of the extent to which college students across the nation were being used as volunteers in mental hospitals. Of a sample of 139 colleges contacted by questionnaire, 87 replied that they had such ongoing volunteer programmes (Greenblatt & Kantor 1962).

Beck, Kantor and Gelineau followed up chronic psychotic patients "treated" by college case-aid volunteers, and claimed success for the programme in that 31% of the patients were able to leave a chronic service after prolonged contact with the students (Beck, Kantor & Gelineau 1963).

Lee reported the Los Angeles County Association for Mental Health's institution of its "court relative volunteer program", where volunteers were located at court to give service to relatives of patients coming to the State Hospital (Lee 1962).

In New York's South Bronx three neighbourhood service centres were manned by volunteers and designed "to detect pathology as it is expressed in the concrete problems of living, related often to welfare, housing, employment but also to more personal emotional life stress" (Reissman & Hallowitz 1967).

The elderly too have been a target for volunteer support and increasing emphasis has been placed on their potential as volunteers themselves. Foley's "Stand Close to the Door" (Foley 1976), Peckham and Peckham's "Thank you for Shaking my Hand" (Peckham & Peckham 1977) and "Releasing the Potential of the Older Volunteer" published by the Andrus Gerontology
Center (Andrus 1978) described both programmes to help the elderly and the ways in which older people have contributed as volunteers themselves.

Volunteer involvement in the treatment and prevention of child abuse and neglect was described by Chapin-Weinberg in "Children are for Loving" (Chapin-Weinberg 1978) and some of the programmes she outlined are staffed entirely by volunteers.

The Americans have placed great importance on the careful selection and training of volunteers in these settings. Scheir and Jorgensen published a book on training volunteers (Scheir & Jorgensen 1973) and in 1980 Scheir's "Exploring Volunteer Space" identified some 20,000 different ways to involve volunteers (Scheir 1980).

One of the best known writers in this field is Harriet Naylor, concerned mainly with the practicalities of "how to do it" in terms of finding, training and working with volunteers (Naylor 1973 and Naylor 1977). Other authors such as Haines (Haines 1977), Pell (Pell 1972) and Stenzel and Feeeney (Stenzel & Feeeney 1976) have followed her in this pursuit.

Also on the increase in the US is the number of handbooks designed as guides for volunteers themselves. Two of these, by Foley, and Peckham and Peckham have already been referred to, and others, such as "Breaking into Prison" by Buckley (Buckley 1974) and Kennedy's "On Becoming a Counsellor" (Kennedy 1977), illustrate some of the expectations held of volunteers.

Despite a proliferation of literature on the subject of volunteers, few authors tackled in any depth issues concerning relationships with professional staff or those relating to the political aspects of voluntarism or the theory of voluntarism. Scheir's "Winning with Staff" (Scheir 1978)
acknowledged the lack of support for volunteers and outlined practical steps to overcome this. Feinstein and Cavanaugh's "The New Volunteerism" (Feinstein & Cavanaugh 1978) is aimed at inspiring professionals to work with volunteers, and is an evaluation of a volunteer programme which the authors created and directed at a state mental hospital. "By the People: a history of Americans as volunteers", by Ellis and Noyes concerned itself less with the relationships between professionals and volunteers as with the professionalisation of voluntarism. They made the point that the process of volunteer jobs developing into paid jobs should be one of the volunteer movement's greatest sources of pride. "Today's volunteering will shape tomorrow" (Ellis & Noyes 1978). Although the authors did identify three important perspectives, those of unionism, professionalism and feminism, their concern with upholding the value of voluntarism as one of America's greatest traditions served perhaps to curtail objectivity in discussing these other issues.

Schindler-Rainman and Lippitt, in "The Volunteer Community" (Schindler-Rainman & Lippitt 1971) promised to take up some of the political concerns and introduced their book with a chapter on democracy and voluntarism. They outlined their criteria of democracy and underlined one of the main provisions of a democratic social system, that of the conditions for a "personally satisfying, self-actualising, growth opportunity for each individual", and they listed seven attributes of the "fully democratic individual". However they failed to relate their criteria to contemporary American society or to make any critical examination of the state of their country's democracy, making what appeared to be a leap of faith to end the chapter by asserting "the trends today are towards the true voluntarism of a democracy, where giving and receiving are reciprocal, where humility arises from genuine caring and respect, rather than concern for the future of one's soul". Leaving this subject, the rest of
the book was concerned with the practical issues of mobilising volunteer programmes, and what might have been a useful theoretical contribution to the concept of voluntarism remained unrealised.

Volunteers in Britain

In Britain, as in America, the services concerned with offenders were among the first in this field. The probation service pioneered the use of volunteers, and in London in 1966 "Teamwork Associates" was launched as a pilot project for a three year period to explore ways of involving the ordinary citizen in aftercare. The Maxwell Report of 1953 (Maxwell 1953) had encouraged efforts to include volunteers, and by 1962 Lacey estimated that there were around 450 voluntary associates in England and Wales (Lacey 1963).

Hugh Barr in his book "Volunteers in Prison After-Care" (Barr 1971) concerned himself with what had become known as "teamwork associates", in the probation service. The teamwork associates model is still used widely in the probation service in England and Wales, as indicated by Clarke's national survey of 1975 (Clarke 1975) and a still more recent but undated Volunteer Centre publication (Volunteer Centre undated). An example of a specific experiment with volunteers in probation is Sara Lamb's report on a scheme in South Yorkshire (Lamb 1976).

Barr's book is perhaps the most detailed account available of volunteers linked to the probation service, yet his discussion on the respective roles of probation officers and volunteers leaves much to be desired. To begin with, agreement with his treatment of the subject requires an uncritical acceptance of the concept of professional "skills", as it is assumed that all volunteers start their voluntary work as "unskilled" (ie: that "skills" are the property of all professionals), as
revealed in these statements:— "... it is natural that probation officers should feel apprehensive of having their professional skills stolen ..." (page 152), and "many volunteers will continue to operate in a relatively unskilled way ..." (page 153, emphasis mine). No attempt was made to define the skills referred to though there was an effort made to distinguish the types of referral not suitable for volunteer intervention:—

"... experience so far suggests that it is unwise or unfair to ask a voluntary associate (volunteer) to cope alone with a client who has serious personal problems. Such a client requires professional treatment, usually by the probation officer, though the voluntary associate may be involved as well. A voluntary associate alone cannot offer the casework (or therapy) needed by the psychologically disturbed client. Similarly, the voluntary associate may not be able to cope alone with the inadequate client who is markedly immature, mentally retarded or psychopathic. Again professional skills seems to be appropriate". (page 136).

The questions which arise here as a result of Barr's gross generalisations in describing types of client, and his assumption that the terms used to do this are unproblematic, cannot be more than acknowledged in the context of this critique. What we are concerned with is how Barr was able to reconcile his view of the kinds of person a volunteer may not be appropriate to deal with alone, with his opinion that a suitable role for a volunteer might be as "someone who could compensate for past or current deficiencies in the client's relationships. Thus he might seem to need a mother figure, or a father figure ... in the case of immature young clients, a relationship with a female voluntary associate who was not very much older sometimes seemed to be helpful ..." (page 87). Elsewhere he described a volunteer as "someone who is willing to enter into a personal relationship and offer acceptance. By so doing he may be able to restore in the client a sense of personal worth in contrast to the profound sense of unworthiness which can result from or be reinforced by his conviction and imprisonment." (page 137).
Barr introduced his book by quoting the 1963 report of the Advisory Council on the treatment of Offenders (ACTO), "The Organisation of After-Care", which held that "the main need of many offenders is for simple encouragement, friendship and human understanding", and registered his agreement with this in his listing of the various categories of client whom he thought unsuitable for involvement with volunteers, yet it is quite clear that his expectations of the range of roles volunteers could fulfil, and his description of how volunteers dealt with clients whom he described as "an aggressive alcoholic", "one inadequate recidivist", "an ex-borstal boy ... with marked signs of psychological disturbance" (page 104), would have required a fair range of personal qualities and attributes.

The approach of Barr and others to the subject of social work staff and volunteers relies on a recognition and an acceptance of a qualitative difference in their abilities, which in turn is employed as a criterion for a division of labour. The difficulty in pinning down this qualitative "difference" results in a morass of conceptual confusion.

Since Barr the numbers of descriptive accounts of the work of volunteers has grown. In 1973 Sparks described a voluntary family counsellors project set up by Barnardo's (Sparks 1973) and my own account of a volunteers and one-parent families scheme was published in 1976. In 1977 Davies' monitoring of a scheme in which volunteers befriended educationally sub-normal school-leavers was circulated (Davies 1977). Since 1976 the Volunteer Centre has been producing a series of case studies, "A Case in Point" (Volunteer Centre 1976), describing voluntary work with the house-bound, children at risk, problem drinkers, victims of crime, the physically handicapped, prisoners' wives, travelling families, and in schools and general medical practice, also volunteers as welfare rights experts and as "advocates".

The elderly have been a popular target for volunteer activity,
as shown by the Volunteer Centre's review and discussion document of methods of organisation of voluntary visiting of the elderly (Volunteer Centre 1977). Age Concern, the national organisation concerned with the welfare of the elderly, commissioned an enquiry which was published in 1972, carried out by Shenfield and Allen. Their report was concerned with volunteers attached to voluntary organisations, and did not attempt to discuss the respective roles of social workers and volunteers. Indeed, as with other writers the qualitative difference is taken as "given" - on page 2 we read,

"... organised visiting of old people in their own homes is a good example of social aid which seems very suitable for volunteers. No-one needs a social work training to be friendly to an old lady and perform some small personal service for her ..." (Shenfield & Allen 1972).

This statement also, of course, stereotyped and routinised the needs of the elderly, a topic which will be taken up again in my analysis of the empirical findings of this study. The essential point here is the trivialising treatment given to the notion of volunteering as something that anyone can do, and of any service rendered as "small", while at the same time the assumption that the reasons for and end product of social work training are universally understood. No attempt was made to define either voluntary involvement or that of social work, yet the authors claimed to be evaluating the service offered by volunteers to elderly clients.

Another study which attempted to evaluate the voluntary contribution to the care of the elderly was that of Hadley, Webb and Farrell, "Across the Generations" (Hadley, Webb & Farrell 1975). The subjects were young people and old folk attached to the organisation "Task Force". Here the authors were more self-conscious in their claim that volunteers contribute something "different":-

"the first point to be made in favour of volunteers is simply that they exist - they are an additional resource made
available at little cost. The quality of the service they provide can also be defended in general terms: they have the time, which professional workers often have not, to provide a personalised service; they are frequently autonomous - independent of the social services bureaucracies; and they give help of their own free will not because they are paid to do so. These characteristics, it can be claimed, make it possible for the volunteers to provide a service which is qualitatively different and often more acceptable to clients compared with that offered by paid workers." (pages 9-10).

An interesting point here is that having established those three conditions in which volunteers can offer an effective service, Hadley et al went on to talk about certain other factors, but this time in negative terms, as they acknowledged doubts about the "skills, reliability and deployment" of volunteers. The "skills of the social worker" were listed as self-understanding, knowledge of the range of services; of social and psychological factors related to the problems of their clients; and the capacity to use such knowledge for their client's benefit. "These skills are not acquired by volunteers simply through developing a desire to help" (page 10). (Again we have the conceptual confusion around the use of the notion of "skills"). Indeed the only explicit reason given for the involvement of volunteers was that the statutory services cannot meet the demands made upon them, yet the study set out to measure effectiveness at levels other than quantitative ones which might have included for example the number of clients taken from social workers' case-loads. Interestingly, the researchers tried to assess the success of the relationships between volunteers and the elderly people, though they did state that the crucial question was the "quality of the work done by the volunteers" (page 105). Presumably then they saw the "work done" as the volunteers' ability in making and sustaining relationships with the clients. It is significant that the quality of relationships was taken as the focus, firstly because such a criterion is liable to highly subjective interpretations (any discussion of practical jobs carried out for the old people by the volunteers was incidental). It is significant secondly
because the notion of "relationship" is one which is still highly valued in professional social work (see Timms & Timms 1977), and its use here in the context of voluntary effort illustrates the potential for confusion when it is claimed that volunteers and social workers have different attributes to offer clients, while at the same time the concept of relationship is held to be crucial to both. What is perhaps different are Hadley et al.'s categories of success, which depended on the length of time the relationship continued and whether or not the old person said their need for social contact had been met by the volunteer's visit. Length of involvement and widening of social contact are not normally seen as the most important aspects of the social worker - client relationship.

Timms and Timms listed five activities which social workers should be able to do. These are:—

(i) conduct interviews with individuals or groups who often face and experience loss and change,
(ii) to plan and to help others to plan on a basis of the understanding of situations,
(iii) to offer and support the delivery of a range of personal services including non-directive and directive counselling to individuals and groups, and advocacy,
(iv) to know, use and criticise the policy of the agency,
(v) to record.

They suggested that "much of the skill required can be captured if we think in terms of the social worker as someone who is good at conducting interviews".

The first three of these activities links with Hadley's identification of three different helping situations, those of

(a) support during crisis (a sudden change in circumstances such as death, illness, incapacity, re-housing); (b) support in long-term caring relationships (permanent
incapacitation or physical or mental illness); (c) support provided by a friendly relationship (no particular crisis and no complicating dependence).

(page 191). Hadley went on to ask, can the volunteer be expected to cope effectively with problems of these kinds? How far do the problems call for the skills of the professional social worker?

"It is arguable that the problems posed in the first two situations may require skilled help ... we have seen that in some of the "successful" relationships in the longitudinal study the volunteers proved capable of coping both with crises and the demands of a caring situation. ... To the extent that volunteers could be relied on to make contributions of this quality they could be seen as a genuine alternative to the professional social worker. On the other hand one must ask how many volunteers could achieve this standard?" (page 192).

Hadley's implicit answer to this question is, "Not many could achieve the standard", yet the very suggestion that some volunteers could and do achieve the "standard", is a challenge to the value and purpose of social work training. In a fascinating discussion of why the "successful" volunteers were more skilled at building good relations with others, it was suggested that age and social class were significant factors.

"Skill in interpersonal relations is likely to increase with age and more of the (successful) volunteers were in the older age groups than other volunteers. There is also evidence from studies of the family and class that middle-class life styles encourage the development of social skills to a greater extent than does a working class environment; a majority of the (successful) volunteers came from middle-class homes" (pages 145-146).

It may well be asked that if mature middle-class volunteers can provide a "genuine alternative to the professional social worker" why is prolonged training necessary for social workers?

The main point I am trying to make in examining the study carried out by Hadley et al, is that a research approach which
assumes a qualitative difference between the voluntary contribution and professional "skills" but fails to define either satisfactorily, and then attempts to measure phenomena which are characteristic of both (such as the concept of "relationship") runs into trouble when the embarrassing discovery is made that some volunteers are equally "successful" as some social workers. It is at this point that Hadley et al, for example, were obliged to employ an alternative vocabulary to "explain" the skills of the volunteers and sustain a belief in professional social work.

But what of written material which has focussed directly on the ways in which volunteers and social workers attempt to relate to each other? That the relationship is not an easy one is demonstrated by Savege who compared it to that between husbands and wives, claiming that voluntary workers, like housewives are both unpaid and undervalued, the functions of both roles being vaguely defined except in menial terms (Savege 1974). She suggested that the professional approach is viewed as typified by masculine characteristics - rational, confident, competent doing and planning, while the voluntary approach is viewed as typified by feminine characteristics, implying irrationality, emotionality and optional extras. "What the professionals want is a contract arranged on their own terms, around which the volunteer is supposed to fit like an accommodating wife". Savege did not say how she had come to these conclusions or give reasons for the difficulties.

In 1975, Giles Darvill, of the Volunteer Centre, produced his "Bargain or Barricade?" which was concerned with volunteers and social services departments (Darvill 1975). His work is mainly descriptive and in some places highly speculative. He did not say where he gained his information, but he did attempt to typify seven different attitudes of social services departments to volunteers. Unfortunately he confused voluntary organisations and volunteers in the process.
However, he did outline several projects involving volunteers, and identified some of the problems they reported in their relations with social workers, which included, inappropriate referrals; inadequate support; the exclusion of volunteers from meetings to discuss clients; a complete lack of a casework plan within which the volunteer can work. Social workers' fears about volunteers were listed under headings of "rational" and "irrational", a distinction which might be challenged when one considers the items accorded to each. Examples of "rational" fears centre on questions of confidentiality; unreliability; over- and under-involvement; judgemental attitudes; irresponsible dropping of clients; anti-authority attitudes; use of clients for political purposes; an undervaluing of the professional's own valid contribution. "Irrational" fears, said Darvill, "may derive from selfish but all too human feelings about loss of professional status, criticism of professional methods, etc..." His discussion on the resolution of these problems is based entirely on the assumption that any dialogue would be between the statutory and voluntary sectors, without any reference to volunteers not attached to voluntary organisations.

To date few attempts have been made at a major study on the relationships between social workers and volunteers. Holme and Maizels carried out a research project on behalf of BASW published in 1978. Their enquiry attempted to discover the extent to which social workers used volunteers, the nature of their relationships with them, the types of activity in which they were engaged and the perceptions of social workers themselves regarding the role and contribution of volunteers (Holme & Maizels 1978). A total of 2,121 mailed questionnaires were sent to individual staff in local authorities throughout Britain, and over 700 to probation officers. The study had severe limitations. Of those who responded (the response rate was 60%) around 10.6% were either in managerial or supervisory roles with reduced or absent case-
loads, or were other staff including social work assistants and trainees. A second potential bias is the fact that the response on average was high from social workers in metropolitan districts than from those in other types of local authority administrations, and lowest of all from Scotland (56%). In addition, the activities of volunteers were not described in any detail, and the information was derived from the accounts of social workers, so it was not based on independent observation. Neither the clients' nor the volunteers' points of view were sought. The authors themselves admitted that the data was treated in an essentially quantitative way, and there is no indication of the quality of relationships between social workers and volunteers.

These drawbacks in the methodology lead to a sense of frustration in reading the report. Holme and Maizels concluded that the use of volunteers is on a relatively small scale and follows fairly conventional lines in that the emphasis is on two broad categories of activity, "befriending" and practical forms of help, undertaken mainly for clients who are elderly or physically handicapped. They reported that a majority of social workers favoured the drawing of boundaries between the "respective functions" of the professionals and the volunteers.

According to Holme and Maizels "they define these by distinguishing the tasks for which professional training, qualifications and experience are considered necessary" (page 172). But nowhere did the writers identify either "respective functions" or "tasks". Under a heading "types of case considered unsuitable for volunteers", they listed such items as "casework generally", "psychological/personal difficulties", "families with special problems", "where confidentiality involved" (page 100). There was no definition of these items (which surely cannot be regarded as "tasks") except a few random quotes designed to illustrate them, such as "the disturbed personality
would be too difficult to handle" or the mention by some social workers of the unsuitability of volunteers for people who are dying. There was of course no opportunity to ask respondents for explanations, or to discover what actually happens in practice, and indeed Holme and Maizels appeared to be able to understand what is meant.

"The evidence thus suggests that social workers generally favour the drawing of fairly well-defined boundaries between the respective functions of the professional and volunteer, and that they define these boundaries so as to distinguish those tasks for which professional training and qualifications are required" (page 101)

The notion of "casework" was accepted unquestioningly. "For most social workers, casework marks the boundary between themselves and volunteers" (page 172). Questions do not arise as to what casework is, in what circumstances it is practiced, when it becomes necessary, on whom it is practiced. This last point is interesting in the context of this research which found that social workers have a preference to work with families and children, and that unqualified staff have a propensity to work with the elderly and physically handicapped. These two latter client groups were also seen as most suitable for volunteer help. One might ask whether this means that the practice of "casework" is seen as relating to disparate client groups, and therefore whether the elderly and physically handicapped per se, are regarded as not "casework" material. Also with the elderly and physically handicapped in mind, similar queries arise if we consider the list of "unsuitable" situations for volunteer intervention. The assumption seems to be that these client groups are not likely to experience "psychological or personal difficulties", are not members of "families with special problems", or that "confidentiality" is not an issue for them.

This BASW study may have gone some way towards indicating the extent of use of volunteers by social workers but it cannot be said to have achieved its aim to examine their
relationships with them, and indeed the design of the study and the methodology inevitably precluded any examination of the complexities of practice, severely limiting the findings of the project.

This long review of the literature has been undertaken for four reasons. The first is in an attempt to highlight the difficulties for social work in having taken as its criteria for a claim to professionalism those characteristics which may be relevant to other professions. I have tried to illustrate that this has led to a way of looking at social work which views professional knowledge and skills as objectively determinable attributes, but without acknowledging the problematic nature of such concepts. The complexities of viewing knowledge and skills as the fixed and exclusive property of social workers are apparent particularly if one focusses on the subject of volunteers in social work, and on attempts to identify the "qualitative differences" so often claimed. The literature on volunteers is unsatisfactory in that it starts from a premise which takes these "differences" as given and tends to result in the authors' having to adopt an alternative vocabulary to explain similar properties.

The second reason for reviewing the literature is concerned with its treatment of voluntary involvement as a concept. It will be apparent that where volunteers are promoted and involved in social work, it is in the absence of any theoretical framework. The resultant ambiguity and lack of conceptual clarity has of course been compounded by the confusions in social work which we have been discussing.

The third point to be made having reviewed the literature is to emphasise the unsatisfactory nature of any research treatment of the relationships between social workers and volunteers themselves. I have considered the limitations of a method which relies on mailed questionnaires and fails to take a
dynamic view of the ways in which social workers and volunteers interact. I suggest that what is lacking is information on the meanings ascribed by social workers and volunteers themselves to the concepts of professional knowledge and skills, and voluntarism, and on the ways in which they attempt to operationalise these notions in their work.

Fourthly, our consideration of the literature has not led to any clarification of what indeed professional social work is and how it is accomplished by those engaging in it. We must ask questions about the state in which this lack of definition leaves social work, and gather information as to the practice of it.

The gathering of such information depends on an approach which regards phenomena such as professional knowledge and skills not as "objectively determinable attributes" but as the subjective constructs of individuals, and therefore a legitimate topic for research. An approach which treats such phenomena as problematic will I hope lead to a clearer understanding of the processes by which particular beliefs come to be held. The theoretical assumptions underlying this stance are set out in the chapter on methodology.

In order to examine the processes to which I have referred I shall make use of the notion of ideologies in social work. The next chapter discusses reasons for this and goes on to identify ideologies in those social policy documents relevant to British social work.
CHAPTER 2

IDEOLOGIES IN SOCIAL POLICY DOCUMENTS

The use of the notion of ideology as a research medium in studies in social work is not new. Hardiker, for example, attempted to explore some aspects of social work ideology in the probation service, to discover to what extent probation officers subscribed to "treatment model" assumptions about crime, and if they did whether this had any bearing on their social inquiry practices (Hardiker 1977). Cicourel took a similar approach to the study of probation officers (Cicourel 1968); Smith used the concept of professional ideology to study policy documents relating to the Children's Panel System in Scotland and to examine the ways in which social workers implement policy initiatives (Smith 1977). Again, in their research into Social Work Departments in Scotland, Smith and Harris showed how the notion of "social need", as made use of by social workers, is not a single concept but rather a set of assumptions which they viewed as professional ideologies (Smith & Harris 1972). Indeed Smith saw the study of professional ideologies as an intrinsic part of organisational research in social work agencies (Smith 1973). Beyond social work, Gilbert and Levinson inquired into the ideologies of mental hospital members regarding the nature and cause of mental illness and policies in treatment (Gilbert & Levinson 1956). Strauss et al produced a major study on psychiatrists' and parapsychiatrists' ideologies about the etiology and treatment of mental illness (Strauss 1964). Stoll used the concept of control agents' ideologies in dealing with deviants, to develop a theory of social control structures (Stoll 1968).

The term "ideology" was first used to refer to political
beliefs, and as a result took on pejorative connotations. As late as 1964 authors such as Bendix, for example, were still saying that the word was in such bad repute that writers on the subject are either apologetic using it or prefer to substitute another term like "belief system" (Bendix 1964). Indeed this is exactly what Converse did, rejecting "ideology" as having been "thoroughly muddied by diverse uses", and defining a "belief system" as "a configuration of ideas and attitudes in which the elements are bound together by some form of constraint or functional independence". At the same time Converse declared his intention to use "ideology" interchangeably with "belief system", for "aesthetic" relief (Converse 1964).

But both of these writers used "ideology" in a political context, and it is important to emphasise that its use in social work studies and those in psychiatry has been essentially non-evaluative, and has focussed on its significantly wider meaning. The definition taken by Strauss, and adopted as a working definition by Smith, is "a configuration of relatively abstract ideas and attitudes, used to characterise some perfect state in which the elements are bound together by a relatively high degree of interrelatedness or functional interdependence". However, I have favoured Erickson's definition, which is even more explicit (Erikson 1968, pages 189-190);

"an ideological system is a coherent body of shared images, ideas and ideals, which whether based on a formulated dogma, an implicit "Weltanschauung", a highly structured world image, a political creed, or indeed a scientific creed, or a "way of life", provides for the participant, if systematically simplified, over-all orientation in space and time, in means and ends".

Here Erikson captured important features in the concept of ideology. He confirmed its relatively abstract nature, he affirmed that it may be well formulated or an implicit view of the world, and thirdly, he identified the notion of ideology with its function, which is to link action with
meaning. In sum, his definition encapsulates political, formal and informal ideologies. Apter put this succinctly - "ideology refers to more than doctrine. It links particular actions and mundane practices with a higher set of meanings ..." (Apter 1964). It is here that one derives the clue as to how one may identify an ideology, that is through one's actions and the meanings attributed to these in terms of one's fundamental belief. In Apter's words, "ideology helps to make more explicit the moral basis of action" (pages 16-17).

But Strauss et al have suggested that the term "ideology" be confined to relatively abstract ideas, and proper study of ideologies requires a distinction between these ideas and their operational application to specific tasks in concrete situations. Strauss termed these applications "operational philosophies", defined as "systems of ideas and procedures for implementing therapeutic ideologies under specific institutional conditions". Asquith referred to the "frames of relevance" of those responsible for implementing welfare policies (Asquith 1977).

The emphasis is placed not only on the abstract portrayal of general objectives by, in our context, social work teams or social workers and volunteers, but on the ways in which their ideas of "skill", or "volunteers", or "clients", or whatever, are employed in the practical performance of specific tasks. In other words, we are concerned here with differentiation between formally stated ideologies and empirically derived, or informal ideologies. A further important aspect in the study of ideology is its prospective and retrospective functions, the former as a motivation for action, the latter as a justification for action. Erikson pointed out that "ideologies are simplified conceptions of what is to come, and thus later can serve as rationalisations for what has come about ..." (page 190). Geertz identified two main approaches to the study of ideology, "interest" and "strain" theory, which are compatible with a view of ideology as both
prospective and retrospective (Geertz 1964). In "interest" theory, ideology determines actions and pro-
nouncements, and although Geertz set it within the context of a struggle for power and advantage, it can be applied to, for example, legislative and policy documents, and I shall suggest later that those systems of ideas identified within social policy documents such as the Seebohm and Kilbrandon reports may be viewed as "prospective ideologies" which social workers attempt to operationalise in their day-to-day work. "Strain" theory, on the other hand, sees ideology, in Sutton's words, as "a patterned reaction to the patterned strains of a social role" (Sutton 1956). Geertz too saw strain theory against the background of "a chronic effort to correct socio-psychological disequilibrium", and human beings as "fleeing anxiety". Both Smith and Hardiker noted that in social work there is not one single ideology, but social workers appear to adhere to several primary ideologies which may be in conflict. Further, the allegiance to the chosen ideology has its limits and in situations of strain a competing ideology is invoked. For Smith this phenomenon of "multiple ideologies" appeared as a regular feature of his studies, and not simply as an occasional occurrence which could be dismissed as an idiosyncracy. Smith suggested that this reflected the range of systems of ideas which were contained in policy documents relevant to social work. So we should expect social workers' and volunteers' views about, for example, the place of professional knowledge and skills in social work, or the contribution of volunteers, to reflect a plurality of ideas.

It is in this way, according to Converse, that multiple ideologies may be encountered, because discrete systems of ideas can be brought to bear upon separate topics or issues which are not, subjectively, inter-related. It is argued that only by an examination of the ideologies of the actors involved and of the ways in which those ideologies gain
expression, can one understand the apparent discrepancies between policy and practice, and their implication.

To sum up this section, I have presented the study of ideologies of social workers and volunteers as an important medium to examine relationships between them and the ways in which they go about their work. I have adopted the term "informal ideologies" (derived from Strauss' notion of "operational philosophy") to refer to ideologies spelled out in more concrete form. In addition, the prospective and retrospective functions of ideology, linked to "interest" theory and "strain" theory, have been identified as important facets of the concept, along with the phenomenon of multiple ideologies. All of these have had a central part to play in this study of professional practitioners and voluntary workers.

But before moving on to examine social policy documents relevant to the study, a little more clarification is necessary. Smith, in his use of the notion of ideologies in social work referred to "professional ideologies" in a way which held a danger of implying that the ideologies used by social workers were derived from "professional" rather than "lay" sources, and that social workers use "professional" ideologies exclusively. Asquith has argued however, that rather than being diametrically opposed categories, "professional" and "lay" should be conceived as points on a continuum. Since professionals are also individuals bringing their own values and ways of ordering social reality, and lay people in social work are likely to subscribe to a "professional" or other official ideology of welfare, it is spurious to try to distinguish professionals and lay workers in terms of ideologies characteristic of them as groups (Asquith 1977). In my discussion of ideologies throughout this study I have used the concept of ideologies with Asquith's comments in mind. Where "professional ideology" is used it is intended to convey the idea of an ideology of professional intervention and where the term "lay ideology"
is used it is intended to convey the idea of an ideology of lay intervention in social problems. It is not my intention to suggest for example that professionals employed "professional ideologies" and volunteers employed "lay ideologies" mutually exclusively.

Social Policy Documents

In the above discussion on the concept of ideology I suggested that ideologies may be viewed as both prospective and retrospective. Because they convey intention, the sets of ideas contained in policy documents may be identified as prospective ideologies and in Erikson's words, they are "simplified conceptions of what is to come", intended as a basis for action. But the effective implementation of social welfare policy depends on the attitudes and efforts of social workers and others employed in the social services, particularly (in Scotland) in social work departments, and any study of social work is a study of the ways in which social workers attempt to put into operation those ideas contained in social policy documents. In a helpful paper which discussed some theoretical difficulties encountered in a study of the Scottish Children's Panel Legislation, Smith used the concept of ideologies to identify different sets of ideas within the policy basis of the Panel system (Smith 1977). On examination of those official documents on which the legislation was based, he discovered a good deal of ambiguity and inconsistency, but saw this as reflecting overlapping sets of ideas which were in conflict with each other but which were each internally relatively consistent and clear. He went on to develop a theoretical model which (a) suggested that a sharp distinction between "policy" on the one hand and "implementation" on the other is misleadingly rigid; (b) attempted to project ambiguity
and inconsistency as central features of social policy analysis; and (c) argued that material on the ways in which welfare and other professionals subjectively construe those measures and strive to implement the competing ideologies contained in them, is part and parcel of the analysis of social policy.

Smith has made a major research contribution to the study of the notion of "social need" by focussing on the way professional social workers employ "need" as a resource, and projecting the concept as a topic for research. He pointed to those policy documents which I shall discuss in this chapter in which the notion of need was a central idea.

It was believed by the authors of these policy statements that views of social need which centred on the then existing categories of social work and social need were unrealistic and merely served to perpetuate rigid and artificial distinctions. It was presumed that the promotion of a new organisational structure would promote the adoption and practical application of new and more accurate notions of the nature of need. As Smith observed, there was no specification of any criteria for determining what those "more accurate notions" of need might be. It was left to practitioners to define and operationalise ideologies of need.

Both Smith and Hardiker found within the bodies of policy relevant to their studies, several clearly separate ideologies about the nature of the system in question. They also found that this was reflected in different professionals' attempts to influence the system by their adopting different ideologies for their predominant approach. If, as is argued, it is in the nature of social policy to appear incoherent, inconsistent and ambiguous, we should expect to find these features in those policy statements which relate to volunteer involvement in social work, and to observe them in the work of practitioners. As a beginning then, I shall view the policy statements as consisting of
separate and independent configurations of ideas and attitudes amongst which emerge those concerning professional intervention to meet social need, and those advocating community (specifically volunteer) involvement, concepts which, although exhibiting a high degree of internal consistency, are in conflict with each other. The most important documents in this field are the Seebohm Report (1968), the Kilbrandon Report (1964) and the subsequent White Paper "Social Work and the Community" (HMSO 1966) and the Aves Report (1969). Since our interest in these documents is analytic rather than historical, they are examined here not in order of their chronological appearance but in terms of their significance for the direct involvement of the community with the provision of a service directly to clients. Since the Seebohm Report was more concerned with this aspect of social work than Kilbrandon, it is considered first.

The Seebohm Report (1968)
This document resulted in the reorganisation of the personal social services in England and Wales, and has also been a major influence in Scotland on the administration of the social services there. On a close reading of the report it is possible to identify a number of ideological standpoints, but two have particular relevance to this study, those of (i) the employment of professional skills in the meeting of social need; and (ii) community involvement in the meeting of social need. These notions may be seen to be in conflict at times, though at the same time internally consistent.

(i) Professional Skills
Seebohm placed great value on the employment of professional skills in the meeting of social need and saw social work intervention as essential to what it described as an
"effective family service" (para 1). The report criticised the shortcomings of the present system and saw shortage of trained manpower as one of the main obstacles to development of the services, and it placed paramount, a professional assessment of need: "Initially a person's true need (sometimes a matter for expert diagnosis) may not be clearly recognised; sometimes the person seeking help may be confused or inarticulate and unable to make plain what particular help he requires ..." (para 83). The argument for a unified social services department was supported by "a realisation that it is essential to look beyond the immediate symptoms of social distress to the underlying problems" (para 141), implying not only that someone other than the client is the proper determiner of need, but that a social sickness is present which required "diagnosis" and "treatment" by an expert. The notions of diagnostic, consultative and treatment facilities were developed further in the sections on guidance services, and here it was acknowledged that considerable knowledge and expertise was located in the three main professions involved in this service (medicine, teaching and social work). In its discussion of social work in schools, Seebohm attached "considerable weight" to opportunities for training and promotion for social workers, and held that "the skill and understanding of the social workers concerned are crucial; and there must be enough social workers" (para 226).

With the demands on staff in the new departments which Seebohm anticipated, there was felt to be a need for a "high standard of training for their professional and administrative practice", since each staff "must have the knowledge, attitudes and skill which will enable them to respond appropriately and sensitively to people in need" (para 528). Seebohm placed a huge, perhaps god-like, responsibility on the staff of social services departments, that of developing new ways of meeting individual, family and community needs, a goal supported elsewhere in the report by the assertion
that "the basic aim of a social services department is to meet all the social needs of the family or individual together and as a whole" (para 516). It is not surprising then that importance was placed on training and development of skills for social workers. Having declared that it would be "a great mistake" to concentrate on the training of field social workers and to devalue the work done by other staff - nursery nurses in day nurseries, supervisors in adult training centres, care and domestic staff in residential accommodation, the home helps and their supervisors, and administrative and clerical staff - the report proceeded to do exactly what it identified as a "mistake", that is to emphasise the training needs of field social workers, while devoting little space to developing similar arguments about the needs of other staff. "However, we feel a particular responsibility to consider the training of social workers ..." (para 530). I hope to show through the analysis of the empirical data, ways in which, in the drive to implement policy statements, this implied superiority of social workers has gained precedence over the contribution of other kinds of workers.

Seebohm saw a need for staff trained in the principles and skills "that are common to all forms of social work with individuals and families" (para 531), (though nowhere does it identify either the principles or the skills), and basic professional training was to be followed by "post-basic" courses, with universities in particular devoting resources to the development of the preparation of social workers for work with groups and with the community, and for "advanced work" with family problems (para 545), and certain areas of knowledge and practice such as delinquency and mental health (para 549). The report also envisaged what it termed "post-graduate" training for those who would take on the role of social work "consultants" in social services departments. The further training of those who would become fieldwork teachers of students was regarded as a "high priority".
One of the recommendations of Seebohm was for an advisory council "vitally concerned with the expansion of training ..." (paras 641 - 643). So clearly the committee, in proposing the new social services departments, committed them to greater responsibilities for the "prevention, treatment and relief" of social problems (para 139) and to making available a wider range of services and skills provided by professionally trained social workers who in turn would have opportunities to develop and expand such resources. Seebohm saw these changes and developments as essential to secure an "effective family service".

(ii) Community Involvement

But, in addition to, and in contrast with an ideology which required the application of professional skills to meet social need, Seebohm saw a role for greater involvement of the community as a whole. "The new department will we believe, reach far beyond the discovery and rescue of social casualties; it will enable the greatest possible number of individuals to act reciprocally, giving and receiving service for the well-being of the community" (para 2). Three ways through which an ideology of community involvement could be implemented were set out in the report, those of community development, through voluntary organisations and by the use of individual volunteers.

(a) Community Development: Seebohm saw one role of the social services department as facilitating community development in the sense of working mainly with neighbourhood groups. Such a standpoint, according to the report "emphasises the involvement of the people themselves in determining and meeting their own needs", with a community worker as a source of information and expertise, a stimulator, a catalyst and an encourager (para 480). It was felt that a "sense of community" might need to be provided through for example working with organisations such as community centres, clubs, play centres and tenants'
associations (para 482). A clear responsibility then, was placed on the social services department to develop conditions favourable to community identity and welfare. Seebohm was at pains to point out though, that there was no suggestion that "welfare through community" was an alternative to the statutory social services, but rather maintained that "it is complementary and inextricably interwoven" (para 483).

(b) Voluntary Organisations: Much of the work suggested by Seebohm to be undertaken by community workers was, the report admitted, already being carried out by some voluntary organisations and Seebohm supported the view that one of the important functions of such organisations should be to help the spontaneous development of neighbourhood interests and activities. At the same time, the committee considered that such work should be undertaken (in addition) by the local authority social services department. No reasons were given for this opinion. Further, "voluntary organisations pioneered social service reform in the past, and we see them playing a major role in developing citizen participation in revealing new needs and in exposing shortcomings in the services" (para 495). It was felt that in "certain circumstances" voluntary organisations might act as direct agents of the local authority in providing particular services, and in turn social services departments would give both financial and professional support to those organisations which could demonstrate "good standards of practice, provide opportunities for appropriate training for their workers, both professional and voluntary, and show a flair for innovation". Seebohm foresaw difficulties in such a partnership and suggested that "a certain level of mutual criticism may be essential if the needs of consumers are to be met more effectively and they are to be protected from the misuse of bureaucratic and professional power in either kind of organisation" (para 495).

(c) Individual Volunteers: Seebohm's views about the
importance of community involvement pointed to the need to encourage informal "good neighbourliness", and to "a crucial role for volunteers in the more formal sense, both within and outside the social services departments" (para 497). The report did not develop its views on "informal good neighbourliness" but maintained that with the continuing growth of the personal social services "it will be more and more necessary for local authorities to enlist the services of large numbers of volunteers to complement the teams of professional workers, and the social services department must become a focal point to which those who wish to give voluntary help can offer their services". Seebohm had "little doubt" that there was a large untapped supply of such people who would willingly offer their services if the jobs were worthwhile, clearly defined and shown to be relevant to present-day needs. Emphasis was placed on the volunteer role of "preventive action" (para 498) though the only specific loci for volunteer activity were given as hospitals and old peoples homes, hardly at a point of possible prevention of social casualty. Again, Seebohm saw the role of volunteers as different from that of professionals, and denied any suggestion that volunteers could replace professional workers, "but they can assume, within the framework of the service and with some preparation, many of the duties that need not be carried out by a qualified professional worker, and which volunteers may even be better fitted to perform" (para 499). The committee insisted that departments "must" include volunteers in their plans, and that they should show, in the training of new staff, the important role of volunteers.

Responsibility for developing and working out in organisational terms, these three aspects of a community involvement ideology, was placed on senior staff, particularly the head of the department, and recommendations were made to establish senior posts at headquarters with special responsibility for developing "certain aspects" of this work, and acting as
consultants to staff at area team level. It was anticipated too that at field level, staff would become, through training and experience, skilled at working with and in the community (para 500).

Some Difficulties

Although these discrete sets of ideas contained in Seebohm may be internally coherent and consistent, the document becomes problematic when viewed as a whole, revealing lack of specification and ambiguity, and presenting conflicting ideologies about the meeting of social need (in itself not a straightforward concept, as Smith has pointed out). As has already been suggested, such inconsistencies are inherent in policy documents, and in the following discussion of some of them in relation to ways in which professional social work and community participation can complement each other, I hope to demonstrate the potential for a wide interpretation in implementation. A critical examination of Seebohm raises questions on at least four dimension. These concern:

(i) the general principles contained in the document;
(ii) the purpose of community involvement; (iii) the role of, and identification of, professional knowledge, attitudes, principles and skills; and (iv) the practical application of each kind of intervention.

(i) General Principles: It is perhaps not insignificant that in taking evidence for its report, the Seebohm Committee did not sound out consumer reaction to the social services, though interestingly, it did claim to have attempted "to discover the opinions of all those concerned with the services" (para 42). It emerges that this refers to certain individual "experts", to local authorities and to other organisations operating in this field. This may in part explain the heavy emphasis on expansion and development of
statutory responsibility and on the principle that such changes would ensure a more co-ordinated and comprehensive approach to social problems. The new unified social services department would require more staff than was available when the investigation was carried out, and all those in senior management positions were to have opportunities for both basic and advanced training. But having advocated such a monolithic, professionally-dominated bureaucratic system, Seebohm also made a commitment to the maximum participation of individuals and groups in the community, in the planning, organisation and provision of services and indeed, maintained that this was implied in the idea of the "community-oriented family service" which the committee proposed (para 481). Seebohm took this point further by suggesting that such community involvement would counteract some of the undesirable results of the report's recommendations: "participation also provides a means by which further consumer control can be exercised over professional and bureaucratic power ..." (para 493).

In its discussion of the identification and assessment of social need, Seebohm adopted the assumption that problems presented by clients may not be the "real" need, and stressed the importance of looking beyond "symptoms" to the frequently complicated underlying difficulties (para 141). Indeed, Seebohm gave as the main precipitating factor in its having been established as a committee, that the Government proposed to improve the "diagnosis, assessment and treatment" of delinquency (para 255), language which strongly implies expert intervention by skilled staff. On the topic of prevention of social distress, three factors were emphasised, those of (a) knowledge of what action is preventive (para 428); (b) ability for recognition of those at particular risk (para 429); (c) the extent to which agencies are able to undertake preventive work (para 430). Seebohm identified ways through which families at risk might be helped by the
personal social services, all of which implied professional activity, and couched in the language of social work, those included "intensive casework, counselling, or merely the supply of straightforward information. It may be helping to develop a person's confidence, enabling him to gain a clearer understanding of the problem he faces or encouragement in fulfilling family and work roles" (para 436). In a whole chapter on prevention there was no reference to the role of the community as such or to volunteers, and indeed where it was advocated that the personal social services should draw on the help of a wide range of people "who normally come into contact with families", a list of such people named health visitors, general practitioners, teachers, social security officers and rent collectors, all officials relating to families on a formal basis (para 439). So the commitment to professional diagnosis, treatment and prevention of social need, is established by the report, and reinforced by a call for more training of staff - "No really effective family service is possible unless the staff receive a really sound basic training followed by opportunities to develop their skill in the light of new knowledge and changed circumstances" (para 528).

In contrast to this, elsewhere in the report Seebohm upheld the right of "the community" (using the term in the context of neighbourhood groups) to "clarify and express their needs and objectives, and to take collective action to attempt to meet them". Emphasis shifted to "the involvement of the people themselves in determining and meeting their own needs" (para 480) and to developing citizen participation to "reduce the rigid distinction between the givers and the takers of social services" (para 492). Having declared that a person's "true" need is a matter for expert diagnosis the committee now claim that "getting citizens involved in the services provides an invaluable source of information about "real" needs ..." (para 493). Referring specifically to volunteers, Seebohm stated that without their continued
help many of the social services might find it impossible to do much more than help the known casualties, with little hope of extending preventive action. The report went as far as to say there are many jobs that volunteers "may be even better fitted to perform" than qualified social workers (para 499). The fact that Seebohm did not specify the jobs leaves identification of such tasks wide open to interpretation from a variety of standpoints.

Seebohm's conflict of ideologies between professional and voluntary intervention is captured in the following extracts in particular. The first is contained in the report's argument of the case for a new approach:-

"We consider that a family or individual in need of social care should, as far as possible, be served by a single social worker. In support of this proposition it can be argued that the basic aim of a social services department is to attempt to meet all the social needs of the family or individual together and as a whole...it is essential that the family or individual should be the concern of one social worker, with a comprehensive approach to the social problems of his clients. It follows that a single worker, and through him the social services department as a whole, can be held accountable for the standard of care the family or individual receives (or fails to receive) much more easily than if responsibility is fragmented between several workers" (para 516). Having, apparently unequivocally, made the individual professional, and through her/him, the department responsible and accountable for all the social needs of clients, Seebohm went on to present a different point of view - "the staff of the social services department will need to see themselves not as a self-contained unit but as part of a network of services within the community. Thus effective co-ordination with other services and individuals, and the mobilisation of community resources, especially volunteers, to meet need, are as important aspects of the administration of the social services department - and
demand as much skill - as its internal management" (para 478). With regard to volunteers specifically, the committee held the view that "with the continuing growth of the personal social services it will more and more be necessary for local authorities to enlist the services of large numbers of volunteers to complement the teams of professional workers, and the social services department must become a focal point to which those who wish to give voluntary help can offer their services ... we have little doubt that there is a large untapped supply of such people who would willingly offer their services if the jobs were worthwhile, clearly defined, and shown to be relevant to present-day needs" (para 498).

(ii) The Purpose of Community Involvement: The above discussion concerned some of the inconsistencies encountered in Seebohm from the point of view of general principles contained within the report. But in addition, Seebohm is ambiguous regarding the reasons for its insistence that the community should be involved at all in the delivery of the social services. A number of ideas may be identified, and I have grouped these into six categories:

(a) The Democratic Ideal: "a belief in the maximum participation of individuals and groups in the community in the planning, organisation and provision of the social services" (para 491). And again, "the notion of a community implies the existence of a network of reciprocal social relationships, which among other things ensure mutual aid and give those who experience it a sense of well-being" (para 476).

(b) An Additional Resource: "direct participation can provide a new pool of manpower ... it could be participation of an active nature where people are engaged in providing services or help" (para 493). And elsewhere, "there is sometimes difficulty in obtaining an adequate supply of regular
voluntary workers, not only to meet new demands, but also to replace those who have served for many years" (para 498).

(c) Consumer Control:
"Above all, the development of citizen participation should reduce the rigid distinction between the givers and the takers of social services and the stigma which being a client has often involved in the past" (para 492). "Further consumer control can be exercised over professional and bureaucratic power" (para 493).

(d) Pressure Group Functions:
"This view ... relates to the identification of need, the exposure of defects in the services and the mobilisation of resources". Seebohm quoted from the 1968 consumer council document, and registered agreement with it "...need for the consumers concerned for a means of bringing their influence to bear upon the industries and also, if necessary, of securing redress against them" (para 491). A reference was made to voluntary organisations in particular - "A certain level of mutual criticism between local authorities and voluntary organisations may be essential if the needs of consumers are to be met more effectively" (para 496).

(e) Act of Altruism:
"Indeed, we have no doubt of the social value of voluntary work, not only in contributing to the resources available to help the community, but in showing concern for neighbours and for helping people returning to the community from institutions such as prison and mental hospitals and so demonstrating community acceptance of them" (para 500).

(f) Personal Fulfilment:
"Getting citizens involved in the services ... can be a creative and fulfilling activity in its own right" (para
"... there is a large untapped supply of such people who would willingly offer their services if the jobs were worthwhile ..." (para 498). "(The principal officer of the social services department) ... must show that volunteers are wanted, that their contributions to the social well-being of others is an essential part of the social services and that the social services rely on them to play a part" (para 500).

These sets of ideas regarding the involvement of the community in social work are not necessarily contradictory, though a question arises as to whether each aspect can be applied with equal force in practice. In its general discussion of the three ways in which it saw community participation, (community development, the work of voluntary organisations and involvement of volunteers), Seebohm referred equally to the six categories I have described. However, in examining the role of volunteers specifically, Seebohm's emphasis was on their contribution as an extra resource, as an act of altruism, and for personal fulfilment, with no reference to pressure group or consumer control functions, though presumably there is no reason why their activities should not include these aspects.

Again Seebohm give no indication as to how the proposals might be operationalised, but did appear to place the onus on the head of the social services department, though one might ask how realistic it was to hold an expectation for machinery to be set up which might lead to criticism of one's own organisation. Seebohm concluded this section of the report, "the manner in which citizen participation in the social services is achieved at the area level will depend both upon the characteristics of the local community and the knowledge, skill and attitudes of the staff of the social services department" (para 506). The empirical study of this research was designed to discover how those ideas in Seebohm which concern volunteer participation, are mediated in practice through the attitudes and activities of social
(iii) The Role of, and Identification of Professional Knowledge, Principles and Skills: Seebohm was at pains to point out that an effective family service could not be achieved without staff trained to a high standard (para 528), particularly professional social workers. "We believe that the services will be more effective if more money, manpower and talent are applied to them" (para 88). The new departments were to be given responsibility for a very wide range of social need and charged with the "prevention, treatment and relief" of such problems (para 139). They were to look beyond immediate symptoms (para 141), to interpret clients' needs to them (para 145), to identify and help children in difficulties (para 227), to provide "care, protection, guidance or treatment which they considered appropriate" (para 260), to supervise and assist young people (para 265), to give general family guidance (para 274), to identify high risk groups (para 435), in other words, as Seebohm itself declared, "to attempt to meet all the social needs of the family or individual" (para 516). But the report went no further than setting out in these very general ways the role of the departments and their staff. Although the Committee called for a greater clarity as to the aims of social action, the report did not attempt to set forward any such goals, and although it agreed with the Central Council for Training in Social Work that "the workers themselves will need to be clear about their professional role" (para 494), the result of its discussions about that role were vague, unclear and ambiguous.

Seebohm had much to say about the personal equipment needed to carry out the social work task (even though that task remained nebulous), and agreed that some kinds of social work required a "detailed knowledge and a particular attitude of mind" (para 515). The Committee declared that staff must have the correct "knowledge, attitudes and skill" (para 528).
and held that there were principles and skills that are common to all forms of social work with individuals and families (para 531). Not only did Seebohm assume that social work is a homogeneous occupation, but also that the terms "knowledge, attitudes, principles and skills", are universally understood and identifiable. Seebohm's call to "extend the boundaries of knowledge" (para 562) indicates a belief that a body of knowledge exists which has been captured within definable limits. Its desire to make available a "wider range of skills" (para 227) and its references to social work "principles" (para 531) and a particular "attitude" (para 515) assumes skills, principles and an attitude that are not available to the public generally. But nowhere does the reader learn more about the content of the knowledge, the specifics of the skills or the distinctive features of the principles and the attitude.

Because these aspects of the concept of a professional service remain undefined, how the notion of professionalism is managed in practice becomes of crucial importance in studying social policy implementation. It is only in observing practice that definitions can be inferred since ambiguity is encountered repeatedly in policy documents.

(iv) The Practical Application of Professional Intervention and Community Involvement: The remit of the Seebohm Committee was to review the personal social services and to consider what changes were desirable to secure an "effective family service". The Committee was concerned to see a unified department which would be available to all and would provide a community based and family oriented service (para 2). In defining the family, it was felt important not to restrict this to the needs of two or even three generation families, so the definition was extended to "everybody" (para 32). The Committee rejected a suggestion that there should be two social services departments, one for children and families with children, and the other for old people and handicapped adults, on the grounds that such an approach reflected an
artificial and rigid view of human need allocating responsibilities of departments according to age or "types" of problems (para 142). The emphasis was to move to "treating both the individual and the family as a whole" (para 79).

In the light of these aims other discussions within the report appear puzzling. In considering the training of social workers, for example, it appears that Seebohm did after all differentiate between "families" and "other clients", as illustrated in this quotation: "The concept of generic training, however has wider implications. Social workers are more and more concerned with the whole family as a group, a development accelerated by the emphasis on family and community care, in for instance, the Mental Health Act 1969. Social workers also find themselves involved with other clients as groups, including clubs for old people or psychiatric patients, and groups of young delinquents, or those who are physically handicapped" (para 556).

This appears in conflict with what Seebohm insisted elsewhere, that "families comprise members falling into a variety of these categories" (para 79). This apparent contradiction of Seebohm's ideal of a unified family service was taken further. "Prevention" implied an almost exclusive focus on the nuclear family and examples of those thought to be at "high risk" were given as the school leaver, the family in the early stages of formation, the worker approaching retirement, the bereaved wife or husband and the discharged long-term prisoner (para 452). Seebohm called for efforts to increase knowledge and skills in recognising and dealing with those at particular risk.

The report not only seemed to differentiate between "families" and "others", but to assume different "needs" and advocate different forms of intervention. In the section of the report which deals with social services for children, Seebohm referred to their "special needs" (para 170) and although it remained vague about what those special needs
were, the language used in the discussion implied a therapeutic approach to them based on a medical model of intervention. An appeal was made for "more flexible methods of treatment for children in trouble with the law" (para 190), and delinquency was examined in terms of its "diagnosis, assessment and treatment" (para 255). The Committee's conception of an effective family service "assumes the provision of general family guidance ... social diagnosis, which we regard as a key feature of guidance for staff and clients alike ..." (para 274). In contrast to this "therapeutic" approach to families and children, Seebohm's consideration of social services for old people gives priority to the provision of practical services. "We have no hesitation in placing good accommodation, both housing and homes, high on our list of priorities for old people ..." (para 302). Ensuring an adequate income for the elderly was seen as a concern of the social services department along with providing ready access to sources of information about services which are available to them. There was no reference to "diagnosis" or "assessment", and "treatment" references were limited to the context of the services of the general medical practitioner. One must conclude then, as a result of Seebohm's equivocal statements about the constitution of "the family", and the report's assumptions about the needs of different client groups, that it would not be unlikely to find these differences appearing in practice, albeit under the umbrella of a single social services department.

In this section on the Seebohm report, I have tried to point out some of the conflicting ideologies and incoherent aspects of the report which are apparent when the document is viewed as containing discrete sets of ideas. These concern concepts such as professional dominance as opposed to consumer control, and expert diagnosis and treatment of "need", as opposed to community identification and meeting of "need". Also identified were ambiguities about the
purpose of involving the community in the delivery of the social services, and about the role of and identification of professional knowledge, attitudes, principles and skills. Finally, there appeared inconsistency as to the definition of the family in society and as to the recipients of particular kinds of service. The chapters concerned with the analysis of the empirical data will attempt to describe the efforts of members of staff in the area social work teams studied, to operationalise these different ideas.

The Kilbrandon Report (1964)

The report of the Kilbrandon Committee and the subsequent White Paper, Social Work and the Community (1966) resulted in a major reorganisation of the social services in Scotland and in the setting up of the Children's Panel system. Kilbrandon was concerned mainly with the perceived increase in juvenile delinquency, and although it did not discuss social need in as broad terms as did Seebohm (published 4 years later), it did subscribe to the ideologies of professional intervention and the wider community involvement in dealing with juvenile crime. The report's notion of wider community involvement lay essentially in the constitution of a system of Children's Panels which were to comprise lay members serving in a voluntary and part-time capacity, who would make decisions about "treatment measures" concerning children brought before them. Working in conjunction with the Children's Panel would be an organisation (called the Social Education Department by Kilbrandon, but set up eventually as The Social Work Department) which would apply professional knowledge and skills to the treatment measures stipulated by the Panels (para 97).

On a close reading, Kilbrandon presents us with similar difficulties as did Seebohm, with similar resulting confusions. To begin with, although Kilbrandon specified that
the Panel would be a lay body, no reason was given as to why this was felt to be important. The Committee did appear to link this characteristic with their view that the Panel should be an "entirely independent agency" (para 74), and not a local authority committee, or a court of law (para 75), but this in itself does not clarify why the members should be lay persons.

In addition, the report was ambiguous as to its definition of a "lay body". On the one hand it considered that members would be selected as "persons who either by knowledge or experience were considered to be specially qualified to consider children's problems", while on the other hand, no one would be appointed on the basis of a "specialist qualification, but simply on the basis of personal qualities" (para 74). In some places Kilbrandon appeared to make universal its criteria for membership: "We are confident that (the Panel System) would be able to draw on a much wider field of suitable persons ..." At the same time, the report called for a "procedure which from the outset seeks to establish the individual child's needs in the light of the fullest possible information ...", and maintained that "the establishment of those needs is in itself a task calling for essentially personal qualities of insight and understanding, which obviously cannot be guaranteed under any system of selection" (para 78).

The problem of incoherence in Kilbrandon becomes even clearer on examination of the different functions of those prescribing treatment and those administering treatment to children. In addition to the quotes above concerning the qualifications required of Panel members, the report admitted that "the daily task of adjudication in children's problems especially, calls for a high degree of skill and discrimination, and for special qualities of insight and understanding" (para 16). In the application of treatment measures, functions of an executive nature, Kilbrandon acknowledged "a
high degree of specialist skill, training and experience in social work" (para 104). In the first instance, the qualities required appear to be regarded as inherent, while in the latter instance, acquisition of the requisite qualities involves training to the extent that "no person should be appointed to the social education department unless in possession of an appropriate training council certificate for the post to which he is to be appointed" (para 249). For the first group, no theoretical knowledge was assumed, while for the second group a "body of theory and practical knowledge" was emphasised (para 248). Kilbrandon gave no explanation of the rationale which regarded the skills of a lay panel as appropriate for considering and deciding on measures of treatment, and the skills of professional persons as appropriate for carrying out these measures.

In addition, in contrast to Seebohm, which as we have observed, appeared to give pre-eminence to the functions and skills of professionals over those of lay persons ("we are not suggesting that volunteers can replace professional workers"), Kilbrandon appeared to give precedence to the lay Panels, by firstly allowing them an "unfettered discretion, not only initially to apply but to modify or vary the measures appropriate to the individual child" (para 79), and secondly, by suggesting that the Panels must "have available" to them various services including those of professional social workers (para 235). This implication that the professionals would be the servants of the Panels is further illustrated in Kilbrandon's view that it was "essential" that they (the Panels) should be provided with a single executive agency (para 91). Again, the Committee saw the Panel's basic action as assuming oversight of the child, "that oversight ... being carried out on their behalf by the social education department". The Director of such a department would be responsible to the Panel for social background reports, for making recommendations and for seeing that the Panel's decisions were carried out. At the same time, Panel
members were to be dependent on professionals for "informed and skilled advice" (para 233), and at times the Panel's function appeared merely to endorse the work of the professionals: "... the panels may, we consider, be able in the course of full and frank discussion to lend the weight of their underlying authority ... in support of the efforts of the social workers concerned" (para 234). Kilbrandon considered that the social education department "would be recognised as the focal point for co-ordination of information about all cases of children in need" (para 235), and that cases would be assigned to social workers "whose skills appeared to be best fitted to handle (them)" (para 236). In the event of referral to the lay Panel, Kilbrandon stipulated that "the child's supervision within the community would in fact involve the application of family casework, and would, we envisage, be most commonly entrusted to the qualified social workers" (para 237). So having elsewhere offered the Panels "unfettered discretion", Kilbrandon here limited the range of alternatives available to them by asserting an ideology of professional intervention in dealing with children in need.

The confusion generated by these conflicting notions is compounded by a lack of definition in Kilbrandon, not only concerning what the Committee meant by "lay members" of Children's Panels, but also in specifying the "personal qualities" and the "high degree of skill" required in candidates. Similarly in its discussion of social workers, the report is unclear about the "body of theory and practical knowledge", the "high degree of skill in social work" or "the application of family casework" which it referred to repeatedly.

In discussing the Seebohm report, I suggested that questions arose on at least four dimensions, those of (i) the general principles contained in the document; (ii) the purpose of community involvement; (iii) the role of, and identification of professional knowledge, attitudes, principles and skills,
and (iv) the practical application of each kind of intervention. Kilbrandon provides quite a different context, but I would hold that the conflicts and ambiguities are strikingly similar.

Before leaving Kilbrandon to consider the White Paper "Social Work and the Community", there is yet another issue within the report which is relevant to the empirical study to be described in later chapters. It is here considered separately only because it had not arisen in Seebohm, and in the above discussion I was concerned to dwell on issues which were common to both Seebohm and Kilbrandon. The topic now to be examined concerns ideologies in Kilbrandon as to ways of dealing with children brought before the Panels. (Although Kilbrandon's discussion was confined to ways of coping with children, issues concerning "treatment" and "punishment" may be observed in relation to all client groups, and one of the objectives of this research was to discover the presence of such beliefs in the attitudes of the social workers and volunteers studied, and the circumstances under which they appeared).

Within Kilbrandon it is possible to identify what appear to be conflicting ideologies of "treatment" and "punishment". In discussing the inadequacies of the juvenile court system, Kilbrandon agreed with witnesses that the legal distinction between juvenile offenders and children in need of care and protection was very often of little practical significance, since in looking to the underlying realities, both might be said to be in need of special measures of education and training. The Committee proposed separating the two issues of (a) adjudication of an allegation of guilt, and (b) consideration of the measures to be applied, the latter function to be that of the Children's Panels. Suggestions for a more sweeping extension of coercive powers in relation to parents of juvenile delinquents were rejected as unacceptable, though Kilbrandon did subscribe to the view that
"more often than not the problem of the child who is in need and the delinquent child can be traced to shortcomings in the normal 'bringing-up' process - in the home, in the family environment and in the schools" (para 87). A more appropriate approach, it was argued, was a process of "social education" involving essentially, the application of social and family casework and necessitating the cooperation of individual parents and child. But having presented this "treatment" model, and asserted that compulsive sanctions are "fundamentally misconceived and unlikely to lead to any practical and beneficial result" (para 35), Kilbrandon confirmed that in fact the Panel would be vested with coercive powers and that indeed the actual range of powers conferred on the Panel would not differ appreciably from those available to the juvenile courts (para 75). Further, the report agreed that "punishment might be good treatment for the particular person concerned in his particular circumstances" (para 53). Again, having set forward the environmental argument as a cause of difficulties in children, the report appeared to adopt a view in direct contradiction, that "the environmental argument ... could never offer a universal answer; in a great many delinquents a degree of maladjustment, of malfunction personal to the individual, has always been observable" (para 77). Kilbrandon was clearly unhappy with the assumption in the concept of juvenile courts of a "high degree of personal responsibility" in the commission of offences, yet the discussion of a child's capacity to distinguish right and wrong is ambiguous in that "it has, of course, always been recognised that the personal and moral responsibility of children may vary widely, age itself offering no reliable guide" (para 60).

Finally, although the Panels were to be established on the basis of consideration only of measures to be applied in dealing with children, and not concerning determination of guilt and innocence, the fact that the Panel could proceed only when the child admitted to having done the acts alleged
holds the possibility of conveying, not only to children and parents, but to officials attached to the Panel, a flavour of criminal proceedings (Kilbrandon's substitution of "having done" for "having committed", does not alter this). The Panel's close association with criminal procedure was in any case confirmed by the referral to the Sheriff Court of cases where the act in question was denied by the child. The Sheriff Court would then have "jurisdiction to determine under criminal procedure the disputed allegation of fact", and having done so, would refer the case back to the Panel for "treatment" (para 73).

This short discussion of the conflicting ideologies of "treatment" and "punishment" in Kilbrandon, and the inconsistencies and lack of clarity in some of the related issues, was carried out with a view to preparing the reader for an analysis in a later chapter of ways in which social workers and volunteers used and negotiated the ideas inherent in the concepts. I have not dealt at length on the topic, not because it is viewed as unimportant, but because detailed critiques have already been carried out by other writers, notably Smith (1977) and Asquith (1977) dealing with similar issues.


Along with Seebohm and Kilbrandon, the Government's White Paper, "Social Work and the Community" was the third major influence on the reorganisation of the social services in Britain. The White Paper was broadly in agreement with the proposals set out in Kilbrandon and declared particularly the Government's intention to establish the Children's Panel System, and to bring together within a single social work organisation services designed to care for children, the handicapped, the mentally and physically ill, and the aged. But like the other policy documents I have examined, the
White Paper presents features which are puzzling, and which leave it open to a variety of interpretations. For the purposes of the present study, three areas of ambiguity are presented here, and these concern discussion of (i) the wider community involvement; (ii) the concepts of lay and professional intervention; (iii) the proposed services to children and to other client groups.

(i) The Wider Community Involvement
The White Paper has little to say about community participation in the meeting of social need, at least in the sense in which the concept was approached by Seebohm, but the comments it did make were vague and at times inconsistent, and what it omitted to say is perhaps in itself significant. It is surprising for example, that having referred to the role of the "community" in supporting people in difficulty (para 8(1)) the White Paper did not say what it meant by "community", and in addition discussed the notion only in terms of physical environment (para 14). Further, although the document admitted that the new social work department "could not hope to provide from its own resources the means of solving all the social and personal problems of those who seek its aid, and the success of much of its work will depend on the degree to which it can gain the support and influence the work of many other public and voluntary services" (para 12), it neither defined "voluntary services" nor made references to any in the subsequent list of services, which confined itself entirely to statutory services such as health, housing, gas and electricity.

The one reference which was made to voluntary workers implied that greater use of such a resource is an important aspect of the function of social workers, so much so that they would require training and preparation for it, not only at the initial stage of training but at advanced stages in their careers (para 44). At the same time however, the contribution of voluntary workers seemed to be dismissed by the assertion, in the context of a discussion of support in the
community and that of residential care, that "the responsibilities of the social work department would therefore be wide, but would be homogeneous in that they would all be based on the insights and skills of the profession of social work and be concerned with meeting personal need" (para 10). Here the "insights and skills of the profession of social work" appear not only to be distinct from other insights and skills (although they were not defined) but to be the only valid criteria for decisions about meeting social need.

(ii) The Concepts of Lay and Professional Intervention
The ambiguity continued as the White Paper took up Kilbrandon's recommendations for the setting up of a Children's Panel System in Scotland. Kilbrandon's discussion of a lay panel was developed (though no further enlightenment was offered on the meaning of "lay" persons) and a hope was expressed that members might be drawn from "a wide variety of occupation, neighbourhood, age group and income group" (para 76). Suitable candidates would possess "knowledge, experience and understanding" of young people, and would collectively be endowed with powers which could have far-reaching effects on the life and future of children brought before them. "... the panel will go on to consider the background reports on the child, the advice of the social work department and of any specialists consulted. They will discuss the whole circumstances with the child and his parents, and in the light of that discussion will reach a decision on the treatment or training which the child should have" (para 66). Such treatment or training might be as serious as removal from home. Assimilation of all available information and deciding on a course of action imply a great deal of skill, yet the White Paper claimed that "it is unnecessary for members of panels to be expert social workers. The expertise necessary in their work will be supplied by the local authority's social work department " (para 80). In addition to the potential confusion here, regarding any expertise possessed by Panel members, the use of the phrase
"expert social workers" is curious in that one possible interpretation might be that Panel members may be regarded as "social workers", but not "expert" social workers. Another interpretation might be that not all social workers can claim to be "expert". But there are further difficulties here. Having asserted that Panel members need not be expert social workers, the White Paper continued, "members will, however, need a good knowledge of treatment methods and of the facilities available for applying them, and they will have to become practised in the best methods of bringing the child and his parents into the process by which a decision is reached and into active participation in consequent treatment". It is interesting that in this quote the term "practised" is used rather than "skilled" or "expert", descriptions which appear to be confined to professional social workers. Similarly, "assessment" is used exclusively in this document in the context of professionals ("the function of assessment ... is part of the social worker's essential skills" (para 28), yet it could be argued that such a function is the major aspect of the work of the Children's Panel. Later we shall consider how this selectivity in language to describe the attributes of professionals and of voluntary workers manifests itself in practice. Finally, the White Paper, having established the principle of a "lay" Panel, stipulated that Panel members "will ... require a certain amount of training, and it is proposed that at the outset this training will be arranged for them by the local authority" (para 80). Are we to assume by this then, that a certain "expertise" is after all necessary, and if so, to what degree, and in what ways would such training differ from that of social workers so as to preserve the suggested advantages of a "lay" Panel? And what would be the advantages of training being provided by the local authorities (presumably the social work department, although this was not stipulated)? Was the Government here suggesting that Panel members
should share the values of professional social workers (if indeed one can assume that there exists distinctly "professional" values), and if so, is the holding of such "professional" values more desirable than the holding of sets of values claimed by other sections of the community? Such questions are open to a variety of answers.

(iii) The Proposed Services to Children and to Other Clients: In considering the Seabøhm report, I referred to the Committee's differences in approach to the needs of "families and children" and to those of other clients. This was also a feature of the White Paper in its expression of the Government's intention to establish a department which would provide community care and support to "adults of all ages as well as those of the children in the family" (para 19). In developing its argument for this all-embracing organisation, the document recorded that "social workers in all the services agree that they require to use basically the same skills. Specialised knowledge and experience are often necessary, but the body of expertise necessary to all social workers is substantially the same" (para 8). In the light of this, the White Paper emphasised the necessity of bringing together within a single organisation services to children, the handicapped, the mentally and physically ill and the aged (para 10). However, the manner in which these groups were discussed individually suggests a certain inconsistency. In considering children's needs, the White Paper concluded that the care and treatment offered to any child must be based on "professional assessment" involving "careful investigation and consideration of the needs of each child and his family" (para 21). Emphasis was placed on prevention of deprivation and the importance of safeguarding the welfare of children. Social workers were to have a responsibility to help "at the first evidence of trouble" (para 61), and it was hoped that additional professional
staff could be attracted (para 84). In contrast, a consideration of the needs of the handicapped and of old people made no reference to "professional assessment", or "deprivation". The needs of the ill, handicapped and mentally disordered were seen as for "advice, guidance and support" (para 30), while those of the aged were seen as for housing, recreation, meals-on-wheels, home-help and "other facilities" (para 32). In a section of the White Paper entitled "Social Work with Children", the document had this to say: "This change of emphasis has involved child care workers to an increasing extent in work with the parents, relatives and communities to which the children belong, and the nature of this work has developed into the provision of guidance and support for a wide range of people who are in emotional or social difficulty. Largely from this experience has grown the recognition that this kind of support and guidance is of the essence of social work, for deprived children as for other members of the community. Social workers increasingly appreciate that in any situation in which the welfare of children is at risk, the children's welfare must be safeguarded in the event of any clash of interests, and that policy decisions must take account of this" (para 57).

Now although this quotation does take account of "other members of the community", it is clear, both from the chapter heading and the content of the remainder of the paragraph, that the Government's references were with children and their parents specifically in mind. The use of the clause "... this kind of support and guidance is of the essence of social work" could be interpreted as suggesting that such activity is "real" social work and the proper sphere of the professional. That discussion of other client groups omitted this kind of language and dwelt on the practical rather than the emotional, suggests different and less skilled help. It also implies that the elderly and handicapped, for example, have less capacity
for emotional growth and are less likely to experience emotional difficulties. Not only did the White Paper appear to describe the needs of children as requiring more professional skills than those of other groups, but it also suggested a greater urgency. "In future, families and their children will be able to look to the new social work department for rapid and effective assistance in time of trouble" (para 60), a sentiment which again was absent in the examination of other clients. So the declaration that "social workers in all the services ... require to use basically the same skills" is thrown into doubt when set alongside these later deliberations, leaving a potential for (i) stereotyping the needs of certain client groups; (ii) creating a hierarchy of client groups in respect of skills required in meeting their needs; (iii) perpetuating the divisions among services which the new social work departments were designed to eradicate.

In this examination of "Social Work and the Community" I have tried to show that, in common with the other policy documents considered, it embodies both professional and lay ideologies concerning the meeting of social need. But also in common with Seebohm and Kilbrandon, it reveals inconsistencies and ambiguities concerning the Government's intentions regarding the respective purpose, role, knowledge, skills and application implicit in these sets of ideas, leaving scope for a range of interpretation by those charged with implementation.

The Aves Report (1969)

The Aves Committee was set up in 1966 by the National Council of Social Services (NCSS) and the National Institute for Social Work Training (NISWT), and its remit is directly pertinent to this present study. The terms of reference
were "to enquire into the role of voluntary workers in the social services and in particular to consider their need for preparation or training, and their relationship with professional social workers" (para 1). The Committee restricted its concern to the "fieldwork setting" and to the role of the volunteer "as an element in the aggregation of services that seek to meet personal needs" (para 2). Information was collected from a range of sources including voluntary groups and volunteers around Britain, and close on 800 volunteers gave first-hand details about themselves and their work. The report's conclusions included recommendations regarding the role of the voluntary worker, the appointment of organisers of volunteers in both the statutory and the voluntary sectors, the selection, recruitment and training of volunteers, the need for social work training to include theoretical and practical material on volunteers and finally, I have already referred in chapter 2 to the establishment of the Volunteer Centre, a direct result of the Aves report. That the Volunteer Centre was financed from central government funds is an indication of the welcome given to Aves by the government. The report remains the only major policy document dealing exclusively with the place of volunteers and their relationship with professional social workers.

It is the purpose of this analysis to highlight those inherent conflicting ideologies, ambiguities, inconsistencies and incoherencies to be identified in this as in other policy statements, as a pointer to otherwise incomprehensible variations in practice. The following discussion revolves around three elements within Aves which present difficulties on close examination, those of (i) the ideologies of professional intervention and volunteer involvement in the social services; (ii) the reasons for including volunteers; (iii) the differences (along several dimensions) between volunteers and professionals.
(i) The Ideologies of Professional Intervention and Volunteer Involvement:
From the outset there was an assumption in Aves that voluntary involvement in the social services was "a good thing" (see the Foreword), but an acknowledgement that the services available from volunteers needed "careful evaluation" (para 4). The Committee doubted the wisdom, "even if it had been practicable" of trying to meet all social needs by the use of paid staff and recorded its agreement with witnesses who mentioned the danger that social work might become too much a professional concern, quoting the opinion that "there is now a danger of the social services becoming over-professionalised and remote from the public they were designed to serve. Imagination is required in seeking new ways of involving the community in the social services, the providers and receivers being fundamentally the same body of people. The volunteer represents the community; sometimes a member of the community already involved with a client may be the best person to help him and his contribution should not be belittled because he has no official appointment" (para 74). Aves saw for volunteers an "important role" in that they are a "means by which the community itself can participate in discovering and meeting the needs of its members" (para 18) and agreed with the view that "they are the manifestation of the total community's care for the socially disabled". The report concluded that "there are clearly good grounds for believing that volunteers, just because their work is done voluntarily, can offer service which is of value to their clients, of a kind which could not be provided solely by the use of paid staff" (para 124), and that there is a "crucial role for volunteers in the social services" (para 205). The Committee found that as their work proceeded they became "increasingly convinced of the special quality and value of the volunteer's contribution" (para 281).

Alongside this commitment to the community's contribution
in meeting need however, is the separate and, taken in isolation, contradictory ideology of the application of professional skills and knowledge. Aves was concerned to point out that volunteers were not a substitute for professionals, and thought that "the vital role of professional social workers" would be taken for granted by most readers of the report (para 261). "Because professional staff who are helped by volunteers can concentrate more on the work for which their special skills are required, their own contribution becomes more valuable" (para 118). Describing the training given to volunteers by Marriage Guidance Councils as "admirable", Aves continued, "(it) cannot be expected to qualify those who receive it for work which requires professional knowledge and skills" (para 274), and saw some duties such as that of visiting boarded-out children as calling for "a high degree of skill and knowledge" and to be undertaken only by social workers (para 276). The Committee aligned itself with the arguments supporting the need for social workers put forward both by the Younghusband Report and the Seebohm Report, and were persuaded that "the part which can and should be played by social workers in all the social services, not only as practitioners, but also as initiators and advisors on policy, will not seriously be questioned" (para 261).

But as with the other policy documents already examined, Aves' assertion that there is a "need" for social workers and a "place" for volunteers (para 279) is not as straightforward as it might appear on a first reading. These conflicting notions lead to puzzling elements in Aves' more detailed discussion of them.

(ii) The Reason for Including Volunteers
This will have become a familiar theme to the reader since this chapter has already tackled similar ambiguity around the notion of "community", "lay" and "voluntary" participation, found in Seebohm, Kilbrandon and the White Paper. Again, within Aves, it is possible to identify several sets
of ideas as to why volunteers should be involved, concepts which are not always in agreement with each other, and indeed at times appear to be in conflict. The report for example, noted that volunteers "are readily seen to be important as a support to overburdened services, and to perform the function of filling some of the gaps in the statutory services". It gave implicit support to this as a legitimate function for volunteers by continuing, "they have, however, another and even more important role", going on to identify voluntarism as a good thing in itself because it is a means by which the community can participate in discovering and meeting the needs of its members (para 18). This duality is apparent elsewhere also, as Aves described the purpose of training for volunteers as "to equip (them) to carry out work for which paid workers are either not indicated or not available ..." (para 218). Again, though at one point Aves asserted that voluntary workers should not be regarded as a substitute for professional staff or used to do work for which it is accepted practice to employ paid staff (para 283), at another point the Committee saw "no objection" to "temporary gap filling", regarding it as a "very suitable way of harnessing the good will of the community" in times of unavoidable temporary shortage of staff, illness or "some other crisis" (para 119). The fact that the report did not define "unavoidable staff shortage", or "temporary" or "some other crisis" serves only to add to the confusion. The incoherence continued as Aves agreed that "nurses can give better nursing care to their patients if voluntary workers can attend to some of the patients' other needs" (para 118), yet in the following paragraph criticised hospitals for asking voluntary workers to undertake "domestic" or "manual" tasks "in a service which is publicly financed" (para 119). To compound the difficulties one might have in comprehending the arguments, Aves saw as "quite different", practical help given to "infirm or inadequate people in their own homes" (para 119), choosing to ignore the fact that such tasks might also be seen to be
part of a service which is publicly financed, that of the social services. Again, in a discussion where no mention was made of any statutory or voluntary body, but where reference was made only to "users of voluntary help", Aves seemed to condone what it had formerly condemned: "any arrangements made for the use of volunteers in manual and domestic tasks must be such that volunteers can see that their contribution is significant and is genuinely respected by the authorities and the paid staff with whom they come in contact" (para 121).

Elsewhere the committee set forward other different notions to justify volunteer involvement suggesting the concept of altruism, and seeing "good grounds" for believing that "just because their work is done voluntarily", volunteers offer a valuable service (para 124). They noted the "rich reserve of kindliness and goodwill that characterises our people" (para 9), and appeared to agree with one respondent who, referring to volunteers commented, "the humanity of it is the compensation for their shortcomings" (para 57). But the impression given that voluntarism is a good thing per se, is countered by an acknowledgement that disadvantages may be, "the volunteers' lack of skill and knowledge, the fear that they may not respect confidence, and their need for close but sympathetic guidance and support" (para 73).

The report gave assent to the practice of selecting the "right" kinds of volunteers and saw a need for "methods of selection ... to be more clearly thought out and more widely used" (para 183), which leads to the conclusion that, after all, "kindliness and goodwill" is not enough. The emphasis too on the quality of the service which can be offered by volunteers cuts across the claim that the voluntary element is in itself of sufficient value. Aves maintained that "the object of making greater use of voluntary help should always be to extend and improve a service by adding something to what is already being done ..." (para 283). It expressed the belief that voluntary work was necessary if
the quality of the personal social services was to be enriched (para 286), and it saw a "crucial" role for volunteers which could not be properly effective without "the support and assistance which suitable preparation or training and continuing guidance can provide" and argued that "it is just as necessary to devote some resources to this purpose as to the training of social workers" (para 205).

Thus far in this section I have identified among the reasons for volunteer participation, those of gap-filling as a result of staff shortages, its inherent "goodness" and its importance in improving the quality of the social services, and tried to point out the ambiguities and lack of definition leading to difficulties in comprehension. Further confusion in Aves revolves around whether voluntary involvement is to be for the benefit of the volunteer or the good of the client. In a section of the report on volunteers' motivation, this was classified as springing from:

(a) altruism: wanting to do something for others;
(b) self interest: seeking personal benefit such as experience, interest, knowledge or occupation; and
(c) sociability: wanting to meet people, to make friends. (para 47)

Aves acknowledged that of the volunteers who co-operated in their enquiries "most ... felt that voluntary work would meet some need, or combination of needs" (para 49) and the Committee agreed that "they must be helped to enjoy what they are doing" (para 50). Those who recruit volunteers were urged to give "careful consideration to the volunteers' need for a sense of identity and companionship" (para 151) and indeed the report was critical of organisations who failed to provide such opportunities (para 196). At the same time, however, Aves warned of the danger of volunteers using voluntary work to meet their own needs: "they may ...
be using their work to bring about a balance in their own lives" (para 240) and declared that "the overriding objective must be the good of the client" (para 24). In the context of a discussion of a working paper by the Schools Council, "Community Service and the Curriculum", the Committee registered disapproval that voluntary work was considered from the point of view of the pupil and the school, with no adequate consideration of the clients, and made clear its view that any piece of work which was judged as a success or failure "by its effect on the child, without any reference to the client", would be unacceptable. As an illustration a teacher was quoted as saying: "a small minority of girls and boys contributed little to the scheme but we believe they benefited from association with the many who did" (para 211). Aves' opinion that this was unacceptable contrasts with their call to foster "a sense of identity and companionship" for volunteers.

(iii) The Differences Between Volunteers and Professionals
To conclude this analysis of the Aves Report I now turn to its treatment of the respective roles of volunteers and professional staff. There are at least six dimensions of this topic which can be discussed in the context of the report, and I shall refer to each of them in turn. They concern:

(a) the status of the volunteer vis-à-vis other citizens;
(b) the respective functions of volunteers and professionals;
(c) the interchangeability of their roles;
(d) their knowledge and skills;
(e) values and attitudes; and
(f) accountability to the agency.

(a) The Status of the Volunteer vis-à-vis Other Citizens:
Although this heading does not concern directly the differences between volunteers and professionals, it is nevertheless important to establish Aves' treatment of the notion of "the volunteer" and to point out that the complexities and confusions began in the report even before Aves tackled the
differences in the two roles. To begin with, Aves implied that there is little difference between the work done by volunteers and that carried out "by numberless friends and neighbours" (para 10), and admitted that "it is still difficult ... to differentiate the role of the volunteer from that of the involved citizen" (para 30). References to volunteers as being a "means by which the community itself can participate in discovering and meeting the needs of its members" (para 10), as "demonstrating the concern of society" (para 98) and as "increasing the involvement of the community in social problems" (para 72) all add to the impression that the volunteer is representative of the ordinary man or woman in the street. Indeed, Aves appeared to say exactly that, by its observation that "the providers and the receivers (are) fundamentally the same body of people" (para 74). Yet Aves also found it necessary to distinguish between volunteers and "those who receive the help of the social services and of volunteers - 'recipients', 'consumers', 'clients'", and in the end settled on calling them "clients" (para 6). At several points in the report reference was made to volunteers and "relationships with their clients" (para 53) or "satisfaction to their clients" (para 126), and indeed in one section on what voluntary workers do, Aves declared that "the visitor who just drops in, whether occasionally or regularly, without some real purpose which is understood by the visitor and has been conveyed to and accepted by the client, may achieve little or nothing" (para 98). The confusion which arises as a result of these apparently conflicting views of the volunteer, is added to by the report's belief that "there is probably no clear distinction between functions appropriate to volunteers and to paid ancillary staff" (para 122)(my emphasis). Not only so, but Aves also suggested a difference among volunteers themselves. It quoted from the second Reading Report on the "place of voluntary service in After Care", published in 1967, which distinguished between "associates" (volunteers who could provide support for a considerable
period by a personal relationship) and "other volunteers, whose contribution is more likely to be of short duration in the way of a simple practical task or advice on a technical problem not requiring close personal involvement" (para 130). The Committee itself adopted this approach, seeing a difference between "simple befriending" and "skilled counselling" (para 98) and between "practical help" and "matters involving delicate and confidential interpersonal relationships" (para 124). So the sets of ideas put forward by Aves embody a range of views as to the status of the volunteer, and even within volunteer ranks a hierarchy was implied. In all of this Aves offered no definitions of the terms used. With this confused image of the volunteer in mind, the discussion now turns to her/his relationship to the professional social worker.

(b) The Respective Functions of Volunteers and Professionals: Although the report gave no precise definitions of either "volunteer" or "social worker", it nevertheless "found it necessary to differentiate between those who are qualified to undertake social work professionally, and volunteers who are without this qualification" (para 6). It went on to assume that volunteers and professionals would undertake different kinds of work and claimed that there was a need for clearer understanding on both sides of their respective functions (para 261). Aves saw "many kinds of work which can be seen clearly to fall on one side or the other" and in support of this listed for volunteers such jobs as house decorating, gardening, playing with children in hospitals and provision of transport (para 275). "It is also possible" continued Aves, "to distinguish some functions which are proper to social workers and should be undertaken by them". Here the Committee suggested that social workers' training was designed to enable them to consider the causes and likely repercussions of a problem and not merely its symptoms. They saw social workers as helping clients to assess
their needs and to plan ways in which they can be helped. "This involves gaining his co-operation and enabling him to feel that he is being helped ..." (para 276). Aves took the view that "the most fruitful use of volunteers in the social services is as an extension of and complement to the work of qualified staff". The report did not explain what it meant by this, but went on to say; "they can often provide the practical help which may be an important element in any personal service". But having apparently allocated to volunteers clearly practical tasks as most appropriate for them, Aves continued; "unless they are highly trained, and professionally supported, they should not be expected to deal on their own with complex personal and family problems, difficulties arising as a result of mental disturbance, or matters involving delicate and confidential interpersonal relationships" (para 124), thus apparently extending the territory of volunteers beyond purely practical work. Elsewhere Aves claimed that the functions of assessment and planning in dealing with people's problems, "usually fall outside the role of volunteers" (para 276), yet in discussing training for volunteers the Committee had this to say; "it must be borne in mind that in some situations the demands on the volunteer may change as the task progresses ... As the client settles down he will need to achieve a greater degree of independence (from the volunteer) and it will be the task of the worker to help him to do this. The preparation of the volunteer should make him aware of the likelihood of such changes and developments, and able to adjust his method of working to meet the changes as they arise" (para 226). In the light of other views put forward by Aves, it could be claimed that the elements of "assessment" and "planning" involved here are functions of social workers and not of volunteers. Aves continued to present confusing ideas by on the one hand calling for clearer understanding of the respective functions of volunteers and social workers, and on the other hand making a plea for "great variety and flexibility
in the patterns of co-operation" and thought it important that boundaries should not become fixed or rigid (para 278). In addition, the Committee expected that the range of work undertaken by volunteers would widen, and anticipated that "in so far as these volunteers demonstrate their capacity to undertake tasks not previously thought possible for them, or to provide new services to meet needs not previously tackled, they and their need for training and support are likely to be accepted" (para 199). So, from a position of advocating a clear definition of the respective functions of volunteers and social workers, Aves appeared to swing to the opposite view which allowed limitless scope for voluntary workers. Indeed the report said as much in discussing the possibilities for volunteers: "An enormous variety of work provides opportunities for the exercise of differing skills and abilities and for every level of responsibility and initiative" (para 45).

(c) The Interchangeability of their Roles: This is closely allied to the discussion of the respective functions of volunteers and social workers, but is here differentiated in order to highlight additional material in the report. Aves, in confronting the fears of social workers that volunteers might take their place and that the distinction between them might be blurred, was reassuring and as I have already described, at several points alluded to the "vital" and "essential" role of professional social workers. But there were also statements which might be interpreted as undermining that stand. For example, in an enquiry into the training of social workers, Aves suggested that the influence of psychoanalytic theory was such that "problems were defined in such a way that only professional help would be adequate" (para 62). One implication might be that an alternative and also legitimate way to define problems would render only non-professional help adequate. Again, the report suggested that in some areas the volunteer may seek the collaboration of professionals, and added in
parenthesis, "who may themselves be feeling their way in those new services" (para 199), with a possible inference here of a similar level of operation between volunteers and professionals. In a description of the work of Marriage Guidance Councils, Aves thought the quality of their training "admirable" but considered that it "could not be expected to qualify those who receive it for work which requires professional knowledge and skill". But then the report went on to say that "social workers have similar standards and in some fields are undertaking very similar work" (para 274). Does this mean then, that after all the standard of training for volunteers with Marriage Guidance Councils may be equated with that for professional social workers, and that in terms of the work they do, their roles are interchangeable?

(d) Their Knowledge and Skills: Aves presented puzzling facets on the theme of attributes required of volunteers and social workers respectively, both with regard to what should be expected from volunteers and what can be regarded as distinctive in the work of professionals. We were told that the volunteer's special gifts are time, a willingness to help (para 123), warmth and spontaneity (para 208). A "most important aspect" of the volunteer's contribution was her/his "qualities and attitudes" (para 225). The statement that "gifts and interests of every kind can be utilised" (para 125) seems to imply that nothing further need be acquired, and we have already considered Aves' opinion that voluntary work is valuable simply because it is voluntary. References to professional workers seemed to confirm that it was they in whom special knowledge and skills resided: "professional staff who are helped by volunteers can concentrate more on the work for which their special skills are required ..." (para 118). Aves envisaged a partnership where "each has learned what the other can do, what is the purpose and effect of the social worker's training, and how it can be complemented by the volunteer's freedom of
approach and ability to give time to individuals" (para 278). It is perhaps worth noting that those basic human qualities and natural gifts thought to be necessary for volunteers were not mentioned at all by Aves in respect of social workers. One might conclude that either such attributes are not necessary in professionals, or that professional skills and knowledge are of a different order. But if the latter is the case, such a notion is challenged by Aves' declaration elsewhere that volunteers also need training in "special skills, though at different levels from those of professional workers" (para 192) and to gain "more understanding of the problems of human behaviour, especially the more intensive personal services" (para 190). The Committee advocated training in "more specialised skills" for volunteers "selected for responsibility and leadership" (para 223). The reasons why volunteers were thought to need training are not clear and indeed may be conflicting. At some points the proper object of training was to increase the "knowledge and effectiveness of voluntary workers" (para 207), or to give opportunities to "develop and direct his personal gifts and interests to the advantage of the work which he is doing" (para 186). But Aves also said that training should be offered "only to the extent that it is needed to enable the volunteer to develop his own potentialities ..." (para 209). It will be clear to the reader that "the advantage of the work" and the development of "his own potentialities" are not necessarily compatible goals.

Moreover, the "special skills" with which both volunteers and professionals are credited were never defined, and the vagueness of the discussion around each adds to the ambiguity. For instance, Aves acknowledged that "social workers are no longer regarded simply as sources of help to which members of other professions can turn in the interests of their clients. Their role has been extended to include diagnostic functions; they are expected to be
sensitive, not only to the problems of individuals and families, but increasingly of groups and communities, and to know how to call on the varied resources of groups and communities, and to know how to call on the varied resources of the community for the alleviation of these problems" (para 263). But in considering the training needs of volunteers, remarkably similar concepts were brought to bear. According to Aves, volunteers need, among other things, understanding of individual clients' feelings, skill in working with groups in planning and evaluating services, and knowledge of the needs of the community, and the services which exist to meet them (paras 220/223). The report did claim that training should be at "different levels", that volunteers and social workers were "equipped for their work in different ways" and "even when they are doing similar kinds of work there are likely to be considerable differences in their ways of doing them" (para 279). But the failure to spell out what levels, which equipment and what differences, and in all of them why such variation was necessary in any case, inevitably leaves room for difficulties in practice.

The confusion which arises as a result of the discussion as to the different knowledge and skills of volunteers and social workers is epitomised in Aves' examination of the role of the organiser of volunteers. Having claimed "special skills" for social workers for which prolonged training is required, and having emphasised the need for a careful approach to the use of volunteers which would require selection, training and ongoing support for them, the Committee concluded that such developments required the appointment of persons to carry out such tasks. But surprisingly they saw the task being undertaken by either "a social worker, a member of staff with some qualification, or an experienced volunteer" (para 295). In the light of the report's declaration that volunteers needed help, guidance and supervision from "professionally qualified
members of staff" (para 137), it seems odd that it was prepared to be so flexible about the qualifications of the person likely to be most involved with volunteers. With regard to the functions attached to such a post, in addition to "organising ability" (para 145), Aves included the following:

(i) to know where voluntary help is required, and to allocate volunteers to places where they are needed and to work which is suitable for them,
(ii) to see that volunteers are used appropriately and safeguarded from either exploitation or neglect,
(iii) to ensure that volunteers are able to obtain the preparation or training which they need,
(iv) to give support to volunteers in their work, and see that professional help is available for them as and when it is required,
(v) to ensure that any service for which volunteers are relied upon is provided to a proper standard. (para 127)

It might be argued that the assessment and diagnostic skills implied here are similar to those identified with social workers elsewhere in the report. However such skills were also attributed to volunteers in other sections of the report. In any case, Aves was adamant that "the organiser need not necessarily be a professional" (para 146) but without supporting arguments as to why the Committee held this view. "The really important factor ... is that the organiser should be sensitive to, and able to share the problems of social workers as well as those of the volunteers" (para 145). It continued "... there is no reason why volunteers should not be used much more widely in the work of organisation, not only by voluntary bodies but also in the statutory services. We hope that greater attention will be paid to the recruitment of people with appropriate ability and experience for this work, and to the preparation or training which they will need" (para 146).
(e) Values and Attitudes: There appeared to be an assumption in Aves that social workers possess values and attitudes which can be distinguished from "other" values and attitudes. A further assumption was that such professional values and attitudes are universally understood and accepted, since no attempt was made by the report to define them. That the Committee held this view is inferred from their reference to the need for clearer understanding on both sides (i.e., those of volunteers and social workers) of their respective functions, attributes and outlook (para 261). (The Committee appeared to hold the view that all professional social workers on the one hand, and all volunteers on the other, had different, but consistently uniform outlooks). Aves appeared to approve of volunteers who had had a professional training (not necessarily in social work) and who "have been accustomed to professional ethics and attitudes" (para 200), but advised caution in accepting as volunteers those with aspirations to become social workers, since they might have the "wrong" attitudes (para 201). Although the Committee adopted a taken-for-granted approach to the values and attitudes of social workers, as far as volunteers were concerned, they insisted that "the volunteer's own qualities and attitudes are likely to be a most important aspect of his contribution, particularly where, as in supporting, befriending and counselling roles, it is through them he must work" (para 225). (One might well ask how else he could work if not through his qualities and attitudes. Aves did identify certain values and attitudes thought to be essential for volunteers and these included a belief in the equality and worth of the client (para 220), a commitment to the concepts of confidentiality and reliability (para 75), a willingness to examine her/his own motives and develop self-awareness (para 229) and a capacity to limit her/his emotional involvement with clients (para 75). These are all very well, but the question which must be posed is in what way is this list of values and attitudes
distinctive from what one might expect of professional social workers? It is difficult to imagine the social work profession declining to support any one of these items. So, having suggested that the professional approach is different from that of other sections in the community Aves failed to say in which ways and with what values and attitudes, leaving a sense of uncertainty about what exactly the Committee was trying to establish.

Accountability to the Agency: Aves made much of the freedom and flexibility volunteers could bring to the social services and went as far as to say "we are left with a conviction that the social services as we know them, and as they are developing, give almost unlimited scope for voluntary effort" (para 125).

The Committee emphasised volunteers' "friendly unofficialdom", their "neutrality", their "ability to spend time with individuals" (para 56), their "informality", their "relaxed" relationships with clients (para 123). There was not seen to be any need for voluntary workers to "concern themselves with administrative distinctions", so they could "ignore the boundaries between services and concentrate on human needs" (para 18). In addition, they were able, according to the report, to bring "an independent judgement to bear on what they see of any service, and are thus in a position to offer constructive criticism" (para 123). Yet elsewhere Aves supported the "need for close but sympathetic guidance" (para 73) and spoke of giving "purpose and direction" to the work of volunteers (para 86). The view is given that where volunteers are helping in casework services "a fairly high proportion of professional staff will be needed to work with them" (para 92), and the Committee gave arguments to "underline heavily the need for careful selection and allocation" and it called for "more thought about the right and wrong uses of voluntary help" (para 112). A recommendation was made for the appointment of organisers of volunteers, who would see that they were "used
appropriately" and ensure their work was to "a proper standard" (para 127). The report saw it in order that agencies using volunteers would "want to have the first call on their services, to arrange for their training and guidance, and to know that there is no conflict of loyalties or direction" (para 150). There was even a suggestion that volunteers should have identification to prove they were "genuine representatives of the service or agency" (para 157) and Aves signalled approval of the issuing of a "formal letter of appointment for a specified period" (para 158). These examples serve to illustrate the difficulties encountered by the report's on the one hand viewing volunteers as independent agents while on the other seeing them as responsible and accountable to a particular agency or authority.

In this analysis of the Aves Report, I have attempted to demonstrate the potential confusion arising out of the presentation of discrete and, taken in isolation, conflicting ideologies regarding the notions of professionalism and voluntarism in social work. I have pointed out inconsistencies in the reasons put forward to justify the involvement of volunteers, and the difficulties which arose as a result of Aves' assumptions about the differences between professionals and volunteers.

In addition to these aspects of the report, at several points there were puzzling references to "voluntary organisations" and "volunteers", with at times an implication that these concepts were synonymous (paras 8, 33 and 286 for example). On the other hand, Aves welcomed the Seebohm Committee's encouragement to local authorities to engage in the direct recruitment of volunteers, and was itself "convinced that whether or not local authority social services are in the fairly near future made the responsibility of a combined social work department, they will provide scope for a very much wider use of voluntary help than is to be seen at present" (para 291). The Committee
did not commit itself to an opinion as to why it was thought to be a "good thing" for local authorities to recruit directly. Moreover, Aves felt that voluntary organisations should continue to recruit volunteers themselves (para 132), and that local authorities should not confine themselves to any one method of obtaining this kind of help. "We believe that a combination of methods, used according to circumstances and the kind of work to be done, will prove the best solution" (para 291). Not only may one conclude that Aves allows for a range of interpretation about attitudes to volunteers themselves, but also as to the circumstances in which they are thought to be appropriate and as to where responsibility lies for their recruitment and support.

This concludes the examination of the major policy documents affecting Scotland regarding the involvement of lay people in the meeting of social need. We saw, within Seebohm, Kilbrandon, "Social Work and the Community", and in Aves the conflicting ideologies of professionalism and voluntarism. Revolving around these notions it was possible to identify specific sets of ideas which were ambiguous and at times the discussion of them incoherent. These elements concerned:

(i) the purpose of professional and community intervention,
(ii) the respective functions of professionals and voluntary workers,
(iii) identification of the differences in the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values held by professionals and volunteers respectively,
(iv) the client groups at whom professional or volunteer services should be directed.

In addition, Kilbrandon provided a unique feature by introducing ideologies concerning "treatment" and "punishment" of offenders.

In all of these documents the notion of "social need" was
crucial but lacked any definitional clarity. Other researchers have already indicated that this ambiguity leads to the problems of clients (and consequently the means to solve them) being defined by those claiming professional skills. Scott concluded, "... more and more the character of stigma in industrialised societies is changed to fit professional experts' conceptions" (Scott 1970).

It becomes of paramount importance therefore, to follow the ideological ambiguities we have identified in social policy statements, into the field and try to gain an adequate understanding of the ways in which attempts are made by social workers to put them into practice.
CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

The first two chapters of this thesis have been concerned with the difficulties which arise in both the social work literature and in social policy documents around the notions of professionalism and voluntarism in social work. An important but neglected aspect of social work research is the presentation of material on the way in which social workers use these concepts in practice to accomplish their professional role, and how volunteers see themselves in the process. This present chapter describes the methods used and the theoretical assumptions adopted in an attempt to identify this negotiation process through an empirical study.

Survey of Scottish Local Authority Social Work Teams

But first it is necessary to say something of the background study which preceded the research which is the subject of this thesis. The grant-awarding body required a survey of the social work departments in the nine Scottish mainland local authorities. This was essentially a quantitative exercise, the aims of which were those of:

(a) obtaining some idea as to the extent to which volunteers were recruited and involved directly by area teams,
(b) discovering the range of ideologies held by teams as to the concept of volunteer participation, in order to come to a decision about which teams to approach to carry out the fieldwork.

I do not propose to discuss here the detailed findings of
the survey, a report of which (already referred to) was completed in July 1981. Briefly, the survey consisted to two phases:

(i) interviews were carried out at regional level in all nine mainland social work departments in Scotland, in an attempt to discover their policies regarding volunteers,

(ii) this was followed by mailed questionnaires to each of the 141 area social work teams in the nine regions, for completion on behalf of the teams. Information was invited on a variety of aspects of work with volunteers. The number of teams who responded was 127, a return of just over 90%, with 100% response from seven of the regions.

The survey revealed an absence of policy at regional level and a wide variation of practice at operational level. Five of the regions had 18 posts of Voluntary Service Liaison Officer (VSLO) (or its equivalent), part of whose remit was responsibility for volunteers. These jobs had developed mainly on an ad hoc basis and the four models which were identified showed a range of approaches:

(i) the VSLO was located at divisional level serving several teams and having responsibility both for liaison with voluntary organisations and recruitment of volunteers on behalf of teams,

(ii) the VSLO was based at team level serving one team only, but with similar duties as in model (i),

(iii) the VSLO was located at divisional level, but acting as a kind of statutory volunteer bureau and recruiting volunteers on behalf of voluntary organisations,

(iv) the VSLO was again at divisional level but performing very much as a community development officer.

Grading of the 18 VSLO jobs ranged from the equivalent of social work assistant to senior social worker. Thirteen of
the incumbents had no formal qualifications, and three were professionally qualified social workers. These variations appear to reflect some of the ambiguities which were noted in Aves for example, regarding organisation of the work of volunteers and their attachment to either voluntary or statutory agencies.

Of the 127 teams answering the questionnaires, 44 said they had a policy on volunteers, but for 12 of them the policy was not to use volunteers directly, rather through voluntary organisations.

Having a policy on volunteers was associated with a "formal" approach to voluntarism ie: the presence of some kind of co-ordinator in the team (who might be a professionally qualified social worker, or a community worker, or a volunteer), selection, training and on-going contact with volunteers, though again the methods of selection, training and supervision varied a great deal.

The existence of a policy on volunteers and the presence of a co-ordinator were associated with a high drop-out of volunteers (though only 59.7% of the teams reported on drop-out). In addition where there was said to be volunteer frustration and under use, drop-out was recorded as high.

In all there were said to be 1171 volunteers working with 60 teams. The overwhelming majority were women (80.4%). The kinds of jobs they were given to do were mainly practical and befriending tasks, though some teams did use volunteers for work with groups, work requiring "special skills" and for "counselling". The most likely client categories with whom volunteers were involved were the elderly and the physically or mentally handicapped, though of the 14 categories of client suggested to teams, all were mentioned by one team or another as having some volunteer involvement. Those who could expect minimal involvement of volunteers
were adults before the courts, adoptive/foster parents, prisoners and their families and the homeless.

The picture which emerged was one of a range of different approaches and a piecemeal pattern in the use of volunteers. The spectrum of attitudes to voluntarism is illustrated by the following quotes from two teams within one region. The first team had a "commitment to expand the use of volunteers ... to help service specific client groups". Its policy was to establish a senior post with responsibility for volunteers and called for substantial input in training courses for social workers in the use of volunteers. The second team held the view that "the stimulation of local voluntary groups enhances the service to the client but in addition develops community awareness. It is 'healthier' and in the long run more profitable than simply increasing the department's resources by volunteers ... the use of volunteers within a department ... makes little or no contribution to the community's independence and self-awareness. Indeed we believe it may inhibit it".

An examination of the data gathered by the questionnaires led to the following conclusions:

(i) social work teams did not have a uniform approach to the ways in which social need may be met, but rather a set of assumptions as to the most appropriate ways of meeting need,

(ii) a community ideology to meet need was open to range of interpretation,

(iii) ideologies about intervention in social problems related to assumptions regarding (at least), (a) the needs of recipients, (b) the recipients themselves, and (c) the kinds of services offered.

But such are the limitations of a mailed questionnaire method of collecting information that several questions are left unanswered because one cannot come close enough to
the process involved in the interpretation of policy statements or explain why difficulties in the system arise. Some of the questions are:

- how do competing ideologies about professional and voluntary means to meet social need come to be held, and in what ways do social workers attempt to implement them?
- in the light of Smith's and Hardiker's work, what are the limits of primary ideologies and in what circumstances does the phenomenon of multiple ideologies occur?
- what is the range of ideologies held by volunteers, and where do they see themselves in the process?
- what is the effect on services offered to clients of these attempts to operationalise different ideologies?

The rest of this chapter describes an empirical model which provides for an examination of these questions.

Design of the Study

The design of the study and of the construction of the writing up of the empirical findings must acknowledge the work of Gilbert Smith in this field. I have already referred to his research into social work practice and his insights into the usefulness of a move away from definitional debate of social work issues and towards a study of their use by professionals. Thus, Smith regarded the notion of "social need" as a topic for rather than a resource for social scientific enquiry. In the same way I have treated the notions of "volunteers", "knowledge and skills", and "clients" as a focus for the examination of their use by social work professionals and others. Chapter 4 attempts to convey a flavour of the teams in terms of their formal ideologies and begins to touch on some of the complexities of practice. The following three chapters contain a detailed analysis of the fieldwork and chapter 7 in particular, "Images of
Clients", relies heavily for its design on Smith's framework for studying "social need" (Smith 1980). The conclusion in chapter 8 attempts to look at some of the implications of the study for social work in terms of its professionalisation, its service to clients and its attempts to involve the community in caring, especially in the light of the Barclay Committee recommendations.

Outline of the Empirical Study

Lofland, in his book "Analysing Social Settings" mentioned that "the bedrock of human understanding is face to face contact" (Lofland 1971). A similar conviction in the conducting of this present study was borne out by the obvious limitations of the mailed questionnaire survey, and it was felt important to gather information about people in situ, from direct observation of them going about their job. One of the more helpful aspects of the questionnaire survey was its bringing to light of the range of ideologies regarding the relationship between professional intervention and community involvement help by social work teams in Scotland. From this range I was able to focus on three teams in particular, all within the one district in the same region, whose answers to the questionnaire appeared to represent the spectrum of beliefs held by social workers.

All three of these teams were serviced by one volunteers' organiser, who, although a divisional appointment, was based in one of the teams. Since the three teams were in the same administrative area and had the services of the same volunteers' organiser, it was felt that the number of variables would thus be reduced, so achieving greater validity for the study. Of the three teams one was committed to a professionally-run volunteer service, a second was less committed but adhered to the principle of
volunteer development, and the third held the view that volunteers attached to social work teams inhibit community independence. All three teams were approached and agreed to take part in the study, but in the event the team holding the middle-range view withdrew because of a drastic reduction in staff, which included the area officer's departure. This was unfortunate, but since the remaining two teams represented extremes on the ideological continuum it was felt that the loss was not insuperable.

I spent six weeks in each of the two teams as a participant observer and had informal discussions with staff, as well as semi-structured, tape-recorded interviews. The staff involved were mainly professional social workers, though in both teams I decided also to interview social work assistants, homemakers, occupational therapists and home-help organisers. This totalled 31 staff, with 16 in one team and 15 in the other. Of the 31, twenty-two were professional social workers, including four senior social workers.

The inclusion of ancillary staff needs some clarification since it had not been an original intention of the study. It became apparent in the early days of my fieldwork in the teams that such workers not only provided additional comparisons between professionals and others but that their attitudes were crucial to the sustaining of the social reality constructed by the teams. Their perceptions were particularly relevant in the team which had volunteers attached, towards legitimating beliefs about and practices involving volunteers. Material on those staff is introduced in the text where it appeared to be appropriate and enlightening.

Only one of the teams used the services of volunteers and I was given the names of all 46 who were active at the time of the study and in addition those of a further 29 who had discontinued during the three years the volunteers' organiser had been in post. Of the 46 current volunteers, 42 agreed to be interviewed. Two others were ill, one did not keep
appointments and one had apparently moved house. Of the 29 ex-volunteers I was able to interview 24, and of the others one was ill, one did not keep appointments and three had moved house. These interviews were tape-recorded and took place mainly in the volunteers' homes although for a small number (four) it was more convenient to meet in the office of the area team.

Although my declared interest was the beliefs held about volunteers by social workers, in carrying out participant observation I tried to make it clear that I was interested generally in the way social workers went about their job and sought to include a variety of situations within teams. This meant that in both teams I was able to observe workers in formal meetings and informal meetings such as coffee and lunch breaks and social outings. In the team where volunteers were used, which I shall call the Hilltown team, I sat in on group meetings and on supervision sessions between social workers and volunteers and was in a position to witness other social worker-volunteer encounters, since the volunteers came into the office from time to time. The team where volunteers were not used I shall call the Lakeside team.

In all, over the twelve weeks as observer in the two teams the number of meetings I attended was as follows:

Hilltown: Twenty-seven meetings of the Intake team; eight meetings of the Elderly Group; seven meetings of the Occupational Therapy (OT) team; five of the Long-term team; four of the senior staff meetings, three supervision sessions of volunteers and two full staff meetings.

Lakeside: this team was far less structured than at Hilltown and much of the interaction was concentrated in the coffee room where business was conducted regularly. I attended on eighty-three occasions (morning and afternoon coffee
and lunch breaks), and in addition was present at six meetings each of the "Upstairs" and "Downstairs" teams. (An explanation of the functions of all these staff groupings will be given in the next chapter).

In addition I had numerous casual conversations with staff and was present at a variety of encounters between office staff, and among office staff and others from other agencies and on a small number of occasions with clients of the teams.

General Methodological Orientations

The study which will be described in subsequent chapters employed a qualitative approach. The initial questionnaire survey of social work teams provided quantitative material on volunteers in local authority social work in Scotland and this was the framework from which important components were deduced, specifically those of ideologies concerning professional and community involvement. But statistical portrayals must be given human meaning in the context of qualitative, ie: direct face-to-face contact. The choice to study teams at either end of the ideological continuum as stated in formal terms, was a way of obtaining inductive knowledge of human activity, which aimed to understand, not only how social workers describe their world ideally, but the practical outcome of their efforts. As Lofland has said, "for each world known about is another world that one does not know, but which one may want or need to know".

A method to achieve this adopts a humanistic interpretative perspective which seeks to learn to see the world of an individual or group "from the inside", to have access to the world as it looks and sounds to those within it. The
goal of this phenomenological point of view which makes the lay person the expert about her/his world, implies that a positive approach is not the only valid model for scientific sociology. As Schwartz and Jacobs commented (page 7):

"Instead of trying to discover things about a social world that those within it do not know, the reverse is sought. We want to know what the actors know, see what they see, understand what they understand. As a result our data attempts to describe their vocabularies, their ways of looking, their sense of the important and unimportant and so on" (Schwartz & Jacobs 1979).

Here the most important preoccupation for sociology becomes access to meanings or "understandings". A qualitative methodology emphasises the importance of the researcher's closeness to groups of interacting individuals, from which derive the social processes that produce meanings and thus the "real world". Blumer termed this development "symbolic interaction", in which socially derived meanings are ascribed to things and are modified through an individual's interpretative process as she/he comes to terms with the world in which she/he lives (Blumer 1969).

Justification for this subjective point of view is given by Schwartz and Jacobs: "These arguments can be justified metaphysically by the argument that the only "real" social reality is the reality from within. They can be justified politically by arguing that people have to live in the world that sociologists define for them and that such definitions of their world will affect their lives in practical ways because of the political, social and psychological consequences of research. Finally, they can be justified scientifically by taking the really deep questions in sociology to be social-psychological: ones such as how is communication possible; how do meanings systems mutually affect each other; or what is the origin of values?"

One of the criticisms directed against a qualitative methodology concerns its generalisability, and it is argued that information from case studies such as this one cannot be
applied on a wider scale. It is likely that Hilltown and Lakeside present unique features in the ways they see work with volunteers.

One approach might be to suggest that, since they were chosen from opposing ends of a continuum of ideologies, other teams which took part in the questionnaire survey (the macro aspect of this research), function within the spectrum created. The questionnaire survey had provided answers as to whether or not teams actually used volunteers and therefore the bald statistics were available already. The micro study could be seen to put "meat on the statistical bones" through a descriptive account of social workers' worlds as seen by the actors themselves. Thus the qualitative data may be used to talk about this other quantitative world. But such an approach might be open to accusations of evading the question of generalisability. The fact is that generalisability is a problem for all scientific enquiry, whatever the theoretical and methodological perspective, and one must ask whether in any case generalisable statements can be meaningfully made. My hope is rather that any value of this study will lie in its contribution to a wider pool of similar research. There is a growing body of research which has used qualitative methods to understand how groups of individuals experience and act upon their social world. Any additional information which can be offered whether the focus is professional social work, psychiatric ideologies (Strauss 1964), street gang behaviour (Whyte 1955), or death and dying (Sudnow 1967), is surely valid and of value, and may contribute to larger theoretical issues.

The contention that quantitative methods are more "objective" than qualitative has been challenged by authors such as Blumer (Blumer 1956), and for example Phillipson has questioned whether indeed the more formalised sociological methods can be "value free". He commented that the researcher as well as the subjects of research is "constrained by the implicit rules governing practical reasoning and conversation"
(Phillipson 1972). In other words, whether methods of obtaining data are highly structured or relatively flexible they are guided by the personal interests and theoretical stance of the researcher. Glaser and Strauss refocussed the research process on the generation rather than the testing of theory, which would they claimed result in grounded theories which "instead of forcing data into preconceived 'objective' reality, seek to mobilise as a research tool the categories which the participants themselves use to order their experience" (Glaser & Strauss 1968). This seeking of meanings implies that concepts and variables should be treated as problematic and statistical accounts become irrelevant when data is collected in a variety (a "triangulation") of ways. In this study conclusions are supported by quotations from the actors themselves, considered in the context in which they were uttered and with in mind the dynamic nature of a notion of "multiple ideologies" rather than a presentation of tables which tend to "lock" individuals into static attitudinal positions.

With this perspective, the choice of participant observation as the means to collect the information I sought was the only appropriate way to, in Blumer's words, "catch the process as it occurs" in the experience of those I wished to study. Becker and Geer, in supporting a method of participant observation, have said that it provides:

"first-hand reports of events and actions, and much fuller coverage of an organisation's activities, giving direct knowledge of matters that, from interviewing, we could know about only by hearsay" (Becker & Geer 1957).

Gold has classified the various procedures which are named "participant observation" and the meaning of the term is not immediately apparent (Gold 1970). The method I used was typified by Gold as "the participant as observer": ie: in sharing the day-to-day experiences of social workers in Hilltown and Lakeside, my presence as an investigator was known and generally accepted by the teams as I attempted to
develop relationships with individuals over time and to adopt their perspective. This implies not only observing participants in a range of different situations, but also, through informal discussions, and formal interviews, learning and sharing the meanings inherent in their symbolic world. Such attempts to collect information stem from what Denzin termed a "triangulated perspective" (Denzin 1970). And by adding interviews with current and ex-volunteers, it was possible to discover what their concepts, as designators of units of reality also, had in common with those of the social workers.

Finally, it must be said that if this approach assumes that the nature of human beings is varied, that the phenomena to be studied have quality and richness of meaning, and have innumerable possibilities for interpretation, then the researcher's personal interests and special perspective will be reflected in the report of her/his experience in a culture. Any claim on my part to a "fly on the wall" study of a "world out there" would be entirely at odds with the perspective I have adopted, and I have no wish to divorce my own beliefs and assumptions from the way in which this thesis has been constructed. The data which I have collected is part and parcel of my theoretical interests and the methodology chosen, although I have been at pains to ascertain that the meanings I ascribed to individuals were those which they intended, by a process of continually checking these with them. In addition those patterns within teams which I describe in the empirical study have been observed over a period and are not concluded as a result of only one or two encounters. As a researcher I was aware of my contribution in constructing the social world and therefore of the importance of the effort to understand the reality of others. The end result may be partial truth, but nonetheless a social reality, since the scientific enterprise itself is basically communal. As Bruyn has it (page 254),

"the larger truth will appear in the judicious combination
of those partial perspectives which, on the one hand, can predict the behaviour of man, and on the other hand, can enlighten his world of choice by disclosing its variety, thus increasing his freedom of action" (Bruyn 1966).

Theoretical Assumptions

From the discussion above it will be concluded that in the approach taken to this study, there is an intimate relationship between methods and theory, and I would argue that only a methodology which revolves around participant observation can support the theoretical framework, which here is spelt out in greater detail, though alluded to in the discussion on methods.

The basic theoretical contention is that reality is socially constructed, that what people "know" pertains to specific social contexts which must be taken into account in any analysis. With regard to this study in particular, the question which the researcher needs to ask is, not only, "what is the range of ideologies of professionalism and voluntarism within Hilltown and Lakeside teams?"; but also "what are the processes by which this 'knowledge' comes to be socially established as 'reality'?" Work on the notion of the subjectively constructed nature of reality was carried out by Schutz who concentrated on the structure of the common-sense world of everyday life (Schutz 1962). His ideas were later taken up and developed by Berger and Luckman who described the foundations of knowledge in everyday life as

"the objectifications of subjective processes (and meanings) by which the intersubjective common sense world is constructed" (Berger & Luckman 1966).

Given that our social world is not constituted of objects that have intrinsic meaning, but that their meaning lies in our plans of action, a second assumption is that the
actors - the social workers and the volunteers, must be studied from the point of view of the individuals themselves. Researchers such as Zimmerman (1966), Cicourel (1968), Sudnow (1967), Strauss et al (1964) and Blum (1970) all designed their studies to take this into account, and all produced detailed ethnographic descriptions of those activities and practices which gave the social world of the actors its meaning. As Sudnow recorded, "rather than entering the hospital to investigate 'death' and 'dying' as I conceived them, I sought to develop 'definitions' of each phenomena based on actions involved in their recognition, treatment and consequences".

A third assumption of this theoretical perspective is that behaviour is observable at two distinct levels, the symbolic and the interactional. This implies the importance of learning the language of the people one is studying as well as trying to discover the meanings they ascribe to their behaviour by constantly checking out with them their perception of their own behaviour and that of others. Denzin made the point that "humans are able to act because they have agreed on the meanings they will attach to the relevant objects in their environment. But ... common symbolic language must be present ..." Berger and Luckman saw language as the most important sign system of human society which "is capable not only of constructing symbols that are highly abstracted from everyday experience, but also of "bringing back" these symbols and presenting them as objectively real elements in everyday life". To complete an investigation into the world of social workers and volunteers, symbols and interaction need to be brought together.

Finally, there are the "situated" aspects of human conduct. Symbols, meanings, conceptions, all vary because of the situation. Denzin noted that situations vary widely in terms of the norms governing conduct within them, and participants in any behavioural setting both create and
interpret the rules that influence normal conduct within that situation. Douglas posited the principle of the contextual determination of meaning,

"the basic idea of which is that the context within which a given statement or action occurs, is of fundamental importance in determining the meanings imputed to it by the members of society" (Douglas 1971).

It would be a mistake to view ideologies out of the context of the time and place in which they occur, and the knowledge which is assumed about the persons involved, since they reflect on-going definitions of social situations.

To sum up, the theoretical framework assumes that reality is subjectively and socially constructed and therefore must be studied from the point of view of the actors themselves. The study must take into account the symbolic and interactional aspects, and give attention to the situational features of meanings for professionals and volunteers. With these principles in mind the discussion now turns to my experience of the fieldwork.

Fieldwork

The fieldwork took place during January to April 1980, and as I have already said, consisted of 6 weeks' participant observation in each team, in addition to the 96 formal interviews carried out with social workers and volunteers. My gaining access to the two teams was not without some difficulties. In Hilltown the area officer agreed readily to my approach, and a date was fixed for my coming to the team. However, within two weeks of my expected arrival there was an objection from the team members, since they felt they had not been consulted. After a team meeting it was agreed that the arrangement should stand, and in the event the delay in my starting date was only one week.
Lakeside presented problems of a different kind. The area officer, having agreed informally to my proposed fieldwork, subsequently wrote saying that after discussion with the senior staff, since volunteers were not used by the team there seemed no point in my spending 6 weeks with them. However, when I re-emphasised that my interest was primarily in the ways social workers carried out their job, permission was given readily.

The teams' knowledge of my interest in volunteers did serve to restrict my activities initially, especially in Hilltown where, at the start, I was expected to be involved in only those meetings or encounters which concerned volunteers specifically. As a result I was often not informed of other events, which were seen by the staff to be irrelevant to my area of concern, and it was necessary for me to make special efforts to be included in as wide a range of activities as possible.

This was less of a problem at Lakeside since they did not use volunteers in the team, and as a result included me much more fully from the beginning.

In both teams it was some time before the purpose of my presence was understood, and constant repetition was required. This is not to imply that I gave details of my assumptions about professional ideologies, but rather to explain simply that I was concerned with "the ways social workers go about their job, and how their beliefs about volunteers fit into that". One of the ways I used to develop rapport initially, was to let it be known that I was also a social worker by profession and therefore sympathetic to the teams' aims. I discovered in both teams that this added to their sense of unease and wariness in the early days so I modified the amount of personal information I offered, though always trying to answer questions honestly.
In Hilltown the sense of suspicion gave way to acceptance of my presence, and some feeling of my "right" to be there. This was followed by a phase of what I experienced as seduction, which held a danger of in Denzin's phrase: "going native", when I was invited to adopt the perspective of those I was studying. Towards the end of the fieldwork I sensed a withdrawal from me on the part of the staff and a loss of interest in my activities. The process was similar in Lakeside. An interesting aspect of the "seduction" phase was that in Hilltown, the danger was of my adopting a "therapeutic" perspective as a way of viewing the world, while in Lakeside the danger was of adopting a derisory attitude to clients and to others not seen as part of the office culture.

With regard to management of the fieldwork, there were no problems with regard to making appointments to see either volunteers or social workers, and the majority willingly agreed to participate. Interviews with volunteers were set up through a letter from the volunteers' organiser which contained an explanation of my research, supplied by me, and encouragement from the organiser to co-operate. This was followed by a letter from me to the volunteers suggesting appointments and the onus was on the volunteers to cancel or change the arrangement. Interviews with both social workers and volunteers were conducted around the framework of lists of topics of interest to the study, and all of the topics were tackled in each interview, though not necessarily in the order in which they appeared on my lists (which are included in the appendix). I am aware of the inherent dangers of such a flexible approach but felt informality and spontaneity were important towards respondents' offering more than simply stereotyped answers. The tapes of the interviews were transcribed verbatim, and although I had the help of an audio-typist, I transcribed the majority myself, and in any case listened to all the recordings. Transcribing the tapes was physically tiring
and time-consuming, but there seemed no short-cut to extracting the information they contained.

With regard to field notes, I tried to record my observations as they occurred, or as soon afterwards as possible. Sometimes I made brief notes and dictated them into a tape recorder later in the day. I found that staff in both teams expected me to be writing things down and in some situations I was able to, for example, spend a morning in the room of a team and bring my notebook, explaining that I had some notes to write up from a previous occasion. At the same time I was able to record something of what was happening amongst the team members while I was there. Although this was an effective way of gathering material its deviousness caused me anxiety and conflict, and on occasions I suffered waves of embarrassment if someone came to stand beside or behind me, or glanced at my notes as we engaged in conversation. On rare occasions I was asked jokingly if I was writing down what people had said, but no one ever asked to see what I had written.

Analysis and Presentation

One consequence of the methods of data collection in qualitative research is that a great deal of rich and different kinds of data are accumulated, but without a clear formula for organising its analysis and making sense of the material. The problem of "cutting into the phenomenon" (Schwartz & Jacobs) which involves discovering meanings, tracing patterns and theorising about the social world of individuals, carries with it no ready-made method of achieving it. In this study the kinds of material of which I needed to gain an understanding had been gleaned in a variety of ways including informal meetings among social workers, and social workers and others, either in a group or the one-to-one setting; in informal situations such as coffee and lunch breaks or the
local pub; or taking part in or eavesdropping on casual conversations including two or more people. There were also transcripts of more formal, semi-structured interviews, and to a lesser extent information taken from written records in the team. It seemed that the only way to tackle the analysis was to become thoroughly familiar with the material and I set about reading all the data. Having done this twice it became clear that this was less fruitful than a perusal of the material which had in mind those topics in which I was particularly interested.

These concerned the respondents' perceptions about volunteers and their role, about professional knowledge and skills and about the issue of client need. This allowed me to code the material and extract information which was conducive to an analysis of the content.

In this attempt to understand the symbols and their meanings in the cultures of the two teams I found Bruyn's four levels of interpretation particularly helpful, and I shall discuss the effort of analysis within that framework. Bruyn postulated four steps in analysis, original meanings, themes, configurations and theories (Bruyn 1966, pages 237-244).

(i) Original Meanings: In the tradition of the founder of phenomenology, Edmund Husserl, the fundamental principle of studies such as this one is a concern with the problem of meaning (Husserl 1931). Validity of any conclusion is based on the researcher's conclusions and the subject's intentions in their original meanings being the same. In collecting the data I made efforts to find out, where possible, what events meant to the individuals concerned in them, either by asking at the time or seeking clarification later. A first step in analysing the material was to gain an understanding of the individuals' meanings in their cultural context and to extract such an understanding from the fieldwork recordings. In this way I hoped to gain some sense of what individual actors meant when they appeared to hold
different ideologies in different contexts about the topics of interest.

(ii) Themes: As a result of an attempt to understand original meanings it was then possible to move to a conceptual level which allowed for a search for patterns among the responses received and to begin to interpret the material. Bruyn defined a theme as "an explanatory principle postulated by the observer as a major motif visibly threading its way through important dimensions of a culture". An example of a theme which I have identified in the presentation of the material is the value held by social workers in Lakeside and Hilltown that "counselling of clients is carried out by social workers and not volunteers" and I have tried to illustrate how symbolic expression was given to that theme in the activities of the respondents. Although as I have said, identification of themes carries an interpretive element, it is still close to description in most instances. Indeed in places I have used descriptive accounts of incidents and events to point to themes by their (in Schwartz & Jacobs' term) "excavation", which entails their detailed analysis with the goal of opening up topics and identifying patterns. I have made extensive use of verbatim quotations which perhaps convey themes and meanings more vividly and accurately than the language of the researcher, though like Backett (1978) I am aware that such a presentation carries a risk of becoming tedious to the reader.

(iii) Configurations: A third level of analysis which I have attempted is to arrive at what Bruyn termed "a gestalt of meanings". This is concerned with not only identifying themes, but with describing how separate patterns within the world of the two teams made their cultures coherent and integrated. In other words, in the case of Lakeside and Hilltown I have tried to answer the question, how did these two teams set about managing the themes which appeared in their everyday world, and integrate them in a way which made sense of their respective distinctive social structures,
social work orientations and professional identities?

(iv) Theories: Throughout the above discussion about different levels of interpretation theoretical interests have been assumed, and the levels are by no means mutually exclusive. Earlier in this chapter I declared my theoretical perspective and of course that determines how the data is interpreted and presented. I do not feel a need to apologise for that, and in the conclusion I have tried to take the study beyond a concern with two social work teams towards wider social and political issues, bringing to bear those general theories I thought to be relevant.
PART II. THE NEGOTIATION OF PROFESSIONALISM
CHAPTER 4

OVERVIEW OF THE TEAMS

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the settings of the two teams and to convey a flavour of the different cultures which existed in each. Here I have not attempted a detailed analysis of the material but focussed on the formal ideologies at Lakeside and Hilltown and how these were used to facilitate the passage of work and to maintain the professional self-image. I have anticipated some of the complexities of the operationalisation of these ideologies, a topic which will be developed in subsequent chapters. At this stage I have not included the volunteers' perceptions, except where they were affected by the organisational structure. What I have begun to identify here are the ways needs were reconstructed to fit available models; the "neutralising" techniques used by the teams; strategies for rationing work; power relationships and the differences between private and public language at Lakeside and Hilltown. As I have already said, the two teams were within the same district of the regional social work department, but their organisational structures and internal cultures were very different. Nevertheless, as I hope to illustrate, a similar range of ideologies appeared in each and efforts to implement them had similar outcomes, ie: a control of the flow of work through the teams. However, their general work orientations presented such extreme positions that I have categorised them as being a "welfare" model (at Lakeside) and a "therapeutic" model (at Hilltown).

The Lakeside office was situated in a mainly rural, economically depressed area of high unemployment, caused by the closure of coal mines in the district. The community
had a high elderly population as a result of many younger people leaving to find work elsewhere. The area office served five major townlands and was based in one of them in a converted police station which the team occupied entirely. It comprised two floors which housed the "upstairs" and "downstairs" teams, who operated on a patch system. The area officer's room was upstairs along with that of the "upstairs" senior, his team of social workers, a social work assistant and a homemaker. The reception area was located downstairs, along with the "downstairs" senior's room, her team of social workers, social work assistant, homemaker, the area occupational therapist (OT) and the home-help organiser.

Also on this floor was the coffee room, an important focus for staff interaction since the area office had few team meetings in any formal way, and social work staff met there regularly for morning and afternoon breaks and lunch periods. At the back of the building beside the kitchen area were two interviewing rooms, still reminiscent of police cells, where the occupants could be observed by looking through the windows on the doors.

The system of handling referrals and files was simple. A referral form was completed by either the duty officer or the clerk, an index card held in "pending" and a file made up by the clerk. This was then passed to the team senior and dealt with in the weekly allocation meeting held by each team (except in the case of OT referrals which were extracted by the clerical staff and passed direct to the OT). The decision from the allocation meeting was passed back to the clerk who marked the index card "current" or "closed" and passed the case to a social worker, if appropriate. Files were held in a straight alphabetical system. The clerical staff also maintained a referral book listing referrals chronologically and allocating a serial number.

By contrast, the Hilltown office was located in the major town of the region and its catchment area encompassed not
only districts which were economically and socially deprived, but those that were comparatively affluent. The building housing the office was a large rambling Victorian structure which in places still had tiled walls. It was shared with the health department and there was easy access by a connecting door. Reception by the social work office was immediately on entry to the front of the building, and the two teams (Intake and Long-term), the seniors' office, the OT team, the waiting room and interviewing rooms were all in this vicinity. The area officer's room and the home-help section were to some extent isolated from the others since they were on the first floor and approached by a large staircase.

The staff operated in groups for the processing of work. These groups were (i) the Intake team (comprising the senior, his social workers, one of whom was a specialist in family therapy, a social work assistant and a homemaker); (ii) the Long-term team (the senior, her social workers and a social work assistant); (iii) the OT group (the OT, a social work assistant, a home-help (family aide), two volunteers and the assistant home-help organiser with a social worker as "liaison" person sitting in on meetings); (iv) the Elderly group (a social worker, the home-help organiser, a home-help (family aide) and 6-7 volunteers).

With regard to the referral procedure, the office clerk completed a referral form for all referrals and passed them to the Intake senior for discussion at the Intake team's allocation meeting held daily. Referrals were passed from there to the Long-term team, or to the Elderly group, or allocated to an Intake social worker. The decision was communicated to the clerk to record. As at Lakeside requests for aids were extracted by the clerk and passed direct to the OT group. Where a case was allocated, the clerk prepared a file and in the case of a social worker, delivered the file to her/him. If the allocation was to the Elderly group, the file was collected by the social worker
who was chairperson of that group, for further allocation to the home-help or volunteers attached to the Elderly group. After allocation cases were categorised as "Probation" or "Elderly", or "Volunteers" or "Intake" or "Long-term" and filed under these headings in the typing pool. Each member of staff and volunteers had a "pocket" in the general office where clerical staff deposited correspondence and circulars for collection.

Two additional members of staff were based at the Hilltown office, though in fact were divisional appointments. These were the Court Liaison Officer, who was a part-time basic grade social worker with a desk in the Long-term team's room, and the Volunteers Organiser who was at senior social worker level and shared an office with the other seniors. Both had a remit to service Hilltown, Lakeside and the third office in the district. All of the social workers in both Lakeside and Hilltown held CQSW or its equivalent.

In addition to this formal structure the area office at Hilltown had been responsible for a range of innovations in intervention in social problems. These included a weekly group for ex-psychiatric patients run by volunteers, a nursery with a social worker and volunteers attached, an intermediate treatment (IT) group and a day centre for the physically handicapped. The team had experimented with group supervision of probationers, and one of them was ongoing while I was in the office, and with group vetting of adoptive and foster parents, as well as group training of volunteers as a regular occurrence. There were plans to set up a mutual support group for the mentally handicapped and another for attempted suicide patients. The area office had also been active in supporting the setting up of an independent IT project and branches of such organisations as "Cruse" (for widowed people), and Women's Aid (for women who had suffered domestic violence).

The remainder of this chapter will be devoted to a descrip-
tion of the respective office cultures of these two teams to give a flavour of each, and to compare and contrast the ways in which they constructed their worlds. I propose to do this under four headings:

(i) social work problems: how they were defined and presented.
(ii) classifying clients.
(iii) concepts of professionalism.
(iv) volunteers.

(i) Social work problems: how they were defined and presented:
I have already referred to the Lakeside team as falling within a general ideological category of a "welfare" model. This is because in defining and presenting cases there was a heavy emphasis within the team on such facets as the material aspects of the problem and less on psychological or social factors, and the moral character of the client featured as an important influence in decision making. Referrals presented to the allocation meeting were dealt with routinely and there was no "opening up" input by staff which might stimulate discussion and lead to consideration of a range of modes of intervention. Requests for statutory reports or residential care for the elderly were invariably allocated, while events such as eviction were not acted upon and notification of gas or electricity bill arrears were met by issuing routine letters inviting contact. The thrust was towards limiting the volume of work flowing through the office, and there appeared to be four main ways in which the flow was controlled. These were by focussing on:

(a) the instrumental or material aspects of referrals
(b) the character of the client
(c) the referral agent
(d) "sharpening".
I shall examine these in turn. (Most of the material presented here was observed at allocation meetings but I have also included information collected in other contexts, and the examples given represent patterns which emerged from the data).

(a) The instrumental or material aspects: The team's workload was restricted by focussing on material need even though the specific reason for referral may have been different. An example of this is a letter requesting support for a family where the husband was said to be a "mental defective". I read the letter which described the family as a very complicated on in need of social work help. When the referral was presented to the allocation meeting the senior social worker said "This is about a boy who keeps wearing out his shoes. What has this got to do with us? We can't do anything about that". Here the senior selected information which had been presented by the referral as part of a larger picture and offered it to the team as the reason for referral. Interestingly, when the letter was read later informally by another member of the team, he selected the same piece of information and used it to reinforce the team's original decision not to take any action. (This technique also served to cast aspersions on the judgement of the referral agent, providing a second justification for rejecting the referral).

Typically, if cases were referred where the "presenting problem" was that of financial problems for example, or homelessness, the social worker might negotiate with the creditor or the housing authority on a one-off basis but without subsequent allocation of the case or discussion with the client of other possible difficulties. Explanations given by staff for this fell into two categories: that of agency policy (for instance not to give payments of money in certain circumstances), and that of client self-determination which held a concern to "intervene" in problems rather than to "interfere". Yet the office
rhetoric about the context of the social work task held an image of professionals as concerned more with practical difficulties of clients than with their psychological problems.

(b) The character of the client: One of the strongest patterns emerging from the data was that where the moral character of the client was used to withhold assistance, a pattern noted by other authors such as Rees (1978), Pearson (1975) and Smith (1980) for example, and where value judgements about deserving and undeserving clients affected decisions made by social workers.

Below are some quotes from my fieldnotes which illustrate this:

"A letter from the gas board reported arrears. Amy knew the man and said: 'He's working and is just a lazy bugger, and should be able to pay the bills'. It was decided that no action should be taken."

"A referral had been received from the electricity board about a family with bills already known to the SWD. Walter said he had had contact with them some time ago when the woman rang up saying she had cut her wrists. He had told her to dab them with surgical spirit ... Jane said, 'it is judgemental but she didn't deserve kids like she had'. Andy said, 'Oh, yes, they were super kids'. Sylvia said, 'I've no sympathy with her, if it had been an accident I would but not now. We got rid of her for a while after that time when she rang up and Walter didn't give her any sympathy'. Andy said 'The only thing to do is for her to commit suicide'. Sylvia said, 'Somebody ought to teach her to do it right'. No further action on that one."

"Mrs L had left her husband - seen by Diane on duty, who said she had referred her to DHSS and housing. Mike said, 'She knows the system. She has left her husband hundreds of times before. She comes to us pleading ignorance but really she'll get by alright'. No further action."

"Lunchtime. Walter said the region have some money and out of the blue they have decided to set up a day centre for offenders. Carl thought this was ridiculous - 'What will they do with them?' Andy suggested a course in house-breaking - 'Bring your own jemmy?' Walter suggested it
should be called Parkhurst House."

Rees, in his study of social worker-client interactions, suggested a relationship between value judgements as a means to making decisions about cases, and attempts on the part of social workers to avoid uncertainty in situations in which the steps to follow were not well known or in which they felt powerless to help. Certainly in the case of Lakeside, activities were highly routinised and the range of courses of action open to social workers was restricted so that work was confined to contexts in which there were known procedures and some degree of certainty of outcome.

One very powerful aspect of the application of moral judgement to restrict the volume of work was the team's use of joking, which served to neutralise problems and prohibit discussion of cases at any other level. The derisory joking used in the quote above is an example of this frequently-used technique. Another instance was where a referral had been received of a 6-year old boy thought to be at moral risk since his mother was running a brothel. The referral agent was described as a neighbour who wanted a social worker to call to discuss the "goings on". The question was asked, "Do we really want to go and hear the gory details? Remember what happened the last time we went to investigate one of these complaints." The last comment brought laughter from the team and seemed to confirm that no action was necessary. In this way the impact of the referral was diffused and further "unpacking" avoided. Such a technique was potent both in any focussing on the referral agent and on the character of the client.

(c) The referral agent: There were two ways in which the referral agent was used as a means of limiting intervention, by denigration or professional collusion. In other words, by either casting doubt on the referral agent's judgement* 

*Goffman suggested that another effect of this "backstage derogation" was to maintain the morale of the team (E GOFFMAN 1956: The presentation of self in everyday life, page 111)
or by supporting an action or decision already carried out by her/him, intake could be restricted. An example of these two techniques having been used one immediately after the other in a coffee break conversation, illustrates the point. The student was discussing an old lady with whom she is involved. She mentioned that Mrs F (health visitor) had been involved in this case and a discussion developed about the powerful personality of Mrs F. Amy said, "she has no idea of the SWD's remit and phones up and makes demands that are out of the question, like removing children to foster parents immediately, or finding a place in an old people's home right away." Several other people joined the group and Andy said he had just been to a psychiatric hospital and talked to two male nurses. He told them one of their ex-customers had been in the office last week looking for money. They said the man had written to his MP complaining that he was being held in hospital against his will. As a result Andy said he was 'arsed out' as quickly as possible, which it seems he did not expect. Andy said he had told the nurses "the SWD had given him the same treatment."

In the following illustration a token effort was made because of the status of the referral agent, but further action was proscribed by a comment on his personality:

"Allocation meeting. A 39(2) - voluntary supervision - had been received from the Reporter. No response had come from a letter sent by the SWD. Liz said it can be opened up again if necessary. Mike explained to me (the researcher) what a 39(2) is and said 'This Reporter feels he must take action on absolutely every case so he sends us a 39(2) to get it off his conscience.'"

A similar technique was used to neutralise an anonymous letter complaining of a woman's treatment of her children, leaving them alone, of bringing home men friends and of general neglect. Amy commented 'From a jealous neighbour'. It was decided without more discussion that no further action would be taken. Sykes and Matza referred to such "techniques
of neutralization" in their study of juvenile delinquents, one such technique being transformation of the victim (or in this case the referral agent) into a wrongdoer, or assigning her or him a trivial status or attributing questionable interests or moral character (Sykes & Matza 1957). The result in the case of Lakeside was a redefinition of a referral which could lead to its early dispensation.

The parallel pattern of professional collusion, where the referral agent's definition of problems and solutions was accepted, had a similar outcome, that is of legitimating minimal or no involvement. For instance, in discussing the case of a family about to be evicted which had been dealt with by the duty officer I suggested to him that eviction creates more problems for the authorities, and in this particular case an attempt had been made by the family to meet the arrears. He replied that there may be other reasons for carrying out the eviction such as complaints from neighbours, adding, 'some of the people I see, I wouldn't want to live beside'. He was supported by a second social worker who thought 'The Housing Manager must have felt the family needs a salutory experience, if the eviction is going ahead'. The family in question were not previously known to the department, so judgements about their circumstances could only be speculative. In this particular case the decision which resulted in minimal intervention was justified in at least four ways: (i) stressing the assumed accurate assessment of the referral agent; (ii) focussing on the moral character of the client ('rent arrears is the result of bad management' and 'complaints from neighbours'); (iii) appealing to departmental policy ('we don't intervene in housing problems any more'); and (iv) calling on professional norms ('there's a conflict between intervention and interference'). This example shows how social workers were able to call on a range of sometimes conflicting ideologies to justify retrospectively action taken, and to make sense of decisions about cases.
(d) "Sharpening": This method of limiting the workflow was closely associated with that of focussing on the instrumental or material aspects of cases, and was a factor in the case quoted under that heading. This separate analysis is included to illustrate other ways in which certain information was ignored in consideration of appropriate action.

In his study of rumour Shibutani (1966) referred to the work of Allport and Postman (1947) who posited a concept of "sharpening" to describe the tendency of the subjects of their study toward selective perception, retention and reporting of a limited number of details. Cicourel reported that "sharpening" was revealed continually in conversations between officials and juveniles and suggested this was one way in which objects and events were classified and counted in an unambiguous way, and accounts were brought into line with general organisational policies, rules and interests of the participants (Cicourel 1968).

A pattern of "sharpening" was in evidence at Lakeside as the following examples illustrate. In the first example, I was able to accompany one of the social workers on several visits connected with a 13 year old girl in an assessment centre, for whom she was looking for foster parents. There was some disagreement among the assessment centre staff as to whether the girl Esther, was 'seriously disturbed', which had implications for placement with a foster family. At a meeting with the staff the psychiatrist said several times that he was very concerned about the child's mental state. Jane, the social worker, later dismissed him by commenting, 'He really covers himself doesn't he? Often he'll say he thinks the kids are seriously disturbed but it's just so that he's not going to be proved wrong by saying they're not'. At a meeting with Esther's aunt and uncle, Jane consistently ignored Mrs D's information that the child had 'played us off against each other', was 'deceitful' and 'scheming', and again afterwards she described Mrs D as 'neurotic'. When I suggested to Jane that perhaps after all Esther was seriously
disturbed she replied,

'I wouldn't accept that because if we decide Esther has some kind of personality disorder then there's nothing else we can do to help her. I would rather believe she is not that seriously disturbed and then we can offer her some help. If we label her psychopathic or as having a personality disorder then we could not attempt to place her with foster parents and this is what I think is the step we should take to help Esther. You have to believe that people have some capacity for change and work on that. The psychiatrist wants to dig deeper than I would want to go.'

Esther presented as an attractive and winning child, so much so that Jane had herself considered fostering the child. The image was only temporarily shaken when Esther was found to have lied to Jane about a stolen watch. However Jane said Esther had 'apologised', and the 'good child' image was restored. Here a treatment ideology was prospective in that it determined action (in the form of seeking a foster family) but was also dependent on the maintenance of a notion of the essential moral 'goodness' of the child who 'deserved' a happy and secure home.

At the same time as rejecting an ideology of pathology in respect of Esther, the social worker was also able to call on just such an ideology to deflect pressure against Esther's father. It was Mr D's view that the father "should be made to take responsibility for her". The social worker's answer was that perhaps the father was unable to take responsibility. When asked about this later she said, 'Whatever the symptoms the man has, and whatever way he acts out, the basic problem is a personality disorder and therefore he cannot take responsibility for his actions'.

It might be argued here that Jane's handling of Esther's case, rather than limiting work, tended to expand it, but in fact the range of possible courses of action within Jane's repertoire was narrow in that for example, there was no question of Esther's returning home or to relatives, and fostering presented itself as the only alternative, so the
information which was filtered through confirmed that decision.

Throughout, information which might have disrupted the social worker's plans, including a history of alcoholism in several members of the child's family and several previous fostering breakdowns, was ignored or discarded, and this was justified by reference to a range of what were sometimes conflicting ideologies.

A final example of how the team "sharpened" accounts to limit intervention is taken from an allocation meeting. A school had referred a 15 year old girl for non-attendance, and had added that the reason was that the girl was an unmarried mother with a baby at home whom her mother was refusing to look after. The discussion among the team went as follows:

'Amy: "She has only 6 weeks to go at school anyway. We're not likely to be able to do anything about it at this stage". Liz: "I don't feel inclined to do anything about this". Mike agreed. No further action'.

Here there was no consideration of any relationship difficulties between the girl and her mother, or anxiety about the quality of child care. The decision made rested entirely on the fact that the unmarried mother would be leaving school shortly and on an assumption that the problem would then be resolved. This brought the referral within the range of the implicit rules at Lakeside which concentrated staff effort on more routine concerns.

In looking at these ways in which the Lakeside team defined and presented social work problems, several points may be made. The team prided itself in always allocating cases, but it becomes clear that by this they meant all requests involving a statutory responsibility, and saw that as their main and most important function. In coming to decisions
about intervention there was no involvement of, or contracts made with clients, and decisions were made publicly and thus legitimated and reinforced. The language used in the team adopted vernacular speech forms and professionally based norms did not feature strongly in attempts to justify action or inaction (at least in public discussion), but nevertheless were apparent from time to time. The team's relationship with other agencies was one of exclusion and collusion. That is to say that the collective image constructed of for example referral agents such as hospitals, doctors, health visitors, the housing authorities or the reporter's office was one of incompetence and ignorance, but direct contact with for example the local health clinic, the housing manager or the electricity board, showed broad agreement with them as to the definition of and action to be taken in dealing with cases.

It is not within the scope of this thesis to give explanations for the social reality revealed in Lakeside area team, but to convey a flavour of ideologies which predominated within it. In later chapters I shall consider other ideologies which emerged within the team, and the circumstances in which they appeared. A question which is relevant here perhaps, is whether a knowledge of the range of alternative interventions possible, served to determine how problems were perceived by team members, or whether a restricted and constricted perception of social problems served to narrow the possible range of interventions. It may be that a reflexive relationship existed between the two, creating a world which effectively precluded imagination and sophistication in its operation. I shall return to this point in later chapters.

Hilltown contrasted with Lakeside in that the predominant shared ideology depended on a therapeutic view of the social work task, and on a perception of clients as in need of help
with emotional or relationship difficulties. There were similarities between the teams in some aspects of how work was processed, and for example, statutory work was allocated, though reluctantly accepted in Hilltown, and notifications about debts were met by the issuing of a standard letter to the client, to which a response was not anticipated.

At Hilltown the negotiation process was more complex than at Lakeside, and typically in the allocation of cases appeals were made to the need for professional knowledge and skills in the treatment of clients. This is illustrated by an instance of pressure from the local councillor and the director of social work to take action in respect of an elderly person for admission to residential care. Such cases were not usually treated as urgent, but allocation was effected by the senior's argument that the case was "similar to a child at risk and should be treated in the same way".

Where the appeal was made to impending statutory proceedings as a strategy towards allocation of cases, there was resistance from staff. (In Lakeside this would have been a legitimate claim to allocation). An example of this was where the social worker dealing with the case originally had left the team and had recommended that the family no longer needed professional intervention. The senior's repeated appeals to the statutory responsibility to produce a report for the Children's Panel were rejected by the team. The senior was prevented from appealing to any treatment aspects of the case by the departing social worker's comments and was left without alternative arguments to negotiate the carrying out of the work.

In Hilltown there was evidence of conflict among competing factions within the office and much of the struggle centred on ideological issues. I shall refer to this conflict as the various themes chosen for this chapter are developed.
For the purposes of this section, that of analysing ways in which social work problems were defined and presented, I have chosen a slightly different classification of the significant factors than for Lakeside.

These are concerned with:

(a) the range of alternative interventions thought to be available.
(b) the referral agent.
(c) the perceived potential treatment content in the case.

(a) The range of alternative interventions: In my descriptive account of the administrative structure at Hilltown I commented on the range of innovative methods of intervention developed by the area office. This range was used by the team in two ways. It facilitated opening up and "unpacking" of cases presented for consideration, and it also permitted the limiting of social workers' caseloads.

Some referrals were dealt with routinely, as in the case of, for example, applications to adopt, where clients were informed that an "adoption group" was to be conducted shortly and were "held on ice" till then. This happened too where applications for residential care for the elderly were received. An assessment was carried out by a social worker and the case routinely referred to the Elderly group for volunteer support.

The following example from my fieldnotes illustrates how discussion of alternatives allowed the team to limit their workload:

"... Myrtle (SW) saw a woman on duty who wants a social worker. She had been in several times asking for help. Myrtle said she (the woman) was worried about her attitude to her children. She feels the children's behaviour is unreasonable and sometimes she feels like battering them. The children are bad-tempered and disobedient. She also said she'd like a caravan holiday and a washing machine. One of her children is living with her mother. She herself has a 15-month old, plus two other kids. There was a lot of
discussion around this and Joan said she herself had seen her and felt she was asking for a social worker because all the other members of her family had one. Alex said, 'She has asked for a social worker so often maybe we should give it'. Simon said, 'I don't want to be cynical but she knows how to get the social worker's ears pricked up by saying she's worried about how she's going to treat the children. This is her way of getting social work help like all the rest of the family'. Myrtle said, 'What about a home-help or a volunteer since she needs practical help?' Joan said, 'One of the children is at the nursery and maybe she should get help there through the social worker there'. Alex said he'd follow up that line of action ...

Here the social worker presented what appeared to be, prima facie, a legitimate referral to the team, having the ingredients of a mother under stress and children "at risk".

At the same time the presentation was weakened by the information that such a request from this woman was not new and an assessment had been made already that social work intervention was not merited. Also, the introduction of material need (a caravan holiday and a washing machine) threw doubt on the would-be client's motives and added potential strength to any arguments against accepting the case, since provision of such material needs was not regarded as high on the hierarchy of ideologies of professional intervention. With the scene thus set, and with an implicit agreement amongst the team to hold to the original assessment of the woman's circumstances, it remained only to confirm the decision and to search for some compromise with Alex's comment "She has asked for social work help so often maybe we should give it". This left the way open to consider home-help, volunteer or the nursery, which already had some involvement with the family and so became the obvious choice.

I suggested earlier that a second pattern which emerged in discussing alternative interventions was that of "unpacking" referrals and opening up possibilities. Reference was made above to the hierarchical nature of methods of intervention available, and family therapy was regarded as the most prestigious of these, with the family therapy special-
ist commanding not only a choice of cases with which to work but freedom to involve other members of staff, a resource regarded as extremely scarce in the area office. Referrals which were taken on for family therapy were often presented as not having "children at risk" elements or any request for therapy but were reconstructed to conform to a "therapeutic" ideology. An example is of a couple who came to the office worried about their 18-year old son whom they described as a "punk rocker", with dyed hair and outlandish clothes and who was also involved with solvent abuse. The family were already known to the team in that some months previously they had come requesting a "good talking to" to the boy and he had been seen alone by a social worker. Ed (family therapy specialist) was of the view that a punitive approach was not helpful and it was necessary to see the whole family to effect any change. He felt it was a case in which family therapy might be helpful, (he had not interviewed the couple but had spoken to them briefly in the waiting room), since there was a problem of communication in the family. Another worker wondered about joint work in the case and this was taken up and agreed to by the senior who said he was pleased Ed had taken an interest and was happy to release another worker. It was agreed the second worker would be female so that a model of parenting could be provided.

Another example was that of a mother's concern that her daughter was truanting from school, who had been interviewed by Ed as duty officer for the day. He said "the mother thinks the girl's problems might be related to fights between parents" and said he'd like to try family therapy with the family. This was agreed to readily.

These illustrations show that not only was the range of alternatives available to Hilltown greater than in Lakeside but that specialisation in therapeutic methods was held in very high regard (it was scorned at Lakeside). Allocation meetings allowed for public acknowledgement of this and for
the development of an elitism within the office. It is not without significance that in the two referrals quoted above (and there were others) the interviewing was carried out by the family therapy specialist and the cases came to be defined as suitable for the application of family therapy. Such an outcome is reminiscent of Cicourel's findings. Here he describes an interview he observed between a probationer and a juvenile:

"... the interview seemed to be a formalized setting for searching questions to document the PO's theories about 'what happened' and the juvenile's motivation for her actions. Thus each question was not a probe searching for basic information but a follow-up of unstated assumptions about what 'really happened', calculated to elicit the documentary evidence to support the preestablished theories ...") (Cicourel 1968, page 300).

Barneis also, in his study of social workers observed:

"... Intake teams construct understandings of and work with people seeking assistance, in ways responsive to the area office's organisational needs of managing its environment and ensuring the continued use of its casework technology" (Barneis 1982, page 319).

Unlike Cicourel and Barneis I was not present to observe social worker-client interactions, but if their analysis is correct it points to a dominance of certain kinds of knowledge over other kinds and affords those who claim such knowledge a position of power to sustain their own versions of social reality.

Although family therapy techniques were acknowledged as the most desirable skills to be possessed by social workers (two other staff members were attending day-release training on family therapy) other forms of counselling were also regarded as the legitimate sphere of professionals. In the case of a family for instance where the mother was presented as "needing someone to talk to", a volunteer was suggested to befriend the family. The social worker who was transferring the case said the woman needed to talk about her
two children in care and about feelings of guilt she might have about them. The senior responded, "Oh in that case, if she needs to talk about feelings about parenting in the past and children in care she therefore needs a social worker".

In short, for the Hilltown team, the existence of a range of alternative interventive ideologies served to highlight a therapeutic ideology, making the social workers distinctive in a way which could not be achieved at Lakeside because of that office's very limited range of methods of work. At the same time the Hilltown's scope of services to clients offered greater variety and breadth, though decisions about appropriate services to be offered were taken by the professionals and not by the clients or others in the team thus ensuring the pre-eminence of their view of the world.

(b) The referral agent: As at Lakeside the view of the referral agent was an important element in how cases were presented and in their eventual disposal. Smith and Harris (1972) found that the status of the referral agent was important in the acceptance and allocation of cases, and at times acceptance of the referral agent's definition of need simplified the day-to-day administration of the office. At Hilltown this was particularly in relation to referrals from, for example, GPs of elderly people, from the reporter to the Children's Panel or from the Courts requesting SERs. In those cases need was taken as predetermined and as such was processed. But principally an expert ideology prevailed at Hilltown, where the social worker was regarded as the proper determiner of need. We have discussed already how some cases came to be reconstructed by social workers in their "decoding" of the world of the client, but they also controlled intake by questioning the judgement of the referral agent. In using the referral agent from another agency as a means to limit intervention, at Hilltown as at Lakeside incompetence was implied. An example of this was a police referral of a man who "had left his two children
unattended and had been abusive". He was being charged with breach of the peace but not with neglect. It was suggested in the team that he was probably "creating a rumpus" and that the children had not been left alone after all. This transformed the case from one of violence and children "at risk" into one of drunken high spirits, with an exaggerated claim of neglect, and allowed the team to refer the case to the Navy Welfare Department (the client was a naval officer). Again, where a health visitor referred a family where she felt the children were being "neglected", the team regarded her as having "flapped" and as having made a judgemental statement about neglect. This was reinforced by the information that the hospital too had panicked when one of the children was admitted because of smothering in his cot. (Ed said "He just turned over on his pillow"). The action taken here was a letter to the family inviting discussion at the office.

I observed above that the status of the referral agent was an important element in whether her/his definition was accepted by the team. However as Smith and Harris pointed out acceptance of external definitions does challenge the social workers' view of themselves as the possessors of distinct assessment skills, and implies a loss of control of the level of demand for services to meet particular kinds of need. An example of a struggle for superiority of definition of need presented itself during my period at Hilltown, and illustrates the efforts and their outcome of professional staff to compete with the definitions of a high status referral agent supported by political powers. The case was of an elderly woman whose family were demanding residential care because she was "dotty, incontinent and physically violent". The general practitioner (GP) maintained that it was a social problem since the old lady did not have a broken leg and therefore could not be admitted to hospital. The GP had managed to enlist the support of local politicians and the director of social
work. The senior social worker who presented the case to the team was anxious to have it allocated and the circumstances assessed immediately. The team were concerned to hold their position ... 

SW No.1: "It's the social workers who are always left with the dirty jobs and get all the shit when things do not work out".

SW No.2: "We ought to show a united front against the medical people and force them to do something".

SSW: "It's all very delicate. Who is prepared to carry out the assessment?"

SW No.2: "I want to get involved in this one". Apparently this resolved the conflict. However I discussed the case later with the social worker after he had interviewed the old lady and below is an extract from my fieldnotes of the encounter:

"He said when he came back he would have said that this old lady was suitable for residential accommodation but when he talked it over with the team he realised in fact he wasn't able to make an assessment because the woman was confused and wasn't able to remember even her son's name. So, the responsibility was put back at her family regardless of all the political pressures."

Here the motivational force had been an ideology centring on notions of professional power and status (since the position was taken up by the team before the woman was seen by any of them) which was threatened by one of the team's making an assessment of the case which would have sabotaged the power base. On returning to the team he was able to accept their constructed reality and adopt the prevailing ideology while maintaining his integrity by a post hoc justification calling on an ideology of professional skill and expertise.

The conflict which surrounded both internal and external negotiations of professionalism was a necessary element in the social work teams' self-image as a highly skilled unit. In the light of this, the significance of the referral agent becomes clear.
The perceived potential treatment content in cases: I have already indicated that one of the aspects of cases which rendered them attractive to social workers was when presentation and definition included a potential for counselling or family therapy, and any group consultation which took place centred on the counselling or therapeutic problems within cases. Even where cases had been presented by the clients in terms of their material aspects they were often reconstructed to focus on the emotional and relationship elements. Sonia, for instance interviewed a male single parent on duty, who said he had financial problems. Sonia said he seemed to have these under control and "just wanted to talk to someone about the stress and difficulties he's having", and she herself made a bid for the case. Vincent wondered if a female worker was appropriate in this case and after discussion it was agreed. Ed commented "it sounds like the children will need to talk to someone about their feelings regarding the mother's coming and going and her attitude to them". Sonia explained later that she was interested in the problems of single parents and the man himself had a lot to come to terms with in accepting the separation from his wife and she could help him do that. She said she had considered volunteer support and had decided this could be offered to him at a later date but at this stage the case needed "some working through of the difficulties he has had in the recent past".

Simon presented a case in a similar fashion, firstly as one of financial problems, but developing it into one where the client had come to unburden himself about sexual offences against boys for which he had been convicted some years earlier. A very long discussion ensued as to the man's present emotional state and his reasons for asking for help, with the team emphasising all along, their counselling role and therapeutic ideology.

In both of these examples the team accepted the definition of the cases as presented by the social workers, and their
choice of questions to ask and comments to make, reinforced the neutralisation of a welfare ideology while confirming the proper function of the team as revolving around a therapeutic ideology.

A regular feature of this area office was where a decision had already been taken elsewhere regarding acceptance of referrals, but where cases were brought to allocation meetings for public legitimation of action, which was invariably to take on counselling or family therapy referrals. One instance of this was of a GP coming to the office to discuss a referral with the family therapy specialist (this was as a result of written publicity from the team to encourage local professionals to refer clients for family therapy). The case was presented to the team and described briefly, and the family therapy specialist offered to take it on. This was agreed without further discussion. Later I asked the family therapist why he had decided to offer to take this case on and made no bid for another similar case presented earlier. He agreed that both would be suitable for family therapy intervention but said he had already made a commitment to the GP to accept the case, and did not have room on his caseload for both. In this situation at least three goals were achieved. The family therapy specialist succeeded in exercising autonomy over the limits of his work, the team's professionalism was acknowledged externally by its receiving a direct request for therapy and the prestige which arose from the referral was used internally to ensure the continued privileged status of family therapy as a method.

Apart from allocation of cases, team meetings were used regularly to discuss difficulties particular workers were experiencing in their work with cases. These discussions always focussed on the treatment function of the social worker and (in the cases I observed) never for example on her/his role as an advocate with DHSS (Department of Health and Social Security), or the problems caused by a long
waiting list for residential care, or action which might be taken to counteract the effects of rising unemployment, all of which were relevant issues for the area and for the team. (Rees' observation is relevant here, that social workers "chose to discuss problems which fascinated colleagues, not cases regarded as 'straightforward'"; Rees 1978, page 55). An example of how this discussion time was used illustrates the point. Joan asked for help in a case in which she was doing "joint family work" with another social worker in the team. The family causing concern said they were being victimised by their neighbours. Apparently the psychiatrist and a doctor had both seen the answer as a change of housing while the social workers thought the problem lay within the family relationships, where their work was focussed. The team gave the necessary support as expressed by Ed, "Noone has approached the case like you have. Everyone else had decided that the problem is either in the change of house or in the woman's behaviour. I feel you're tackling it right in focussing on the relationship".

The discussion went on to interpret some of the behaviour apparent within the family and the family therapy specialist suggested some "paradoxical work" and thought he'd like to try "live supervision" of the two workers in the case. These suggestions were not taken up at the time but the injection of such esoteric concepts and the general emphasis on the "special" skills and assessment abilities of the social workers contributed to the maintenance of the team's social world.

It will be clear from this account of the two teams studied, that the culture which was developed in one would not have been acceptable in the other. The overall ideology in Lakeside was based on a "welfare" model, while that at Hilltown was based on a "therapeutic" model. Hilltown adopted an esoteric language while Lakeside traded in vernacular speech forms. The methods of intervention at Hilltown were wide ranging and hierarchical in nature, while at Lakeside
they were limited and linear. Lakeside's relationship with the external world was one of exclusion and collusion, while Hilltown's was one of conflict. All of these characteristics led in Lakeside, to an internal uniformity of function while in Hilltown diversity contributed to élitism among some staff.

In Hilltown the presence of a range of methods of intervention including the use of volunteers, was necessary to highlight the professional character of some of the work. At Lakeside the presence in the team of, for example, volunteers would have become a threat in the absence of diversity.

One point which may be made as a result of these contrasts is that the practical accomplishment of social work cannot be assumed from a reading of policy documents such as Kilbrandon or Seebohm, but an understanding of practice is necessary, since very different cultures are likely to develop and different interpretations of social need and ways of meeting it are possible.

Nevertheless there were some similarities in the ways some cases were dealt with in the two teams. Requests for court reports for example, were handled routinely in both offices, though with greater reluctance in Hilltown than in Lakeside. Notification of debt by statutory authorities such as the electricity board or the housing department, were met with routine letters. Work with the physically handicapped and with the elderly were passed to staff other than social workers. Social workers in both offices had devised ways of limiting their caseloads, Lakeside by having a narrow range of alternatives and Hilltown by having a wide range of alternatives. Although the overall ideological positions of the teams presented extremes, a similar range of ideologies appeared within each.

Some of these differences and similarities will be returned to later, but now we shall continue the comparison of these
two social worlds by considering their ways of classifying clients.

(ii) Classifying clients:
Classification methods concerning clients were important in that images of clients could be used to reduce individuals to generalities and therefore ensure a smooth processing of work. The teams were similar in that clients were viewed as on the one hand "the elderly and physically handicapped" and on the other, "families and children", and these groups were processed by means of typification and handled differently within the office systems. There were however, differences in the ways these groups were typified and processed.

(a) Elderly and physically handicapped: Both teams saw these groups as having fairly routine and stereotyped needs which resulted in the level of intervention being at an individual routine level. The only exceptions to this were when another member of the old person's or physically handicapped person's family or other referral agent was seen to be the client.

At Lakeside a dominant ideology viewed the needs of these two groups in terms of material deprivation, which led to an instrumental, unidimensional response at the level of the individual, and emphasised the "relief" or "holding" function of the department. Referrals of the physically handicapped were given directly to the occupational therapist by the clerical staff and were not discussed at allocation meetings, indeed remaining almost invisible in the day-to-day operation of the office. Referrals for residential care for elderly people were allocated routinely at allocation meetings to the social work assistant (in one of the teams social workers were carrying out this work as the social work assistant had a prolonged illness) who carried out the assessment. For both the elderly and the physically handicapped the relief function involved pro-
viding aids, home-helps, residential care and general monitoring without any expectation of improvement or growth.

At Hilltown the dominant ideology with regard to the elderly and the physically handicapped held a notion of "throughcare" which involved an instrumental response similar to that of Lakeside, but added a "support" dimension to the relief function. Again referrals concerning the physically handicapped went direct to the occupational therapist and her team where the work was divided between that which was perceived to involve straightforward delivery of aids or "disabled" badges, and that which required a "medical assessment". The former was carried out by a social work assistant or a home-help (family aide) and the latter only by the OT herself. The "support" dimension involved the use of volunteers to befriend clients either individually or in groups. So although organisational procedure stereotyped the needs of the physically handicapped as being practical and material, a social worker attended the OT group as a liaison and advisory person from the Intake team, yet attempts by the OT group to individualise client need and acknowledge the emotional dimension, were resisted. This is illustrated by a discussion in the OT group of a handicapped woman who had been bereaved, where support work was being done by a member of staff from the group, all unqualified workers. This led to a general discussion about "grief work", and whether it ought to be the remit of the OT group to carry it out. The social worker was challenged directly about the Intake team's responsibility. His reply acknowledged that the OT group should deal with the practical and not the emotional aspects of disability, but he was constrained from accepting referrals by the Intake team's need to limit the volume of work flowing to it, so instead suggested referral to a voluntary organisation which specialised in bereavement counselling (carried out
by volunteers). In this way he acted as an impediment to the flow of referrals to the Intake team while at the same time reinforcing an ideology of the exclusiveness of professional skills. It is interesting too that to achieve this he was able to overlook the fact that the voluntary organisation's counsellors were themselves not professionals, yet having emphasised the importance of social work intervention this social worker drew on a conflicting ideology to deflect the dilemma between the need to control referrals and the status of professional skills. I do not suggest that there was any calculation of this process on the part of the social worker. Indeed when asked about his perception of the discussion, he expressed his concern to clarify relative tasks of the OT workers and the social workers. "We must ask what is the role of the OT group? What is the right time to come in? When is the time when there's no longer an OT task? We need to discuss the separation between OT tasks and social work tasks?"

In Hilltown assessments of the elderly for residential care were carried out by social workers as a matter of policy since it was found that unqualified staff who had performed this function formerly were found to produce unsatisfactory assessment, "not taking into account all the factors involved". But the needs of the elderly were typified as "practical" and "befriending" and never as interpersonal or requiring a therapeutic input. At one point the social workers made a bid to discard assessments of the elderly for residential care, suggesting that for example, volunteers could perform the task equally well, but this bid failed on the grounds that "headquarters would object". This gives some indication of the low status given to the elderly within the office, evidence which is reinforced by the fact that families where the "presenting problem" concerned an elderly member were never offered family therapy as a possible solution. When questioned about this the team's response was that they had not considered such a method of inter-
vention "though there is no reason why it should not happen". At the same time however since assessments for residential care continued to be carried out by professionally qualified staff the social workers retained effective control of that sphere of work.

Having completed assessments, social workers referred their elderly clients routinely to the Elderly group where they were allocated by a social worker to volunteers, whose work was supervised by professional staff. The belief that the needs of the elderly were routine, simple and practical was declared publicly in the Elderly group by the way in which those needs were presented, as the examples below show:

- "needs someone just to sit and blether"
- "is chatty and would like a regular visitor"
- "needs someone to help her to the loo"
- "lonely and cries a lot"

Volunteers accepted these presentations as did paid unqualified staff whose views are summed up by the statement that "social workers are not for old folks. They're for children and families. And really, it's children and families that have all the problems, isn't it? Old folks don't have the problems".

By retaining any "assessment" function with regard to the elderly, the social workers at Hilltown held the balance of power, while at the same time insisting that their special skills were underused in this work. The Elderly group provided continuing care for this client group, but also facilitated the public declaration that their needs were simple and to be met by unskilled workers, a process which carried the implication that "real" social work was going on elsewhere.

So as with the physically handicapped, the ways in which Lakeside and Hilltown teams typified the elderly were strikingly similar in that social workers had minimal contact
with them. Support work with both client groups which in Lakeside was undertaken by social work assistants (SWAs) or homemakers or the home-help organiser, was carried out in Hilltown by volunteers or SWAs or the home-help organiser or a home-help who was attached to the area office directly. Indeed at Hilltown the difference between work carried out with the elderly by volunteers, by SWAs and by the home-help was far from clear. The public rhetoric held that SWAs and the home-help dealt with old people's more complex problems such as negotiating with fuel authorities and the DHSS, while volunteers engaged in "simple befriending", but in fact volunteers were also helping to solve their clients' money problems, and regularly discussed these and possible action at meetings of the Elderly group. But the reality which was sustained by both paid workers and volunteers allowed for a pecking-order of personnel in which volunteers were seen by social workers, SWAs, home-helps and by volunteers themselves as ranking lowest and as taking on the least skilled jobs. I shall return to this issue in the next chapter, on "Images of Volunteers", but here make the point that ancillary staff played their part in legitimating the team's activities, and that one result of the presence of volunteers was an enhancing of the status of staff at the least prestigious end of the hierarchy.

(b) Families and children: The greatest differences between the two area offices were apparent in their approaches to families and children, though it must be said that both used typification techniques in constructing an understanding of this client group.

At Lakeside a dominant ideology embodied a notion of clients as being personally responsible for their plight or as being personally inadequate. This led to a fairly mechanical response at the level of the individual client which held a "gatekeeper" function. That is to say that the team were concerned with helping only the "deserving", with protecting the public purse and with ensuring punishment for offenders.
These points can be illustrated by views on various issues:

On day centres for offenders:
"What we really need are hostels for adolescents and for the mentally handicapped in this area, not going off and spending the money on facilities for offenders". "We don't think it's a good idea to lump offenders together. It would be very much like prison where they could influence each other for the worse".

On writing court reports:
"Oh good, I've been looking forward to doing that ... it won't be an optimistic report. This boy has been on the loose for a long time and has done a lot of damage to other people's property".

On debt:
"Clients should be doing without things - stereo, coloured TV and things, and paying the bills". "(the client) said, 'If I was down in England they wouldn't cut off the electricity'. But he didn't see that it was his responsibility. Oh, I could have throttled him".

On offenders:
"I'm inclined to take a hard line and to be sure they don't get off". "Community service orders isn't a cop-out but is clearly a punishment where people are being made to make retribution for their crimes".

Social workers in this team saw a clear difference between them and their clients, as shown in comments such as the following in connection with an offender, "Of course we can't assume he has finer feelings like us". Or this remark after taking a group of children on an outing, "I would hate people to think they were actually mine". Or the opinion, "We knew we'd get floor covering when we could afford it. We had only dusty floorboards but we didn't worry. Why can't everyone be like that?" Or this view of
a mentally ill person, "He definitely looked like a looney".

For Lakeside then, the image which was created of the professional identity allowed for the stereotyping of clients in this particular way, by creating a "them and us" arrangement, providing both a distinction between the team and the outside world and a legitimation for their existence as an area social work office. Stereotyping also served the function of limiting workloads by allowing justification for withholding help or keeping intervention to a minimum.

Hilltown's social workers also distanced themselves from their clients, but the form taken by their typification of families and children was different in that it was based on an ideology of need which revolved around a notion of interpersonal imbalance. This in turn led to an interactionist, multi-dimensional response at the level of familial relationships, emphasising the therapeutic function of the area team. While in Lakeside statutory work was seen as the main sphere of involvement of social workers, at Hilltown their role was different, as demonstrated by this conviction on the part of one of the senior staff, "Social workers are trained as therapists". Earlier in this chapter a case of school absenteeism at Lakeside was used to illustrate how that team selected information to focus on the material or instrumental aspects of referrals. An example of such a referral at Hilltown shows how information was used there to typify cases in terms of their amenability to that team's particular expertise. A mother had come into the office to see the duty officer because she had discovered that her daughter was not attending school, and was worried about this. The duty officer, in presenting the case to the allocation meeting, said the mother thought the girl's problems "might be related to fights between her and her husband". The duty officer had asked the woman if she thought her husband would see him and she thought he might. The duty officer thought he'd like to take the case on and try family therapy, and this was agreed. Another example
is the case of a young woman worried about a drink and drugs problem who referred herself to the team. The social worker who had taken the referral offered the information that there were "difficulties at home with her (the client's) relationship with her father and she feels quite sorely against her mother because she said she knew from a young age that her mother was having affairs and her father was quite unaware of this". The discussion in the team centred on the relationships of the client and eventually Ed said, "It's clear that the alcohol problem is related to home and relationships generally".

This extraction of selected information by questioning which focussed on family relationships and "internal" (psychological) rather than "external" (eg: societal structure) factors, facilitated the interpretation of cases in terms of whether they could benefit from "treatment" or "therapy" by the team, and eliminated those perceived as not having such potential. The family therapy specialist himself said one of the things he enjoyed about his job was that it released him from any feelings of having to deal with other problems such as financial ones. "It gives me permission in a way to concentrate on family relationships rather than generic social work which insists that other problems get dealt with".

In comparing ways in which Lakeside and Hilltown classified clients, it will have been noted that there were several differences in their approaches. However, there were also similarities in that:

(a) both teams used typifications of clients which rested on an ideology which viewed the needs of, on the one hand, the elderly and physically handicapped, and on the other hand, families and children, as essentially different.

(b) both teams used information about clients selectively to interpret their needs in terms of the function or
expertise of the team.

(c) the outcome of (a) and (b) was that the flow of work to social workers was limited and also that the teams' existence was legitimated in one case as a "gatekeeper" and in the other as a "therapeutic" agent.

The typifications which existed at Lakeside and Hilltown are not unique to the teams, and such stereotyping of the needs of different categories of client has been observed by for example Stevenson and Parsloe (1978), and I drew attention also, in chapter two, to the assumptions made in Seebohm and in Aves as to the respective needs of the elderly and physically handicapped and those of families and children. Decisions at Lakeside and Hilltown about cases depended on what Shibutani termed "common understandings" about clients, which led to consensus (common assumptions underlying co-operative endeavours: Shibutani 1961, page 40). Thus, as Schutz had it, "typifications help an actor deal effectively with an environment which carries with it ambiguity and gaps in "directives to concrete action" because the typical is rendered homogeneous, non-problematical and therefore taken-for-granted" (Schutz 1964, page 44). Tacit knowledge about, for example, the elderly, was articulated into surface rules (Cicourel 1973, page 51), which consisted of prescriptive and proscriptive norms which in turn facilitated smooth processing of cases. Into the social order constructed in the teams, was built that knowledge which they were able to assume to be held in common in their day-to-day activities.

This of course does not explain how the direction of development of such knowledge came about, or why particular versions of reality gained dominance over others. Shibutani put forward his theory of development through "natural selection" where ideas compete and the common definition that eventually arises takes shape through the "adoption of some views, the elimination of others and the gradual integration of those items that have survived. The result is a
collective product to which each participant has contributed in some way" (Shibutani 1966, page 178). He suggested that collective selection takes place on the basis of plausibility, as the result of a careful examination of the best available evidence. No doubt plausibility is an important factor in the acceptance of some ideas over others, but Shibutani's choice of phraseology implies that the "best" ideologies emerge in the natural order of things, and pays not enough attention to power relations among publics. Adler and Asquith came to the heart of the matter when they argued that

"...the establishment of particular modes of thought as legitimate ways of viewing the world involves a conflict of interest between proponents of the legitimate and of alternative ways of viewing the world, and provides the structural means for mediating power in even the most transient of social relationships ..." (Adler & Asquith 1981, chapter 1).

It is this consideration which is crucial in our examination of the ways which teams in the study had developed to classify their clients.

(iii) Concepts of professionalism.

Although there were similarities in the administration process through which work was filtered in the two teams, in view of the different ways in which Lakeside and Hilltown saw their function it is not surprising that they held different perceptions of their professional role. This subject has been touched upon already in preceding sections but here is discussed in greater detail in terms of the self-image held by each team. Consistent with a "gatekeeper" ideology, Lakeside's overall sense of professional identity was in terms of their basic function, and the team sought the lowest common denominator in defining it. There was little emphasis on a knowledge base for social work or on distinctive social work values, and a lack of confidence in the possession of distinctive
skills. At the same time efforts were made to sustain a belief in the social worker as a professional person and not only as a local authority official.

In some ways the image of professionalism at Lakeside was reminiscent of Davies' view of the essence of social work as being the "maintenance" of a stable society (Davies 1981). Davies warned of the dangers of attempting to go beyond the maintenance/reconciliatory role "to anything other than the most modest degree". He argued that the assumption is erroneous that social work is first and foremost to do with the achievement of change and he urged social workers to acknowledge their limitations and their role as "pastoral carers in a secular society". Moreover he cautioned against an overly narrow definition of who does social work and held that many more practitioners could adopt a social work perspective than is currently the case. Although Davies' model was a modest and pluralist account of social work's identity he was able to envisage that "all will sense the professional cohesion which unites them and commits them to their reconciliatory task".* Lakeside demonstrates the tension which arises as a result of efforts to maintain a professional identity while at the same time attempting to implement a non-élitist view of social work. In the following quotation a social worker discusses the team's homemaker:

"She has perhaps different attitudes to the social workers and talks to people straight and direct but they seem to listen to her and take her advice ... she says the kinds of things I would like to say but haven't got the nerve ... often when I go into a house and there's a stereo in the corner I can't bring myself to say 'Get rid of that and feed the kids', I'd rather leave that to someone else to do ... Gillian can do this. She has a narrower view of things than the social worker has and only takes into consideration the fact that the bills need to be paid whereas a social worker is taking a wider view and taking other things into account ... Gillian's role is taking the pressure off social workers with regard to financial problems so that they can get on with working on relationships.

* see Community Care, 23 April 1981
and other difficult areas ... Gillain is more straightforward - she's of the old school and has certain standards and values which it's right for her to communicate to the people she's dealing with."

In this example, although the social worker accepted and approved the homemaker's value, she indicated that social workers apply a different value system in areas like for instance "working with relationships". Yet in the context of comparing her practice before and after professional training, this social worker said 'I think I work much the same way to be honest. I haven't changed my practice to a great degree'. So the lines of demarcation between images of professional staff and others were not easily definable, and as a result there were some principles of professional practice which were hotly defended by the social workers. The issue of confidentiality, for example, was one which was highly valued as a concept by professional staff and was, incidentally, given as one of the main reservations the team had in working with volunteers. Another persistent topic concerned the audacity of headquarters staff in questioning "the professional judgement" of social workers submitting reports to divisional committees.

At Lakeside there was a disparagement of "therapeutic" methods of operation in social work and comments of this nature were often directed at the popular image of Hilltown team:

"purporting to cure psychological problems assumes that social workers know best what's right for clients, whereas the clients should tell the professionals what they want them to do for them".

"How could anyone do therapy anyway when you haven't established credibility by helping with the bills and whatever else the person presents? You must establish credibility first".

There were frequent stories about cases which had come to the team "in an awful mess" after other social workers had tried
family therapy, "but didn't know what they were doing and left all the other practical difficulties to hang in the air ... the people involved were really badly f**ked-up and more confused than ever about their relationships". Similarly the value of intermediate treatment was questioned in this team as being too artificial to do anything worthwhile. "All you get by way of feedback is 'gets on well with his peers'. Too much jargon. You'd get more normal feedback from Scout leaders". This unsophisticated way of viewing the job is further illustrated by a conversation I had with one of the social workers about treatment for clinical depression. His comment was, "Well ye ken, I think if you've got a sense of humour it helps a lot. I know we can't avoid big things like cancer and heart disease but keeping cheerful avoids a lot of those other illnesses".

One social worker at Lakeside summed up the team's self-image by describing a television portrayal of a social worker: "she was a nice, unpretentious, ordinary person". At the same time, the team were able to sustain a belief in their professionalism by identifying what they regarded as the distinctive characteristics of "professional judgement" and their espousal of a set of professional values, particularly those of confidentiality and self-determination of clients.

At Hilltown the team had a more self-conscious sense of professional identity than had the team at Lakeside, with a view of social work as the practice of "therapy" and an emphasis on, in the area officer's words, the "internal", while ancillary staff were seen as dealing mainly with the "external" aspects of individuals' and families' problems. The various work groups were used as a forum for reiterating that the professional function was one of "counselling" and "casework" and of working with "relationships", and
contrasts were drawn between, for example, the volunteer's role of "befriending" and "information-giving" and the social worker's of "counselling", or unqualified staff's concentration on the "physical" and that of qualified staff on the "emotional". This is illustrated by a discussion in the OT group of plans for setting up a social and information centre for the physically handicapped, which was to be run partly by volunteers. Bill the social worker commented, "there are two areas here - information-giving and counselling, which may not be suitable for volunteers. Social work staff should be involved in discussions about this ... because there will be calls not only about physical health but also about mental health". In another context, in defining the role of the home-help (or family aide) in a case, a social worker said, "She will take over the financial side, try to help him (the client) to reduce his debts, while I continue to discuss his relationship difficulties and personal problems".

The staff groupings were also used for communicating propaganda in a more formal way, through arranging for "ideology pushers" (Strauss 1964, page 149) to talk to the groups. For example, the family therapy specialist asked to be invited to the OT group, to the volunteers' group and to a group of home-helps in training so that he could explain "what family therapy is all about". He used a variety of methods, including role-play, to illustrate his techniques and goals. The outcome of his efforts with, for instance the home-helps, was one of admiration, with comments such as "I could never do that. I think I'll just stick to being a home-help". In other words, the effect of such activities was not the sharing of skills but the increased mystification of those areas of social work in which the professionals operate. This was supported by an exclusive language which included concepts such as "paradoxical work" with clients, and casual conversations between social workers about cases containing
psychoanalytic notions like for example, "resistance" and "regression".

In addition to the effect of "ideology pushing" as a mystification of social work, there was evidence to suggest that it also had a "conversion" effect. Balint (1963) spoke of the "missionary role" of the professional and Rees (1978), in his descriptions of face-to-face contact between social workers and their clients, concluded that social workers assumed that implementing 'treatment' would involve encouraging clients to share their beliefs in its value:

"Emphasis on the purpose and commitment required to counsel people with relationship-type problems was implicit in these workers' ideology of casework. Their sense of mission began by their interpreting problems as having to do with personal crises and their tasks as open-ended, having no obvious time limit. In their eyes this legitimated their initial intervention. Their interest was reinforced by respondents' appreciation ..." (pages 95-96).

We do not have information about social workers' interactions with their clients in this present study, but the empirical findings indicate that other workers at Hilltown team accepted social workers' definitions of professionalism (and volunteers attached to Hilltown did also, as will emerge in subsequent chapters). Support is also found for this in Stevenson et al's study (1978) where assistants saw themselves as doing more "mechanical" work while social workers took on "indepth, at risk, or stressful cases" (paras 6.16 and 6.17).

Although privately some unqualified staff questioned social workers' professional judgement ("some of them are quite zany and have really odd and 'way out' interpretations of why people behave the way they do, and I think they overdo things a bit"), this was not expressed publicly. Indeed public attitudes of unqualified staff reinforced the image of the professional task of dealing with the client's "internal" world and requiring superior knowledge and skills
to other kinds of social service. Even when attempts were made to cross the hierarchical boundaries, or at least to have a public acknowledgement that unqualified staff were in fact working already in areas claimed as the domain of the professionals, they functioned to emphasise the exclusiveness of professional territory: An example of this was a challenge made by the social work assistants who chose a full staff meeting to make it. The issue concerned the role of the social work assistant (SWA) attached to the OT team who claimed that her job concerned more than simple assessing for aids for the physically handicapped and often there was "a social work element" for which she needed support and supervision from a senior social worker rather than the OT. She said she wanted to develop "skills of assessment and understanding", to help her deal more competently with such cases.

The SWAs as a group pointed to an anomaly in their position, in that those attached to the Intake and Long-term teams were allowed to do some "counselling" work because they worked alongside professionals. This meant that some cases referred by the SWA from the OT team might be allocated to a SWA in the Intake team, for example, for counselling which it was thought not appropriate for the SWA in the OT team to undertake. This conflict was dealt with by the area officer's personalising the matter, "This looks very much like envy between groups and among the SWAs. It seems to be Mary's (the SWA in the OT team) personal problem and not an issue to be discussed at a staff meeting". A suggestion was made by an independent academic observer who sat in on staff meetings regularly, that perhaps the department needed to clarify the role of SWAs and to develop some policy as to their remit. This attempt to generalise the problem was lost and the area officer reinforced his view of the individual nature of the issue by introducing an ideology of professional competence and skills:

"The choice is between internal and external, that is,
whether someone wants to deal with a person's external or physical problems or whether they want to understand the person's internal world. Unfortunately the difference is made by training ...

He implied that opportunity for such training was not available to this particular SWA. The debate terminated when another member of staff suggested that the SWAs ought to have written a paper and distributed it in advance. This was taken up by the area officer who said they "hadn't done their homework" and asked the SWAs to take the issue away to do more work on it. In subsequent discussions with various members of staff as to their perceptions of the incident, there was some acknowledgement of the difficulty in determining where the "social work element" begins but a conviction that where "social work help" was needed it should not be done by an unqualified person. At the same time the specific occurrence was rationalised by the opinion that the SWA in question was not a suitable candidate for professional training.

This example illustrates a pattern which was prevalent in the Hilltown team. There was amongst the social workers a systematic ignoring of, or a redefining of those situations where unqualified staff and volunteers were working in areas of human need claimed as the province of the professionals. When this became public it was dealt with by a polarisation of the "physical" and the "emotional", the "external" and the "internal", which served to sustain the social workers' professional image and legitimated their position of power and status within the team.

The attitudes of unqualified staff were crucial in this process. The SWA above, supported by her colleagues, by insisting that she required additional expertise and that her supervision should be undertaken by a senior social worker in preference to the OT, was thereby declaring her belief that only professionals possessed the skills she desired. Further, the only means to acquire them was
through initiation by a professional. Despite the unclear boundaries of the practice of social work at Hilltown, there was a "faith" (see Holmes 1965) amongst all levels of staff in the qualitative differences in the work they did, the most enviable skills being lodged with social workers. At the same time, by suggesting publicly that unqualified staff might venture on to this territory, the SWA "broke the rules", she "refused to keep her place" in Goffman's words (1956, page 127), and therefore sanctions had to be applied. The impression that the rest of the staff were attempting to maintain of what constituted appropriate work was threatened, so as Goffman again observed, "we may expect that the director ... and the audience may well become ill-disposed to (the performer)". This suggests that notwithstanding the expressions of concern about professional standards of work, the public debate of professionalism was different from (and in some respects more important than) the private practice of it.

So, in comparing the two teams' concepts of professionalism, I have suggested that in Lakeside a fairly unsophisticated professional self-image prevailed, while at Hilltown it was consciously defined as that of a therapeutic agent. At Lakeside what might be termed "lay" values and a lay approach to knowledge and skills, with no claim to special competence, was a primary ideology. At Hilltown the claim was to distinctive values, knowledge and skills in social work. At the same time however, both teams made efforts to sustain a professional self-image, albeit at different levels, and at Hilltown the demarcation lines between the work of qualified and unqualified staff were not as impermeable as the public rhetoric maintained.

(iv) Volunteers.
The two teams held different overall ideologies concerning the role of volunteers in social work, with Lakeside holding a concept of community development rather than volunteers
attached directly to teams of social workers, and Hilltown having a very visible volunteer presence around the area office and with a concept of work with volunteers as an integral part of social work. In view of this, it came as a surprise to find no differences in the two teams, in the degree to which social workers themselves worked with volunteers. During the period of fieldwork, although in both teams there was discussion of the ways in which volunteers might be involved with individual cases, only two social workers in each team were working directly with volunteers in their cases. At Lakeside one of those was a regular driving job and the other entailed taking two children to a childminder daily. At Hilltown the special¬list social worker for the elderly involved volunteers with a small number of clients, and another social worker used a volunteer on a regular driving job. I shall return to this point later, but now continue with descriptions of the teams separately.

At Lakeside the overall approach of the team to volunteers was that to have volunteers working directly from the area office would constitute a loss of freedom for the volunteers and would bring them effectively under the control of social workers, "as part-time, unpaid staff", seen as an undesir¬able development. It was felt that if volunteers were based in the team they would "have to accept social workers' views and would not be free to criticise". For the same reasons training for volunteers was thought to be unhelpful.

As a means to put this ideology of volunteer autonomy with its attendant "pressure" function into operation the team had used finances from a "special projects fund" allocated to each district in the region, to set up a Volunteer Bureau (VB) in a local town about four miles from Lakeside. This had been done with the help of the district-based volunteers organiser who served on the management committee of the VB which was run on a part-time basis by one paid person. The
MB had been operating for six months at the time of the study. However referrals to the MB came mainly from local health clinics for jobs such as decorating, transport and gardening. The MB's records showed little from the area team, except from the OT, again mainly for transporting jobs. The MB worker described her job as operating "a glorified taxi service".

In the light of this it becomes unclear as to what the team meant by "volunteer freedom", especially too, as in discussing ways in which they would consider involving volunteers, controls and restrictions were imposed on any such operations and included the notion of "vetting" volunteers and the problem of confidentiality. The following excerpt from my fieldnotes illustrates this:

"Laura said she has been looking for a male volunteer to befriend a mentally handicapped boy of 17, but the only person the VB could produce was very unsuitable. Laura said the 23 year old volunteer was dominated by his mother and turned out to be quite spineless... she said she likes to vet the volunteers herself. She visited the young man at home and found herself in a roomful of people. When she suggested speaking to him privately - 'I'm very strong on confidentiality, I'm afraid', she said - his mother became highly antagonistic and wanted to know the details... Laura said it really was a 'hairy' set up, and said 'I'm not prepared to give out a lot of information about a client. For me trust is a very real barrier'..."

A second example illustrates a shared, often repeated fear amongst the team of the dangers of living in a small rural community. Variations of the following story were voiced frequently. Again the quote is taken directly from my fieldnotes:

"Pat said another social worker has asked for a volunteer to befriend a man coming out of prison. One of the staff had overheard the woman gossiping about this prisoner in a local store, saying how worried and afraid she was of taking on the job. The member of staff reported back and the woman was tackled about it".

So at Lakeside, although the official ideology about
volunteers was that they were a valid resource so long as their individual freedom was protected by their operating outside the team setting, the image which was constructed by the team held volunteers to be in need of careful vetting, to be unreliable and to breach basic social work principles. The opinion which was expressed by all the social workers in this team, that volunteers attached to the team would be "part-time unpaid staff", suggests that these professionals did not recognise any qualitative differences between the work of unpaid and paid workers, while at the same time volunteers' negative attitudes were used as a legitimation for their non-involvement by the team. The incongruity of these two approaches to volunteers may point again to the observation made earlier in this chapter (page ) that at Lakeside volunteers would have become a threat in the absence of diversity or of a separate professional identity among social workers. It may well be that the presence of volunteers was unconducive to Lakeside's particular brand of a "welfare" model of intervention in social problems. In the light of this, and assuming that Lakeside's model of social work was similar to that posited by Davies, as I discussed earlier, one might ask whether within Davies' "maintenance model" there is any place for volunteers and how realistic is his belief that a wider range of workers could adopt a "social work perspective".

At Hilltown volunteers were very much a part of the office culture and the team was well-known for its success in working alongside them. Emphasis was laid on the intrinsic value of voluntarism as an altruistic act and on the "special quality" of the volunteer's contribution. The practice of involving volunteers directly with the team was started by the area officer who had pressed for the appointment of a district-based volunteers organiser. The area officer continued to be the main advocate for using volunteers in new and imaginative ways and "pushed" such an ideology publicly, declaring that it is "unprofessional not to work
with volunteers" and it "is a mark of maturity for social workers to work with volunteers".

Indeed volunteers were used in a range of ways by the team, though not directly by social workers in their cases. The largest bulk of the work of the Elderly group was carried out by volunteers who constituted two-thirds of that group. Volunteers were also very active in the OT group and ran virtually alone, a day centre for the physically handicapped. An intermediate treatment group set up by the team involved a volunteer and a group for discharged psychiatric patients was supervised by two volunteers*. There were cases of volunteers offering support to families with problems and befriending children in residential care, but in all such instances there was little or no contact with social workers, and in some social workers were not involved.

The volunteers organiser's job was fairly peripheral to the team and most of his activities were concentrated elsewhere, in what might be described as a community development role. He had assisted in the setting up of new voluntary groups such as Women's Aid and Cruse Association for widows and he liaised with various voluntary organisations in the district. His function within the team lay mainly in the periodic recruitment and training of new volunteers and in responding to any requests for volunteer help from staff. He did not attend meetings of any of the groups and did not "push" volunteers as a resource, taking a fairly passive role. The bulk of the requests which came his way were for driving jobs, and indeed a list of volunteers which he circulated to staff indicating the interests of volunteers, consisted mainly of times when they would be available as transporters for clients or others.

* Interestingly the IT group could not be run entirely by volunteers as was the day centre, for example, since it embodied the concept of "treatment" and its client group were children. Some of the children were, of course, under statutory orders, but duties under these could have been carried out by social workers in alternative ways while volunteers operated the IT group.
Although volunteers were an everyday part of the area team's life, they seldom entered the room occupied by the social workers in the Intake and Long-term teams, and in accord with the hierarchical structure of available "skills", certain tasks were felt to be inappropriate for them (these were not written or formalised in any way, except by omission in that, for example, the list of volunteers' interests already referred to did not include activities such as "counselling"). The constructed image of volunteers which was held by the staff is illustrated by some comments made by them:

- "where cases are complicated, such as counselling a bereaved person, a social worker is needed".
- "I have several cases which only need a visit from a volunteer". (my emphasis)
- "I wonder if a volunteer might be appropriate in this case since it's just someone to talk to".
- "We choose people as volunteers who think like us".
- "This volunteer seemed to be working as an advocate on behalf of (the client) and was very antagonistic towards the department".

Two points emerge from these quotations. One is that the work carried out by volunteers was seen to be straightforward and simple and the language chosen to describe it sustained that image. The second is that volunteers were expected to accept social workers' definitions of their role and to be guided by paid staff in their activities. A critical function for volunteers was not considered and was never put forward as a possibility. The volunteers themselves accepted the constructed reality of their position, giving deference to social work and other staff and accepting supervision of their work from social workers with comments such as "a trained person would know what things might be significant, but we don't".

At the same time, however, volunteers were involved in what
might be seen as fairly complex situations. An example was of Mr and Mrs S, an elderly couple being visited by a volunteer. She reported that Mr S was drinking heavily and there was friction in the house with the couple generally argumentative. The volunteer assessed that Mr S had "definitely deteriorated". She was instructed by the social worker, if there was more serious deterioration to get in touch with the health visitor. The volunteer summed up the situation between Mr and Mrs S by saying, "Mrs S is just not going to come to terms with her illness ... there's a real love-hate relationship between them. I have a good discussion with them, and get all their grievances". The volunteer declined to describe her work as "counselling" or to acknowledge that skill was involved in perceiving "deterioration" yet it could be argued that she was carrying out both assessment work and marital counselling, both areas which were regarded as and declared to be the territory of social workers. Although bereavement counselling was often cited as an area of work outside the competence of volunteers several examples of volunteers carrying out such work - albeit under a different guise - arose. One incident was of a case brought for allocation to the OT group. The client had undergone several eye operations and had eventually lost her sight. She was described as "very uptight" and needed someone to "be a good listener" since her family would not let her do things for herself. A volunteer was requested and allocated. Despite the fact that this allocation took place immediately after a long discussion as to at what stage bereaved clients should be transferred to social workers for counselling, no such query arose, and there was no recognition of a possible sense of loss for the blind client. Another example was of an old man who had just been admitted to hospital, possibly permanently. The social worker who presented the case to the Elderly group said "a volunteer has a valuable role in helping this man express feelings about being in hospital and about going home". Again, there was no acknowledgement of the potential for "bereavement"
counselling. There were also examples of volunteers in other situations of bereavement in the accepted sense, those where a family member had died. Of course an important factor in the ways in which those cases were constructed, was that the clients were seen as elderly or physically handicapped, or both, and we have already considered that their needs were defined in terms of their material or physical aspects. It is not surprising then that volunteers were regarded as an appropriate resource for such groups. In this way not only was the work flow to social workers controlled, but legitimated. Information flowing through the team was "sharpened" and the fact that volunteers were involved in "complex" cases was ignored so that work could be processed and a public forum was used to perpetuate the myth (though held sincerely) that volunteers carried out basic and simple tasks and "befriending", while social workers did "counselling" and "therapy". The low status afforded volunteers within the team was apparent at all levels. At senior social worker level work with volunteers was seen as low priority; at social worker level a volunteer was "just someone to talk to"; for the home-help section volunteers "didn't do anything, just sat there"; and for the OT group, volunteers were "often more trouble than they're worth". Even the area officer, the main ideology pusher in favour of volunteers, in his statement that it is "unprofessional not to use volunteers" was in this more concerned with the characteristics of being a professional person than with the inherent value of volunteers.

It is interesting in comparing ideologies and practices about volunteers in Lakeside and Hilltown, that the Hilltown social workers, when asked why they did not work directly with volunteers, gave answers similar to those at Lakeside. These included issues such as confidentiality, reliability and availability. So although in each team the formal ideology concerning volunteers differed, informally social workers in both teams said they were prepared to use
volunteers in similar ways. At the same time the social workers themselves were unlikely to involve volunteers to any great extent in their cases and both teams gave similar rationalisations for their practice. These findings are not very different from those of Holme and Maizels (1978) for example, whose respondents were unlikely to work directly with volunteers. Indeed these researchers found that unqualified staff were more likely to use volunteers in their work than the professionals, who were more concerned about professional standards of work and with the possibility that volunteers might not meet them. Doubtless this anxiety was genuine on the part of social workers, though additional possibilities for their non-involvement of volunteers might be to do with the unclarity of the professional identity, or simply that unqualified staff were working mainly with the elderly, seen by the social workers as the most appropriate target for volunteer intervention.

The social workers in Stevenson et al's study (1978) envisaged volunteers as working mainly with the elderly and as providing a "friendly relationship" (see chapter XI). "Most social workers recognised tasks which volunteers could perform but many were most reluctant to make use of them. They suggested that they might prove unreliable, might not keep confidence, or only wanted to be involved in 'nice tasks'..." (para 11.22). In the next chapter I shall begin to explore some of the reasons for this minimal use of volunteers.

Conclusion

As I said at the beginning of this chapter its aim was not a detailed analysis of the operations of Lakeside and Hilltown teams, but to describe the organisational and administrative arrangements for the division of work and to convey a flavour of the cultures which existed in the two
teams, with a view to leading the reader into the next three chapters which will develop some of the themes touched on here.

The topics chosen to bring empirical evidence to bear were those of:

(i) social work problems: how they were defined and presented.
(ii) classifying clients.
(iii) concepts of professionalism.
(iv) volunteers.

In particular I have been concerned to point out that although the professionals in the two teams held very different views of the social worker's task, the ways in which different ideologies were used achieved similar ends, those of controlling the flow of work and sustaining the professional identity of the social workers. The organisational structures and the public rhetoric reinforced the differences among professionals and others.

The following three chapters focus on the perceptions of professional social workers and volunteers and are concerned with a comparison of the range of ideologies through which social workers in Lakeside and Hilltown, current and ex-volunteers made sense of their experience and conducted their work with clients.
CHAPTER 5

IMAGES OF VOLUNTEERS

In the last chapter I attempted to describe the overall cultures of the area teams at Lakeside and Hilltown as I encountered them and to convey some idea of the dominant ideologies which existed in each. This present chapter is concerned with the repertoire of ideologies about volunteers which existed within the teams and among the volunteers themselves (both current and former volunteers). I shall examine different ways in which these different, sometimes conflicting images were used in different contexts to legitimate action taken and to facilitate the accomplishment of work, and the negotiations which took place to achieve subjectively acceptable constructions of the proper functions and the characteristics of volunteers. The discussion will also be focussed on the challenges to the repertoire of ideologies, and on how these were "managed" by the teams by adopting strategies to sustain the images held. The material used in this chapter has been taken from fieldwork in the Hilltown team mainly, since they were the team using volunteers, but I shall also describe the ways in which Lakeside used images of volunteers to legitimate their position.

The use of a notion of images is particularly suitable for studying ideologies and their operationalisation. By "image" I refer to those collective social constructs which are used to objectify subjective reality and so portray "things as they really are". They are typifications which are used as a vehicle for conveying ideologies and objectified meanings.

In my survey of Scottish social work department area teams
which I carried out in preparation for this study, it emerged that none of the regional social work departments had any formal policy about volunteers and their involvement in social work. As a result teams were left to develop their own practices. The picture which emerged even at the level of the questionnaire responses indicated that a range of images of volunteers was used by the teams to explain their practice. This closer examination of two teams in particular aims to describe in more detail the uses to which these typifications were put.

The Repertoire

Berger and Luckmann (after Schutz) made the point that consciousness is dominated by the pragmatic motive, that one's attention to this world is mainly determined by what one is doing, has done, or plans to do in it (Berger & Luckmann 1966). Ideologies that were held by individuals in the study were both prospective in order to project images, and retrospective as a rationalisation of images, brought into operation for the purpose of objectifying their unfolding experience. It follows that the potential repertoire needs to be wide so that in the world of everyday life practical interpretations can be accommodated and a sense of consistency and integration sustained.

It was commonly held institutional knowledge among the two social work teams in the study that volunteers' attitudes, values, assumptions and skills were different from those of social workers, and a process of typification was used to categorise volunteers. The teams constructed their repertoire of images on two dimensions:

(1) the appropriate functions for volunteers, and
(2) their characteristics

and I shall examine each in turn, comparing social workers'
constructions with those of volunteers.

Appropriate functions for volunteers: The repertoire of images of volunteers' functions ranged from what might be seen as revolving around a professional ideology, implying a degree of expertise such as in counselling, assessment and relationship building, to basic instrumental jobs requiring no special skills, such as shopping, driving, writing letters, changing library books, all tasks which might be seen as contained within a lay ideology of voluntarism. Within this spectrum concepts which appeared were of volunteers as "befrienders", as "watchdogs", as those who "sit and talk", as administering physiotherapy, as involved in "play therapy", as bakers, swimmers, anglers and climbers. A similar repertoire was apparent in both Hilltown and Lakeside teams and the following comments are representative of views held:

Lakeside:
(1) "It depends very much on the volunteers and their experience. I was thinking about say, eh, cases where there's a psychiatric problem or something ... but a volunteer might be an ex-psychiatric nurse and might deal with the case far better than I'd ever do ..."

(2) Researcher: "Are there any of your cases where you can see a role for a volunteer?"
SW: "There's a lot of transporting things, more of a one-off thing. There are some things where I'd quite like people to sort of decorate, you know".

Hilltown:
(1) A social worker explained that she would involve a volunteer "where I've wanted more information about a client, but more from, not just factual information, but what they're feeling and what really makes them tick, and how much they were loved in childhood and why that's causing personality problems now ... things like that take a lot of trust and time to come out, more time than I have to give them and I feel a volunteer can be very valuable there".

(2) "... volunteers are used with the handicapped. If they can act as an extra pair of legs or drive a car, or talk to somebody who doesn't get enough stimulation, then they're doing a lot of good work with them".
Practice at Lakeside: The important subject for us in considering this range of ideologies about volunteers is the way in which they were used by the teams. In neither team did that image of the volunteer which expressed an "expert" ideology gain any credence in public discussions. At Lakeside, with its limited number of interventive techniques, the idea of volunteers as a resource hardly appeared at all, and was inadmissable in the allocation of cases. As I said in chapter 4 the channeling of work was highly routinised and the professional identity depended on efficient processing and elimination of any back-log of, for example, court reports or assessments. At the level of public debate, the notion of volunteers was irrelevant to this image, and indeed the introduction of such a topic threatened to disrupt the patterns of allocation and social worker functioning in the office. The following illustration from my notes shows how challenges to the social reality were managed and repelled:

"Dr J had referred an elderly woman aged 99 for additional supervision. A social worker suggested a volunteer from the Volunteer Bureau but was told by the senior 'that's not really what she needs. She doesn't need specific help - the home-help does shopping for her. No volunteer would spend an afternoon or a day with her'. The social worker persisted that it would provide some extra cover, but received the reply, 'she has home-help, meals-on-wheels, the district nurse and the health visitor already. There's not really much help we can offer'."

The team's assessment of this elderly woman's case had concluded that the available range of resources had been brought to bear to support her. Volunteers were ordinarily outside this range and their introduction to the discussion held a danger of disrupting not only the management of the case in question but also the routines developed by the teams in dealing with all their work. In the example above, the main argument used to reject the introduction of the alien subject was on grounds of adequate casework help being available already (ie: in terms of professional assessment) and the rejection of volunteer support as unreasonable and
unrealistic. The implication here was that volunteers were in fact not ruled out by the Lakeside team as a way to meet client need but simply would not be appropriate in this specific case. Yet volunteers were not used to any extent by the team in their day-to-day work. Social workers justified this by projecting a negative image of the volunteer which viewed her/him as a "do-gooder", as not being able to observe confidentiality and as "judgemental". This allowed them to continue to believe in the value of voluntarism (in whatever sense they defined that), but also allowed for the continuance and legitimation of current practices within the team.

Practice at Hilltown: At Hilltown the outcome was the same. Here it is interesting in view of how social workers perceived their professional role, that they were able to attribute to volunteers the potential functions of assessment and counselling. In practice, however, although this "expert" ideology expedited the processing of work, when the notions of counselling and assessment tasks were advocated as suitable for volunteers it was invariably in the context of elderly and physically handicapped clients, groups which as we have already observed, were least involved with social workers. Further, terms such as "counselling" and "assessment" were used only in private conversation but were not attributed to volunteers in public. For example, volunteers in the Elderly group were allocated work which involved carrying out fairly skilled work, as illustrated by a social worker's encouragement to "help the old lady to talk through feelings of bereavement", or another's advocating that the volunteer "get into the person's grief". Again, a volunteer was given the job of going to see an elderly person and to "see what sort of person she is and what sort of (residential) home would be suitable". This way of allocating work allowed for efficient (at least in terms of social workers' time) dealing with the workload, and at the same time avoided any
implications which might have disturbed the professional identity. Any public attempts to translate these tasks into the language of social work and label it "assessment" or "counselling" were resisted. We saw in chapter 4 and later in this chapter will examine again how bids for such public acknowledgement were managed and the implied threat both to the institutional order and to the professional self-image negated in relation to volunteers. The professional self-image was dependent on holding a "frozen" image of volunteers as carrying out unskilled work, and any image which might question the perceived professional function was excluded from the social workers' "visual field", to use an expression of Wittgenstein (1971, page 117). Even in the case of low status clients a public image of volunteers as "experts" was unacceptable since it would raise uncomfortable general questions about social work knowledge and skills. As Pearson observed "... in a professional culture a profession renders the world less awkward ..." (Pearson 1975, page 127).

In the context of families and children, at Hilltown volunteers were seen as "befriending" or as "providing support", but never as engaged in "family work" or "therapy", language which held connotations of a qualitatively different and superior type of service. In public discussion of cases among social workers in the Intake and Long-term teams volunteers were suggested occasionally as part of a casework plan for families and children, but these suggestions were seldom taken up, usually on grounds of the inappropriateness of such intervention in terms of professional assessment. Discussion around such cases always assumed that the social workers would carry out any counselling or therapeutic work with a view to involving a volunteer after completion of it, and that the volunteer would be concerned with a mainly practical and "relief" function. The social workers believed that they involved volunteers in their work, and when asked in individual
interviews how volunteers were used in the team they often included work with families and children. They saw themselves as involving volunteers, and most had cases for which they said they planned to seek volunteer assistance. This belief in the value and presence of volunteers was reinforced by those discussions of cases where volunteer help was considered, even though in the overwhelming majority it was thought not to be appropriate, or preferred as a future possibility. When confronted with the fact that in spite of the rhetoric about the value of volunteers, few social workers were actually working with them in their cases, explanations which were given by the professionals focussed on a negative image of the volunteer as being "judgemental", "insensitive" and "authoritarian".

So the ways in which these positive and negative images of volunteers were employed by the area team achieved a variety of purposes. Discussion which included an image of the volunteer as a possible resource in the social work task, sustained the team's belief in their commitment to volunteer involvement, while the content of such discussion, which confirmed the volunteer's contribution as qualitatively inferior to that of the professional, confirmed the social workers' view of themselves as skilled experts. The negative image of volunteers was brought into play when the need arose to explain why things were different than they appeared to be, and effectively located the "fault" in the characteristics of the "other", the volunteer, thus leaving the social worker's integrity intact. The negative volunteer image served not only to "explain", but in the process, to uphold professional norms of conduct towards clients.

Images of volunteers as role maintenance at Hilltown: Although it was reported at Hilltown that volunteers' function was that of "simple befriending" and monitoring, I have suggested that some aspects of their role came closer to that of the professional than was acknowledged. But for the professional the ultimate argument in defining the "difference" was that
of their training and qualifications which acted as a kind of "sacred canopy" (Berger 1973) protecting them from doubts and confusion in relation to their role. In order to appreciate this more fully it is necessary to consider some ways in which other workers maintained relative status within the team. What then of those staff who received payment for the job but who were without formal qualifications, such as social work assistants (SWAs) and family aids (home-helps with a formal monitoring function)?

In my observations of the Elderly group (which covered eight meetings) it proved difficult to distinguish these different kinds of worker from each other and from volunteers, since there did not seem to be any clear criteria for allocating cases. It could be argued that in terms of the types of work being undertaken, volunteers were carrying out without payment the work of paid staff, or conversely that employees were receiving payment for work appropriate to volunteers. In either case the situation constituted a political "hot potato".

But the various workers themselves avoided a confrontation of this issue by viewing the roles within the office hierarchically and attributing to volunteers the most menial of functions. Images of volunteers were used as a kind of compass from which staff could plot their position (inevitably superior to volunteers) on the organisational map. They ascribed to volunteers tasks which they saw as too unskilled for themselves. Thus in the list which emerged, befriending (ie: "just visiting"), had lowest status, followed by neighbourly acts such as shopping, then involvement with clients' financial problems, after which came counselling, and top of the list was therapy. The family aide, for instance, who saw herself as dealing with clients' financial problems, declined to accept a referral for someone to visit an elderly person saying,

"It has to be a volunteer for this one. Someone who would just sit and blether. It's not for me. I'm too busy to do that kind of thing".
Likewise a SWA who viewed her job as contacting resources and negotiating with other agencies on behalf of clients, held an image of volunteers as "doing very basic tasks such as changing library books or going shopping". Social workers, whose self-image was of dealing with clients' emotional problems felt that volunteers could cope with financial problems "provided they had enough experience, but counselling isn't appropriate for them". The family therapy specialist was prepared to concede that volunteers could carry out "nearly all the tasks done by generic social workers" but had not the skills to do family therapy. All of these different roles within the organisation were sustained by the incumbents holding an image of volunteers which supported their own view of themselves within the agency, and objectifying it as "in the natural order of things".

Yet in the reporting back period in the Elderly group volunteers consistently described their negotiations with DHSS and fuel authorities on behalf of their clients, their discussions with GPs and health visitors, and in the case of one volunteer, even correspondence with a hospital doctor on departmental notepaper, approved by her social worker supervisor. The same volunteer carried a "caseload" of twelve elderly people. All the volunteers attached to the Elderly group gave written reports on their clients and often arrived at meetings carrying clients' files. They each had a "pocket" in the general office for correspondence and general memoranda, in the same way as had all the paid workers. These volunteers saw themselves as accountable to the social work department, as revealed in this telling comment from one of them,

"... up until I went on the training course I suppose I thought really that your first loyalty should be to the client, but (the volunteers organiser) does impress on the volunteers that you are responsible to the group, the office, that you're more or less employed by them, so your first loyalty should be there".
She went on to give the opinion that her clients perceived her as representing the social work department: "no matter how close a relationship you have with them they still see you as from the office", and thought this a good thing because "it sort of helps you keep the job in perspective".

To all intents and purposes many aspects of the role and the obligations of volunteers were very similar to for example that of SWAs, except that, in the words of one volunteer, "(SWAs) visit a lot more people than us". However there were crucial differences between them in terms of the practical outcome of beliefs held about them. Any similarities were not acknowledged and, when it was put to them that there were some, both the SWAs and the social workers I interviewed explained the differences in qualitative terms. A small number, including the SWAs, referred to volunteers' anxieties and over-involvement with cases, but all the social workers focussed on values, and suggested that although neither had been professionally trained, those SWAs who worked alongside social workers had imbibed professional values as a result, which volunteers as a group did not possess. Thus volunteers remained "fixed" in a position of low status whatever tasks they performed.

The duality which existed in the team concerning volunteers is highlighted by an incident where the task undertaken by a volunteer was challenged externally. It arose as a result of the volunteer's writing to a health visitor (HV) about a client. The HV refused to deal with a volunteer and when approached by one of the team's social workers said she did not acknowledge a volunteer's right to act as representing the team in this way. The following extract from my taped conversation with the social worker illustrates some of the difficulties:

"SW: It's quite difficult for (the volunteer involved) and some of the others. They could really do with a session of sitting down and looking at things and documents and what they should do-how we expect them to be professionals and
and yet don't afford them the resources. And then they get hammered when they do send out personal letters. Um, there's just ourselves to blame... I mean that was absolutely unbelievable... I felt it was courtesy that if someone, anyone, wrote then you replied in writing, and then it eventually came out that because it was a volunteer writing she wouldn't answer.

Researcher: Do you think it would have been more acceptable to her if the volunteer had written in her capacity as a private citizen?

SW: In any capacity, yes, I think she would have replied. That would have been OK. Really it was the word volunteer that stuck in her throat totally, which was absolutely astounding. I was quite glad that the team room was full at the time it happened because I think it really brought home to everyone just where volunteers are seen by other agencies, and even within social work. Really that they're OK, you know, to go down and speak to people and maybe make them a cup of tea and fetch the library books and things like that, but when a volunteer actually questions somebody like a doctor then you really are wondering who the hell this woman thinks she is."

Here the social worker admitted that the volunteer had been placed in a vulnerable situation by the department's expectations, but at the same time implied that the HV had been unreasonable not to reply. But the "unreasonableness" was related to common courtesy, not to the right of the volunteer as a team representative to receive a reply. Although the social worker was indignant at the HV's behaviour, and as a team member accepted responsibility for exposing the volunteer to it, her indignation did not include any insistence on the improved status of volunteers or any re-examination of their role in the team. The only further action taken as a result of the incident was a policy decision by the Elderly group to have all future letters written by volunteers, approved and signed by social workers. (Interestingly a similar decision, but at a higher level in the hierarchy, was made at the senior staff meeting about child-minding assessments carried out by unqualified staff).

At Hilltown volunteers were expected to accept responsibilities undertaken by paid staff in the team and to take on jobs publicly declared to belong to paid workers, but without
the rights, privileges, status or organisational immunity commensurable with them. During my period in the office nobody questioned the political implications of the presence of volunteers (this is not surprising, since after all they were performing a useful function by relieving the team of some of their work). This way of structuring their reality not only allowed the team to continue using volunteers in an unproblematic way, but also by allocating them a place firmly at the bottom of the pecking-order of functions and skills provided all other staff, not only the professionals with an acceptable sense of their organisational identity.

Management of challenges to the repertoire: Here I shall focus on two attempts which I observed during my fieldwork, to adapt the repertoire of images of volunteers held by the Hilltown area team. They illustrate ways in which negotiation of the division of work and of professionalism took place, and how challenges to the social order were managed.

The first attempt to widen the repertoire of images of volunteers concerned referrals for holiday accommodation in residential care for the elderly. It was suggested that since the teams were under pressure volunteers could take on the job of investigating such requests and make assessments of the suitability of old folk for temporary admission. Such work was in any case of low prestige and priority within the team, and the family therapy specialist who had made the proposal was supported by two other social workers, one of whom commented, "It's only a matter of finding out if the old people are fit enough to go into a home". The suggestion was rejected by the team senior, who quoted departmental policy as the reason. He explained this policy to me later as a result of unqualified staff having at one stage carried out such assessments, but the standard of their reports was found to be unacceptable. Headquarters had made professional assessment a matter of formal policy and
and this was established as a proper function of social workers. I took this up with the family therapy specialist later. He commented,

"That could possibly be got around, couldn't it? If volunteers have this sort of pool of intuition we go on about then the other part of it is then we just sort of teach, eh, eh, method, social work method they could practice, like doing a report. I really think if the skills are there, you know, if the basic skills are there then we should capitalise on that. It's a simple case of just tutoring people as to how we do reports - it's a lot easier than dealing with somebody's complex problems ... for me it's easier to say volunteers could do a lot of tasks that generic social workers can do. I'm struggling with the idea that volunteers could do family therapy ... they have fairly basic things like their ability to relate to people and this kind of stuff you know. But I think in family therapy you're talking about all those things plus a whole set of techniques, intellectual as well as - intellectual input as well as an emotional kind of - eh - pool of - eh - skill. You know what I mean?"

In this example the main aim was to hive off tasks to relieve the burden of work on professional workers, but this involved a public acknowledgement that volunteers were capable of assessing client need, for although the client group was a low status group the function was high status. In the attempt above to justify such a departure the social worker found it necessary to trivialise the task (a topic I shall return to in the next chapter) in order to make it acceptable. This was done by the use of words like "simple" and "easier" and an implication that such work is "intuitive" rather than "intellectual", a comparison which was seen to constitute the difference between the ways volunteers and social workers went about their work. The fact that the attempt failed to adapt the repertoire of images in this way, is an indication of the resistance within the team to the admission of any image of volunteers which might have usurped the professional self-image, whatever happened in practice.

But in view of the department's formal policy of assessment
as a social worker function, as expressed by the senior in the team, it seems curious that the correspondence to which I referred earlier in this chapter existed, between a volunteer and a hospital doctor. A letter from the doctor was written to one of the volunteers attached to the team but addressing her as "social worker", asking whether she had any concern about the mental state of her client. The case was referred to the Intake team who passed it to the Elderly group, and the volunteer replied to the letter directly. She made it clear as to her status as a volunteer and continued,

"In this capacity I have visited Mrs B regularly over the past 9 months and agree with your staff that her memory is deteriorating. Since my early visits to Mrs B I have been worried about her emotional state. She imagines she is being branded as a shoplifter. She talks incessantly of this on every visit I make to her, becoming very agitated and displaying nervous mannerisms". Signed K Steel, Social Work Department.

Later it was pointed out by a social worker in the Elderly group that although there was no reason for volunteers not to write such letters, they should always be signed by a social worker to make them acceptable to external organisations and individuals, and as I said earlier this became a matter of policy. In other words, volunteers might indeed carry out some of the functions seen to be within the expertise of professionals. What was proscribed was the public declaration of this activity. (This practice was not confined to volunteers and there were other instances where unqualified staff found themselves in similar circumstances. I have already referred to a decision made at the senior staff meeting which arose as a result of departmental headquarters' having queried a child-minder report done by the homemaker. Although the senior said he countersigned such reports there was pressure from the other senior staff to sign such reports himself and thus "protect the staff member from criticism").
The second challenge to the repertoire of images of volunteers was quite different. It took place in a senior staff meeting where the area officer was negotiating the allocation of resources to a project about which he was enthusiastic. A social worker was to carry out exploratory work in the "overdose ward" of a local hospital with a view to establishing group counselling for attempted suicide patients. There was resistance to the plan from the Long-term team senior and from the volunteers senior, the former arguing that it was a case of "prioritising" and more concentration should be focussed on placing children needing homes, and the latter pointing out that other commitments remained unfulfilled. The area officer made three points which clinched his case. The first was that input at an early stage in such cases would avoid a greater demand on the team later (he supported this by making a connection between for example fuel bills and overdose). The second was that the exploratory work was being carried out with the consent of the team, and the third point was that in any case it was expected that volunteers could "take over" the group. In other contexts, the area officer had argued that dealing with the "internal" world of the client was a matter for the application of professional skills, but here the projected image of volunteers as counsellors went unchallenged because the main concern of the debate was to find ways to lessen the burden of work while at the same time accepting referrals which were seen to fall within the team's remit. The introduction of the notion of volunteers expedited this goal. Later the area officer justified his action to me by moving the frame of reference from an ideology of professional intervention to one of voluntary involvement by commenting, "there's no magic in it, volunteers can listen to patients as well as anyone else". This shift in the frame of reference implied a trivialising of the volunteers' contribution and of the nature of the task, and the language used supported this. The argument which was put forward successfully managed the tension between the need to limit the work flow and the
sustaining of the professional self-image, while at the same time introducing innovatory schemes into the office. In the previous example the bid to introduce a new volunteer image failed. Departmental policy was cited and doubtless this was a genuine influence on the decision. However it is worth noting that the social workers' original argument for allowing an assessment function to volunteers was on grounds only of limiting their own work. It was only in retrospect that the argument which sustained the professional identity was brought to bear as a justification for the action.

These two examples show how the ideologies about volunteers which were chosen from the repertoire for public display had to sustain images of them with which social workers were comfortable or found acceptable, whichever ideologies operated informally in Hilltown. Such images were available to be used in political moves either to "corner" new areas of work or to discard old ones. But even when the declared intention was to involve volunteers with high status clients (eg: overdose patients) or in high status work (eg: assessment), the public rhetoric ensured their image as one of functioning in a different and less skilled manner from the professionals, and the image of volunteers carrying out high status work with high status clients never appeared in public discussion.

Characteristics of volunteers

As with the image held of the functions of volunteers, a similar repertoire of images concerning the characteristics of volunteers was identifiable among social workers in both teams. The range which was available saw volunteers as on the one hand sensitive, aware, trustworthy and reliable, and on the other as judgemental, inexperienced, lacking in knowledge about people and unreliable. These positive and negative images were brought to bear in different contexts
by the social workers. The range is illustrated by the following quotes from individuals in the two teams and is representative of the views of the social workers:

Lakeside:
(1) "I think (volunteers) are far more flexible than we are ... the people I know who do voluntary work consider it, you know, if they've said something then they'll do it, come hell or high water."

(2) "... you're back to your charity people, your do-gooders ... the type of social work done by that type of person isn't always beneficial. I always feel that these sort of well-meaning people have, always leave you with a feeling of inferiority and that they're so well-endowed with whatever it is you haven't - something to do with privileges ... they leave me sometimes with the feeling "aren't we good". They're community minded people and really they're pretty good, they'll sort this community out. And there's a feeling that "we're better than the next one" and that concerns me because I don't think that should be there at all."

Hilltown:
(1) "I do believe there are some people who are almost natural social workers. They have understanding, they have sensitivity; they have the kind of common sense psychology ..."

(2) "the volunteers do pass judgement, especially on families. Acceptance is important and volunteers have been taken aback at conditions of some of the houses and of the kids, em, and there's pressure from them to say "these kids should be in care" ... too many volunteers are authoritarian."

Let us now look at the individual practices of the teams.

Practice at Lakeside: As I have said already the topic of volunteers seldom appeared at all in public debate at Lakeside, but in my individual discussions with social workers negative images were used extensively to justify the team's practice of minimal involvement of volunteers. It was interesting that in both teams the positive images of volunteers constructed by the teams reflected their own values as to desirable characteristics of social workers. At Lakeside the volunteer was seen as someone who was
efficient and reliable. (At Hilltown the image was of someone who was "understanding" and "sensitive"). But, at Lakeside the principles of "confidentiality" and "acceptance" were also highly valued, and it was on this count that volunteers were found to be wanting. All of the social workers could recount stories of how information about clients had been "leaked" by volunteers, about having overheard volunteers gossip in shops, and generally the dangers in a small rural community where most people were widely known. The professionals themselves said they were "hot on confidentiality" and saw this as the main reason for their caution. One can appreciate the complexities for the team were they to hold an image of volunteers which viewed them as both reliable and efficient, and respecting and accepting of clients. In this case their practice would require to change and there would be the additional question of what constituted their difference as professional people.

But there were instances at Lakeside where unqualified people were included in the team's work, and it is useful to consider how this practice was legitimated. The homemaker for example, was seen as someone with different values from social workers, and who at times imposed those values on her clients. "She has different standards, she's managing in this area having lived here ... she sees very clearly what she's got to do ..." Although it was acknowledged that the homemaker's approach was not that which social workers should take, it was justified on the grounds that, as someone who had grown up in the area, she knew the "local language", and in any case since she was known and trusted by the staff it was clear that her intentions towards clients were kind, and not condemning. The volunteer on the other hand, who might have held similar values, was endowed with malicious intent by the social workers. In this way the status quo was maintained and current practice rationalised.

Practice at Hilltown: At Hilltown, as we have concluded
from the quotes at the beginning of this section, the range of images as to the characteristics of volunteers was similar to that at Lakeside. In both teams, linked to these images were images concerned with the motivation and expectations of volunteers. These were used far more widely in Hilltown than in Lakeside and the discussion of them here concentrates on the fieldwork material derived from Hilltown.

The images of volunteers can be categorised as:

(i) aspiring social workers,
(ii) therapy seekers.

An interesting feature of these images was their adaptability. It was possible for each category of motivation to be used in either a negative or a positive sense according to the intended practical outcome of its use.

(i) Aspiring social workers: Aspiration to professional social work was regarded as a valid motive for volunteers when it was used to "explain" good performance, as illustrated by this quote from a Hilltown social worker:

"I started off with one girl ... she has gone on and become a social worker since then. She was extremely good."

But such motivation was also capable of being treated with suspicion, as expressed here:

"Some of the volunteers have certainly indicated to us that perhaps they wanted to enter into the social work field more directly. Em, now, if you have someone who says that to you in joining the team, then you can feel at times the uneasiness of the team being watched and their method of work being examined, and there's an element of ... someone who's watching and listening and taking something away which they want to use, and are not qualified to use."

The positive aspect of an image of volunteers as aspiring social workers was employed in at least two ways. The team had a reputation for successful working with volunteers and viewed itself as sustaining a range of innovatory work within its sphere of operation. Reports of good work carried out
by volunteers abounded in the office and were an important confirmation of the social workers' view of themselves. Further, they regarded work with volunteers as of being good quality and of a high standard and in their references to volunteers referred frequently to their being "extremely good", a sentiment which was often associated with the opinion that the volunteer "would make a good social worker". In other words, as well as sustaining a belief in their successful, high quality work with volunteers, a positive image of volunteers as aspiring social workers also sustained a belief in professional "difference" in that volunteers who were seen to possess qualities perceived as basic to social work were regarded as "exceptional". This served also to project an image of the public in general as "judgemental" or "insensitive" or whatever.

At the same time however, negative images of volunteers as aspiring social workers could be used to justify the notional exclusion of volunteers from certain areas of work and with certain client groups, and to explain "failure" in involving them successfully. In the quote from a social worker earlier which expressed suspicion of volunteers' motivation, the comments were made in the context of a discussion of attempts to involve volunteers with the work of the Intake team. Several members of the team had admitted discomfort in the presence of the volunteer and anxiety as to how to use her or what kind of work to allocate to her. Eventually her services were withdrawn since she was underused.

It is worth noting that this attempt to locate a volunteer in the Intake team was a departure from normal practice in Hilltown, which located volunteers in the Elderly and OT groups only. The Intake team, including its physical habitation in the office was regarded very much as professional territory where highly skilled work took place. Its prestige within the team is illustrated by the existence of a memorandum outlining a tour of the office
for new students which stipulated that the procession "avoid the Intake team during the allocation meeting". The two social work assistants attached to Intake had been socialised into its norms and were experienced as being "under the control" of the team. It may have been that the question of accountability was unclear with regard to the volunteer who was not an employee, but the fact remains that the team were unable to tolerate her presence.

The rationalisation of this "failure" was made on professional grounds, which implied protection of client interests: "... someone who's watching and taking something away which they may want to use and are not qualified to use". Although this related to a specific incident, the comment was not an isolated one, and there was a trend among the team towards explanations of this kind. Here is another example

"... (if the volunteer feels) they're getting on great and thinking it was going well, they might feel less need to consult, to discuss, to bring things back to the social worker, as that's where it can go wrong, you know when the volunteer thinks they're in control of the situation. Em, they may be quite good but they might miss something that sharing with the social worker responsible for the case would pick up and say, 'Hang on - how long's that been happening?' you know, that's a bit worrying."

In their use of both positive and negative images of volunteers as aspiring social workers, the emphasis for social workers was on sustaining the professional self-image and on a sense of maintaining control of the "professional" areas of their work. Such folk images were highly potent in their outcome, which was that a belief in the contribution of volunteers was upheld while at the same time their repression was legitimated.

(ii) Therapy seekers: A large proportion of current volunteers could be classified as therapy seekers and they frequently offered as a motivating factor the hope that they would find help for their own problems in becoming involved
Typical comments were:

- "I decided I was getting old, I was, I was - this is the end you know ... so I phoned up and that was it. I mean this is where I hope I'm helping other people and it's helping me as well".
- "I decided I would have to go out and do something before I was needing somebody to come in and talk to me, because I was depressed".
- "I came out with early retirement ... when I finished up suddenly I had nothing ... it seemed as if I was wasting my life, I was idling myself away, so I just decided to take up this voluntary social work".

These images of volunteers as therapy seekers were endowed regularly with meanings by social workers which made actions subjectively plausible and served to maintain the universe of the teams. In introducing a volunteer to an elderly person for example, a social worker in Hilltown said how pleased she was with the way the volunteer presented herself and the reasons for her involvement. "She and the old lady really struck it off quite well because (the volunteer) sat down and explained who she was and what she was doing in the department ... she said to Mrs So-and-so, 'I'm a volunteer and I'm doing it because I'm feeling a wee bit lonely myself and you know, it's nice to help people'."

Her efforts to delineate the differences resulted in only one distinctive "skill" which was that "social workers don't bring their problems, you know". Along with this view of motives went behaviour which was not prescribed for social workers, as described here by another social worker,

"I said to a volunteer yesterday how as social workers we don't tend to get involved in sort of telling the client that we're going to have mince for our tea, that sort of thing, em, we tend to leave our home lives outside of the
situation completely and focus in on the person, but it may be OK for a volunteer going to chat to an elderly person, em, in a sort of friendship basis to say, you know 'I've got two kids at school and I'm going to pick them up later on today', and you know, talk at that sort of level if it seems appropriate.

Therapy seeking was never presented as a motivation of social workers, and was regarded as unconducive to a professional approach. It was however, in its positive aspects seen as acceptable in volunteers and greeted with a sense of relief among social workers who expressed reassurance that volunteers' admission of their own needs in this way was an indication that they did not intend to "social work" the clients.

Social workers' concern to differentiate motivations in this way may be significant in the light of the findings of this study to be outlined in the next chapter. These concern the difficulties the majority of social workers had in defining their distinctive knowledge and skills as professional people and in outlining the differences between themselves and volunteers. In the light of their confusion, it may have been particularly important for them to distinguish between themselves and volunteers in terms of their motivation to work with clients.

But negative images of volunteers as therapy seekers were potent as retrospective explanations for actions. Here I shall give only one example but there are others which convey social workers' concern about "volunteers meeting their own needs at the expense of the client". In the following example such an image allowed a social worker to cope with a large drop-out of prospective volunteers from a training course.

"I'm firmly convinced that two-thirds of volunteers have great needs and problems themselves, em, certainly for the ones that start off, the ones you get on the first three nights on the training course ... Em, because a lot of them were single parents, divorced, separated, em, a couple of them had been assaulted by their husbands, you know, battered, em - quite severe problems. That was quite a
large proportion of them and a lot of them dropped away actually. Em, the ones I'm remembering having mentioned these things, em, aren't any of the ones that we have now. That's quite interesting. I feel they were looking for some fulfilment of a great need, probably loneliness being one of them, and a need to feel necessary, and they weren't realising it would involve so much commitment, possibly because of their own demoralised psychological state as well - that they possibly have not much to give of themselves, haven't many resources because of the bad experiences, a lot of output from themselves is asking too much - so they weren't able to stand up to the course, so we ended up with a lot less than we started with, which didn't alarm me because I thought this is the weeding process at its finest, you know, what we're coming out with is good material, or is likely to be very enthusiastic and dependable and responsible people, you know."

Such a rationalisation was common and achieved at least three purposes. It dealt with and integrated any threat to the subjective reality which was present in what might have been perceived as the team's inability to retain volunteers. Secondly, it confirmed the team's view of its high standard of service to clients as shown by the "weeding" process, and thirdly, it legitimated an ideology of professional control over volunteers' entry into the team and their activities within it. In this it achieved similar ends to the use of a negative image of volunteers as aspiring social workers. Indeed both positive and negative images of volunteers were crucial towards the maintenance of the social workers universe and a belief in their own distinctive position.

Typification at Lakeside and Hilltown

In this discussion on the ways in which social workers in the two teams negotiated images of volunteers I have suggested that a range of tactics was used to achieve subjectively satisfactory constructions of the functions and characteristics of volunteers. The process of typification of volunteers narrowed the choices available and facilitated habitualized practices, and the folk images thus created were used in controlling and legitimating
procedures. In referring to the way in which typification was supported by anecdotes, Backett in her study of patterns of parenting noted the use of the "explanatory incident" through which even one experience could be sufficient to concretise images (Backett 1978). I have pointed to the presence of this phenomenon in this study, where social workers were able to generalise that for example, "volunteers are judgemental" from relating a particular incident. Doubtless the anecdotes were factual, but what concerns us here is how it came to be that the images created by such incidents achieved such prominence and potency in the teams. Why was the language used to project images of volunteers selective in that it was confined within a lay ideology of volunteers (as I have defined it on page  )? Why did images of volunteers as "counsellors" or "assessors" never gain access to public discussion among the teams? As it was, their contribution was held in a frame which implied that (i) they operated on an intuitive level while social workers operated additionally on an intellectual level; (ii) in effect volunteers provided an inferior service to clients, and (iii) they were "inexperienced" while social workers were "experienced".

All of these legitimation tactics which we have discussed were essentially contextually based and choices of images were made according to the desired pragmatic outcome of the negotiation. A paradox apparent in both teams was that they were able to sustain contradictory images of volunteers without discomfort. These images allowed them to uphold the volunteer contribution as a "good thing" while providing justifications for their not involving volunteers with high status work in high status cases, or in the case of Lakeside, with any cases at all.

But the paradoxical nature of their images of volunteers did not need to be confronted by the teams, who had adopted what Garfinkel termed "the et cetera assumption,
which allowed questionable or ambiguous utterances to pass, on assumption of common understandings" (Garfinkel 1964, pages 247-8). At Lakeside and Hilltown a number of "recipes" were available which, as Schutz pointed out "permit us to obtain desired typical results" (Schutz 1962). It is only when the results fail to materialise that the recipes are called into question.

For the same reason social workers saw no conflict between their typifications of volunteers and their own view of themselves as upholding professional values such as "treating people as individuals", and being "non-judgemental". The "stock of knowledge at hand" resulted in an unquestioned belief and certainty on which actions were taken, but which is not made a topic for reflection. As a result of this process social workers were able to operationalise a number of typifications, some of which were contradictory.

As a consequence of these "preconstituted typifications" (Cicourel 1968, pages 66-67), theories about volunteers' characteristics for example could be employed in routine ways by professionals. In turn, volunteers became "trapped in their role", to use a phrase employed by Sudnow (1967, page 54), who in his description of a morgue attendant observed, "... he could not completely dissociate his work from the moral character others imputed to him by virtue of his being so employed" (page 58).

Current volunteers: But what of the volunteers who worked alongside the Hilltown team? What was the range of images of volunteers held among them? How did they see themselves in relation to the work and the area team? In terms of appropriate function and typical characteristics, the repertoire of images presented by the current volunteers was very similar to that of the social workers, and a wide range emerged, grounded mainly in their own experience as volunteers. On appropriate functions for volunteers for
example, the following quotes give some indication of the spectrum of views expressed:

(i) "It depends on the volunteers and on the exact situation - say probationers. For example, it could be that I have more experience than a social worker in terms that I might have been in prison when I was younger, getting into gang fights. I could have been on the wrong side of the law or something like that, somehow on closer terms with a guy on probation."

(ii) "I'm on the list and if they need somebody to run somebody somewhere they can phone me and I'll do it if I can, and I'm quite happy with it that way, you know. I'm not desperately wanting to do, you know, I'll do something if they ask me, but I'm quite happy."

These two views of voluntary activity as potentially quite complex and as fairly mundane were echoed by the comments of other volunteers. Most of them saw no reason why volunteers should not be involved with all client groups and with difficult situations, but stated a personal preference for particular kinds of work. For most of them that work was likely to be what they were involved in as volunteers though it may not necessarily have been their first choice. This was especially the case with those volunteers who were closely identified with the area team, the "office" volunteers (mainly attached to the Elderly group) who said they were satisfied with the jobs they were doing and would not involve themselves with "more difficult" tasks such as might be found in work with families for example. This of course may have been a rationalisation of the fact that work with families was unlikely to be open to them in any case, but at the same time volunteers who were external to the office culture spoke to a greater extent of what their preference had been originally, though they were not dissatisfied with their present duties as volunteers. Of the 42 current volunteers, twenty-six were working with the elderly or physically handicapped (or indeed both since some elderly were also physically handicapped), ten were befrienders to children in their own homes or in IT or in children's
homes, two were involved in running a group for ex-
psychiatric patients, one each was in touch with a
probationer, a hostel for battered women, a group for the
mentally handicapped, and one was doing clerical work
attached to the OT group. What is interesting is that all
those who had close links with the office worked with either
the elderly or the physically handicapped. These were
the "visible" volunteers as far as the team was concerned,
whose presence in their capacity as supports to low status
clients undoubtedly was another confirmation of the images
of volunteers' functions which predominated in the area
office.

As to images of the characteristics of volunteers, the
current volunteers' comments indicated that they held
values similar to those of the social workers in that they
regarded certain attitudes towards clients as acceptable
and others as unacceptable. The range is illustrated
below:

(i) "they (the clients) can have a good swear in front of
me if they want to, and I'm not shocked. They
wouldn't dream of swearing in front of (the social
worker). They feel more comfortable talking to me.
I'm not shocked. I don't ask questions but if they
give me an inlet I'll pursue it with them. (The
social worker) isn't the sort of person you would talk
to about sex problems, but they can to me."

(ii) "we had a meeting of volunteers a couple of months
back ... I couldn't believe the contrasting views ...
people who believed that eh, we shouldn't have social
security payments for people to get clothes - you know,
'why don't they go to a jumble sale?' and yet they
were doing voluntary work. I found it a bit hard to
reconcile the attitudes they were expressing with the
fact that they were doing voluntary work."

In considering these quotes, the question arises for us
again as to why an image of the negative characteristics
of volunteers was dominant in the teams, when clearly a
range of attitudes existed. Further, the notion of
"acceptance of clients", for instance was projected as a
professional property by the teams, and although desirable
in volunteers, was not anticipated. This gave rise to a duality in the sense that social workers sought what they regarded as professional characteristics in suitable volunteers, but at the same time appeared to regard such attributes as peculiarly "professional". The discovery of these positive characteristics in volunteers called for a "professional" explanation, i.e.: that those volunteers who possessed them were social work "material". Incidentally, it is worth noting in passing that in the first of the two quotations above, an image of the social worker as "judgemental" and "unaccepting" was projected. As in the case of social workers' images of volunteers, whether or not this image was based on fact, its non-appearance in the world of the teams is interesting. Since the social workers themselves constructed the world such an image remained invisible, and indeed it never arose at all in social workers' views of themselves.

Two questions arise from this:

(i) if professional social work is based on distinctive knowledge, values and attitudes, why were there not differences in the ideologies of volunteers held by social workers and volunteers?
(ii) what contribution did volunteers themselves make towards constructing images and defining their role?

(i) "Mirror, mirror": In describing what they considered to be the differences between social workers and volunteers, social workers in both teams tended to emphasise personal qualities as the distinctive feature, suggesting that as a result of professional training social workers had acquired sensitivity, objectivity, respect of individuals, acceptance, self-awareness and insight into others. As we have already noted, such qualities in volunteers were sought but not anticipated and their presence was regarded as exceptional. The following incidents related by
volunteers are presented as representing a trend that
volunteers did possess such qualities, and that they were
capable of what might be termed "a conscious use of self".

(i) "Sometimes the women (in a hostel for battered wives)
need a night out rather than buy shoes for the
children. I don't disapprove of that. Social
workers disapprove. They say 'wouldn't you be
better off buying the shoes?!'"

(ii) "the old lady that I worked with, she was looking in
the mirror one day, she used to follow me about the
house when I tidied up for her - she looked in the
mirror and she says 'Is that Nelly?' And I discovered
that Nelly was her sister that died. She was
awfully upset when her sister died, and I says 'How
many people do you see?'. She says 'There's two of
us' and I says 'And which one is Nelly?' - and this was me. And I says 'Do you see Nelly?'
and she says 'No I see you'. And then I was making
a wee bit of breakfast for her ... and she started
putting out another cup and saucer and I discovered
that this was for Nelly, so I didnae bother. I
thought, if she wants to put out a cup for Nelly
that's alright. But a neighbour came in and gave
her a row. She said, 'Nelly's not even there'. But
I felt if she wants to see Nelly that's alright. I
mean why should she not?'."

(iii) "Billy (a boy in a children's home), he's the kind of
guy that everything gets pigeon-holed. He likes to
have little boxes to put you in - keep the volunteer
there, children's home there, his Mum's history there
and his Dad's life there. Billy was to some extent
opening up some of those doors and invited me to meet
his Dad, to visit his family, so he could use me as
a sort of sounding-board about things that were
happening domestically. Had I sort of discussed the
case with a social worker in more depth I would have
been better equipped to understand Billy right from the
outset. For example, last week after almost a year I
discovered there was a brother and sister - something
that he wants to forget about. I was absolutely
astounded because I felt it might have been part of my
brief to talk about my own relationship with my
brothers, and the fact that I haven't seen them for
a while, so that he could perhaps identify with it
and feel more open. One of his great difficulties
is, when he has unhappiness he shuts it off."

The fact that volunteers' ideologies were much more similar
to those of professionals than was envisaged by the social
workers, might be explained simply by viewing the repertoire
among the teams as reflecting the range of cultural values available in the wider society and not as peculiar to social work, and I shall return to this point presently. It could be argued of course that volunteers who were attracted to social work had a particular familiarity with the principles claimed as distinctive features of the profession, or that the training courses were designed to socialise them into the world and norms of the area team. But this does not explain why, of the repertoire, certain images gained dominance over others. At Lakeside and particularly at Hilltown, the image of the volunteer as intuitive, in-experienced and inferior was crucial to the legitimation of the existence of the teams as a specialist service. In order to make the area offices subjectively plausible and to "make sense" of individuals' preparation through professional training, those images had to be sustained which emphasised the teams' uniqueness. If the images were not controlled in this way no distinction between social workers and volunteers would be discernible. Volunteers would then be free to claim high status work with high status clients, thus presenting a threat of dismantling the professional world. Those ideologies of volunteers constructed by the teams at Lakeside and Hilltown may be compared with Goffman's "stigma theory" which explains "the other's" inferiority and accounts for the danger she/he represents (Goffman 1963, page 15). It also ensures the perpetuation of "difference".

But in order to answer the question as to why there were not differences in the ideologies of volunteers held by social workers and volunteers the argument must be taken further. Virginia Woolf, in writing of men and women, said that women are condemned by society to function as mirrors, reflecting men at twice their actual size. I observed above that the social workers in the study exhibited a duality in their dealings with volunteers arising from their seeking but not anticipating certain
qualities in volunteers. I suggest here that part of the difficulty arises from the emphasis among the social workers and in social work generally, on the acquisition through training, of "sensitivity", "self-awareness", "objectivity", "respect for individuals", and "insight" into others. Are these not qualities to be sought in any caring community, qualities which are claimed traditionally as the evidence of a democratic, welfare society? And were such attributes not highly valued before the advent of professional social work? It would appear that, at least in the case of Lakeside and Hilltown, the virtues of ordinary citizens have been taken and claimed as "professional" and the power of "caring" has been elevated, and caring functions taken to a level at which only the professionals have competence. At this level the professionals may decide on the rationing of a caring capacity back to the community. The disqualification of volunteers from such decisions is emphasised by the existence of a social work qualification and a professional "bonding". In our present study, as we shall see below, the volunteers were socialised into accepting back the privilege of caring in a passive and acquiescent way. As mirrors they played a crucial role but with little awareness of any power that might afford them.

(ii) Volunteer consciousness: My discussion of the extent to which volunteers contributed to a definition of their role is approached by a brief description of the training which they underwent and their perceptions of it. Training courses had been taking place regularly over about six years and varied from 10 sessions originally to between 4 and 6 currently. I did not have the opportunity to observe any of these courses since none was taking place during my period of fieldwork, but the volunteers gave their perceptions. Although their views related to different courses organised by different social workers, the topics they mentioned can be classified as: (i) the content of
professional social work; (ii) appropriate tasks for volunteers; and (iii) personal development and qualities of volunteers.

A majority of current volunteers, and this was the case also for ex-volunteers, said the training course had made them much more aware of the work carried out by social workers. There were comments such as,

- "I didn't know there were so many social workers and such a big need."
- "I became more aware of their work. The elderly is just the top of the iceberg."

All of these volunteers agreed that their knowledge of social work had been widened as a result of the training course, though one of them gave the opinion that the meetings were good "if you want to be a social worker, but not if you just wanted to visit someone. They're geared very much to people who want to become social workers at some stage."

As to tasks for volunteers, the current volunteers produced a long list of possible areas of involvement which had been offered on the course which included, as well as the elderly and physically handicapped, young offenders, mother and toddler groups, bereavement counselling, children's nurseries, women's hostels and intermediate treatment projects. This list was far longer than that offered by the ex-volunteers, which may reflect the fact that current volunteers had perhaps become familiar with all these different aspects of the social services in the course of their voluntary work, and as a result retained information given to them on the course, while ex-volunteers may have discarded such information following their non-involvement. Nevertheless the general feeling among current volunteers was that the training course had been informative and interesting, though several said they had to pursue the volunteers organiser afterwards to find work and suggested one of the qualities needed by volunteers was persistence.
It was when volunteers came to speak about those points of the training which did concern their personal development and qualities, that the subjects chosen by the office volunteers showed differences from those volunteers operating external to the office (and incidentally, from the ex-volunteers too). All of the office volunteers remembered the emphasis placed during the course on attributes such as reliability, trustworthiness, ability to handle confidential information, and as I discussed earlier, on volunteers' accountability first to the department. Confidentiality and reliability as topics of the course were recalled by a small proportion of the other current volunteers.

The qualities of reliability, trustworthiness and respect for confidentiality are perhaps less contentious than the question of accountability, but it could be argued that they indicate a conformity which might inhibit a volunteer's independent judgment to act in the interests of her client, or even to make a sound assessment of her own contribution. I have already discussed the close identification which those volunteers had with the SWD, from the point of view of the staff, and tried to demonstrate how different categories of staff were able to use images of volunteers to maintain their relative status within the team. The vulnerability created for office volunteers by their close association with the area office became clear both in their behaviour in the Elderly group and in my private discussions with them. As it was, the world of the area team was constructed by those paid staff within the organisation and volunteers played a minimal part in defining themselves or their role in the Hilltown team. Although privately they were prepared to be critical of social workers their attitude towards them was one of acquiescence and acceptance of the professionals' definitions. They showed little awareness of any bargaining power on their part. They commented that they "didn't want to tread on social workers' toes" and presented themselves as inexperienced to the
extent that they regarded their own life experience as irrelevant to their voluntarism. One volunteer who had worked for two years in a geriatric ward of a hospital said "I'm no' experienced enough yet to know when I'm going over the mark ... when I worked in the geriatric ward it was only for two years" (my emphasis). I asked a volunteer if she felt she could refuse work offered to her. She replied, "No, if they felt that they could ask me and they felt confident enough in me that I wouldn't make a complete hash of it, you know, I would do it, but I wouldn't choose to ..." Attempts on the part of volunteers to be advocates for their clients, when met by professional "reason" were not sustained by volunteers, as in the following illustration:

Volunteer: "Social workers are trained, I mean trained intensively, you know, they know much better what to look for - they see everything I suppose from a much wider point of view than a volunteer. The volunteer - well I know I tend to not see the, you know, I concentrate on the one person I'm at at that moment and you know, I don't see a wider aspect. Can I give you an example? Well, the one old lady, the one for whom I've just got this attendance allowance, she is quite well looked after at home, and I felt that, you know - well she's on the priority list to be taken into (the local psychiatric hospital). I felt, why should she need to go there when she's adequately looked after, more than adequately looked after at home. She's perfectly happy there. Well, right enough she might be just as happy in (the hospital) but why should she have to move? And I don't know whether she has said she wants to go because she's so confused that she doesn't really know where she is anyway ... she has a home-help, she has the district nurse attending her every day, she has the "tucking up" service every day, she has me visiting and I don't know who else or whatever resources going in, but she is very well covered, you know. I thought, why does she need to go to a home. She's quite happy there, why shouldn't she just die here than be put into a home. I discussed it with Helena (the social worker) and Helena made me see that, em, she was using resources that somebody else might need, so I could only see that lady's side. I couldn't see the wider aspect that might take the resources away from anybody else. I tend to concentrate on that person."

Researcher: "And did you accept Helena's explanation of that?"

Volunteer: "Yes, I see, when she said it I could see, yeah,
alright, fair enough. I suppose that old lady's not going to mind too much whether she's in her own house or even if she'll know if she's in her own house or in a institution. I don't suppose it will make much difference to her, so long as her material needs are looked after, she'll be OK."

The screening process, the socialisation of volunteers into the teams, the emphasis on a professional ideology and the fact that volunteers were isolated organisationally all militated against the construction of any collective reality which might have led volunteers towards recognising and using any potential power to influence the world of the area team. The public rhetoric encouraged them to see their role as passive, minimal and with low status client groups, and they themselves acquiesced to this image. It would perhaps be going too far to suggest that the volunteers' attitude approximated to "minstrelization", as coined by Broyard and quoted by Goffman to describe the stigmatised person who "ingratiatingly acts out before normals the full dance of bad qualities imputed to his kind ..." (Goffman 1963, page 134). However the social identity attributed to them within the organisation provided them with instructions as to how to view others and with a formula for an appropriate attitude regarding themselves. A "good adjustment" (Goffman, page 147) resulted in a continuing with the team as volunteers. (The fact of having been selected by the team was important to most of the volunteers, who said they were reassured to find that the social workers "weren't prepared to take just anybody").

So on the one hand volunteers were regarded as "special" while on the other hand they were required to accept a humble position in the organisation and to adopt a modest view of themselves and their capabilities. Similarities are found in the work of May and Smith on the Children's Panel system in Scotland. They discovered that lay members of Panels are "imbued by inclination, selection and socialisation with a social work ideology ..." (May & Smith 1980, page 297). Although their role is surrounded by ambiguity, Panel members do have more authority over social workers
than the volunteers in our study. But May and Smith were able to conclude that the lay panel were reluctant to seek more than symbolic control over the social workers "because their competence to exercise any real authority is recognised neither by the social workers, nor, more to the point, by panel members themselves" (page 310, my emphasis). The primacy of social work criteria remained virtually unchallenged. The relevance of this research for our study is that volunteers at Hilltown who were selected by the team, first of all acknowledged the supremacy of a social work frame of reference and secondly were reluctant to usurp what was claimed to be the professionals' diagnostic and treatment function. Those volunteers who did not accept this definition of reality, could of course decide to withhold their services from the team but in that case, as they were not paid staff and therefore the area team had no accountability to the department for their activities, they could be categorised as "drop outs", and as was illustrated earlier, rationalising accounts introduced as explanations. Such a process results in the team's reality remaining intact or a "return to reality", and in an assuaging of any anxiety caused by marginal experiences such as the discovery of "professional" attributes in volunteers. For the volunteers, in the absence of any "volunteer consciousness" the rhetoric of persuasion confirmed their role as reflecting mirrors.

Limits to the repertoire of images

Under this heading I would like to examine the perceptions of ex-volunteers and describe how these were dealt with by the Hilltown team. The range of images of volunteers among ex-volunteers was wider than the repertoire present in the teams and among current volunteers. They were therefore able to challenge the taken-for-granted world of the social workers. Ex-volunteers fell into three categories with similar numbers in each group. The three categories
contain:

(i) those who had never operated  
(ii) those who had operated unsatisfactorily  
(iii) those who had operated satisfactorily and had moved on to do something else.

All of them offered criticisms which challenged the formal ideologies about volunteers which existed in the teams. Those criticisms concerned, (a) volunteers' expectations and (b) professional performance.

(a) Volunteers' expectations  
Ex-volunteers rejected the image of volunteers as carrying out unskilled work with low status clients. Most of them had envisaged working with families or offenders and there were complaints that jobs offered were inappropriate and that volunteers were "exploited" by the team. The non-operators and the unsatisfactory operators said they lacked confidence in asking for suitable work, while the satisfactory operators, who were almost all intending to take up social work as a career and needed experience of voluntary work, were much more adamant in demanding and getting work.

In my discussion of training courses for volunteers in the context of current volunteers, topics mentioned were classified as, (i) the content of professional social work; (ii) appropriate tasks for volunteers; and (iii) personal development and qualities of volunteers. The discussion here in relation to ex-volunteers follows a similar pattern.

Most of them commented that their "eyes had been opened as to the work of the social work department (SWD)", or they "got a good insight into what social workers do". The following quotes illustrate the social work input:

- "Why children came into care and what the social work people did to try and help out, and how they went about different ways of trying to help."
"they read case histories, gave you an idea of what the social workers actually did."

"he obviously went into it in a lot of depth and discussed it all, and so I imagine he was a professional social worker."

"we spent a lot of time dealing with how they cope with people about to commit suicide."

"there was also a little play, sort of like a little charade ... and how you would solve a situation like if a father came in drunk and was going to attack you, what you would do to calm him down."

Several people said they had been impressed by the social workers they met and admired the work they were doing, having realised "there's a lot more to it than meets the eye".

On the practical input nearly all the ex-volunteers said they enjoyed visits to institutions such as List D schools (community homes) and old people's homes, but several said they were disappointed not to have heard anything about their particular interests which included prisons and the mentally ill. For the majority their main impression of volunteer jobs were those which included driving and escort tasks, which they saw as rather incongruous with the effort expended by the staff in the training course:

"I got the impression there wasn't much for us to do. The important thing was if you had a car."

"They were quite keen for volunteers to drive somebody somewhere on a Saturday, and there was a gap between what we got on the course, our expectations rose, and what there was actually to do."

On the personal development of volunteers aspects of the course, this was mentioned by far less people than the social work content. This may be partly because over the years the emphasis had changed, according to the volunteers organiser, to focus more on the practical content of volunteering. But interestingly none of the non-operators referred to it at all, even though they had attended different courses. Those unsatisfactory operators who mentioned personal development held negative views about it and found it off-putting. One
person described it as "like going to a séance, there was so much interest in self-examination and introspection". Another said "there were diagrams about psychology which went right over my head ..." A successful operator admitted she did not learn much and that the sessions bored her because she could not understand "half of what they were about", but stuck them out because she wanted to do voluntary work.

There was much frustration expressed about the course, since ex-volunteers wanted to get involved in voluntary work and this was being delayed. Some said they saw the course as a hurdle to be achieved, "if you didn't survive the training then I don't think you were worthwhile going on ..."). However, all of the successful operators said they enjoyed the course and appreciated the effort which had gone into it, even though much of it may have been inappropriate.

By far the greatest strength of feeling among the ex-volunteers concerned the follow-up after the course. Of the non-operators, two were about to take up further education and found that the course's length left no time to follow through any voluntary work. They were disgruntled about this, although both of them had known in advance how long the course would last. Of the others only one had been approached with a job by the volunteers organiser. She declined it because the jobs available did not meet with her expectations, which had been to work with families with problems. She commented, "we all should have looked a bit further and asked more questions as to exactly what we were going to be allowed to do, what are you going to give us and just how involved will we become, and so on. I thought, well if that's what I'm going to have to do in my evenings, my spare evenings, ferry people and eh, decorating and these other sorts of tasks - the whole thing petered out then."

The other non-operators said they heard nothing more after the course:
"I waited weeks and weeks and I got really angry and fed up, and wondered what all the fuss had been about, asking for volunteers and then having nothing to give people as a result of it."

Some of them said they had felt on the course that the SWD was not really interested in volunteers, and the absence of feedback led them to conclude that they were not suited to working with social problems. This was expressed by comments such as "when I look back at it now, I probably wouldn't have been very good at it". They acknowledged that they had the option to approach the volunteers organiser for work or for an explanation, but showed uncertainty as to their right to do this, saying social workers "had more to do than go chasing after people". They admitted to feeling ignorant and to lacking confidence on territory which they saw as belonging to the professionals, even though they suspected "inefficiency and a haphazard way of tackling the work on the part of the social workers." The uncertainties expressed by the non-operators may have been rationalisations and their not pursuing work may have been attributable to other more personal reasons. That the motivation of some of them at least was genuine is illustrated by the fact that they sought and took up voluntary work elsewhere.

The unsatisfactory operators were the most voluble in complaining about the inappropriateness of the work offered, and it was this group particularly who saw themselves as becoming involved with high status clients. One of them had operated for 3½ years before withdrawing, but all the others dropped out of the scheme fairly quickly after experiencing what was on offer. Although this group said they wanted to work with high status clients they admitted an uncertainty about their own strength of motivation, but also that the vagueness of the course was unhelpful to them in deciding. These comments illustrate their views:

"I'd been wavering around. Do I really want to do
voluntary work? Nobody knew what we wanted to do. I wanted to do something but I was in a state of flux. The meetings were really just a waste of time. They weren't useful."

"Various people came to speak. There was a vagueness about it - you could do this, or that, or do your own thing ... Tell me what to do, and I'll do it. I need someone to say 'you can do this ...'"

"If I hadn't had back problems I would have continued ... I would have been happier with a wee bit more pressure. In one way that was a bit disappointing, I felt nobody would put any pressure on you. I felt maybe the social workers would have taken more advantage of us, once we had volunteered ourselves."

Several of these unsatisfactory operators admitted that what they really wanted was a paid job, but either had not been able to find one or had domestic circumstances which prevented their taking on paid work. We do not know whether an offer of what they would have regarded as worthwhile voluntary work would have retained them in the scheme. It is known however, that they were critical of the jobs offered:

"I discovered that there was an awful lot of ferrying about ... well I tended to think that at that time being 40 and having had two youngsters, I felt, well, possibly I might just have something to offer. Again it doesn't seem to work that way. You could have had half a dozen children, brought them up absolutely perfectly, they might all have been model children but that wasn't what counted. It really was this course, and you know, that was the main thing ... why do qualified social workers think that, eh, unqualified people can't possibly be given the job of running after families, looking after families, and trying to help them with their problems and so on ..."

Although this ex-volunteer here appears confident about her own skills, she also suspected that perhaps there was more to helping people in trouble than the bringing to bear of one's own experience. Like other volunteers both former and current, she thought that since professional training existed it must therefore be necessary, but was quite unclear as to its content:

"I can't think of anything that an untrained volunteer
social worker shouldn't be asked to do. I'm possibly kidding myself on, because I don't know what this course (social workers) have gone through really covers, but, eh, I tended to think I was the sort of person who could go out and help other people ... But I suppose there's a lot of knowledge to be acquired about how to cope with all these problems and so forth. I'd love to know, I'd love to know what it is, I really would, I'd love to go on the course even for a short spell and find out what it is that they teach their people ..."

The topic of professional social work training is part of the content of the next chapter. For those ex-volunteers who had been excluded from what they saw as "real" problems, and all of whom confessed to a sense of guilt and failure as a result of their unsatisfactory operation, the need for "special skills" was the ultimate justification for their dropping out. At the same time it was necessary for them to sustain a perception of themselves as caring people with a capacity to help others. This may explain in part why they placed some of the "blame" for their discontinuing on social workers' haphazard approach. Nevertheless the fact that other volunteers, including all but one of the satisfactory operators, confirmed a lack of follow up, an absence of "appropriate" jobs and a general disinterest among staff, lends substance to the criticisms.

What does seem certain is that volunteers were no clearer than social workers as to what their role ought to be or as to the differences between them. A contrast between the "office" volunteers and the ex-volunteers was that the former tended to trivialise their life experience in relation to their voluntary work, while the latter held on to the belief that their experience was relevant and valid. It may be, of course, that current volunteers, with a sense of having carried through their voluntary work "successfully" and subsequent feelings of self-worth, lost nothing in being self-depreciatory, while those unsatisfied ex-volunteers who carried a sense of failure regarding their attempts at voluntary work, needed to retain some self-esteem. But this does not explain why current volunteers needed to dis-
parage themselves. I have already referred to Goffman's notion of "good adjustment" but one might go further and speculate as to whether it was a necessary condition of selection to "deskill" oneself in order to fit the images of volunteers which predominated in the area office, and there was some evidence from social workers themselves to indicate that they discouraged "disruptive" volunteers. According to the volunteers there was a heavy input into the training courses as to the place and worth of professional social work, but a restricted repertoire of images of volunteers. The experience of the satisfactory operators in pursuing their interests (which sometimes were outside the repertoire), demonstrated that it was possible to challenge successfully the team's practices. However such challenges were made after the training course by individuals, leaving the public image of both volunteers and professionals unaffected.

The current volunteers were more likely than the ex-volunteers to accept the social workers' view of the world while the non-operators and the unsatisfactory operators (at least at this stage of their relationship to the team, and the possible significance of that is not denied), found themselves able to be critical of their handling by staff. Perhaps the drop-out volunteers were less flexible than those current operators who adapted their expectations to accommodate the kind of work being offered to them, but even in that case the fact remains that the team was resistant to an image of volunteers as carrying out high status work with high status clients, and in most cases succeeded in deflecting challenges to its subjective reality.

As for social workers, the kinds of knowledge which made subjective sense regarding drop-out volunteers concerned volunteers' motivation and personal characteristics and confirmed a negative image of their reliability and commitment. Even when social workers admitted that they had neglected to offer work to volunteers it was justified on
grounds of inexperience or the inappropriateness of their particular work for volunteer intervention. That the ex-volunteers accepted social workers' behaviour towards them, despite private perceptions of themselves as having something to offer and that "the community should be involved a lot more" may be attributable to weak motivation on their part, but it is also indicative of the political potency of a claim to legitimate professional control over work. It also illustrates the success of institutional controls which channelled workers' conduct in the direction of a professional rather than a lay ideology of social need and its resolution.

But there were exceptions to ex-volunteers' acquiescence to professional definitions, notably among the satisfactory operators whose main motivation was to gain experience towards social work training. They commented that "volunteers won't shout" and "aren't demanding enough" and spoke of their determination to persevere and ask for what they regarded to be appropriate and interesting work, as illustrated by this quote from ex-volunteer Elizabeth:

"... I found in fact that one had to stick at it and work at it, and get to know some of them and I managed to form a relationship with one of the social workers and was able to build on that, and therefore one got something a bit more interesting and demanding than just em, taking someone somewhere which I didn't mind doing, but when one's asked to do nothing except drive people around one begins to feel that well really that wasn't what it was supposed to be like at all. All these long sessions about how you would speak to someone who was about to commit suicide just didn't match up at all."

Elizabeth who had declared an intention to take professional social work training said she eventually was taken on by a social worker to assist with the after-care of a young man who had been discharged from a detention centre and she regarded this as a worthwhile job. Indeed she reported that when the social worker left, she (the volunteer) continued supervision alone. The extent of her involvement is illustrated by this incident:
"... he got into trouble again and there was a social enquiry report (SER) to be done. It was suggested that I did it and I'm afraid I chickened out of that one. Actually I thought in all fairness to him it would be better if a social worker did that ...

The volunteer said she insisted at this point that a social worker be appointed to the case and this was carried out by the team. In this example, having first of all successfully challenged the dominant ideology as to the functions of volunteers, Elizabeth appears not only to have been involved in a non-routine case but eventually to have been offered a high status activity, that of assessing the situation and writing a report for public display in a world beyond that of the area team. In addition, according to her own account, her judgement as to how the case should be handled, prevailed over the suggestions of professionals and a social worker was appointed.

This exception leads to at least three points which may be made:

(i) the impermeability of the professional world of the area team was more notional than actual, and depended on the acceptance of volunteers (and others) of social workers' definitions of social need and of images of volunteers. For those volunteers who were dissatisfied, drop-out was not the only alternative, although it was the course of action most likely to be pursued.

(ii) despite a public rhetoric which "pushed" a professional ideology concerning the meeting of social need, in order to facilitate the passage of work the area team was prepared to accept implicitly, in practice, lay intervention. However a justification was found for this by regarding some volunteers as "exceptional", which at the same time sustained an image of volunteers in general
as inexperienced and unskilled. (In Elizabeth's case those staff in the team who had known her as a volunteer remarked on her special commitment to social work and to clients and on her "determination which put her at odds with several of the staff").

(iii) in the exception we have considered, it was Elizabeth who defined and set the limits of her role. She did this by adopting a professional ideology as to the kind of intervention necessary in the case, which social workers could not do otherwise than accept when confronted explicitly, since it was in accordance with the formal ideology of the team. In addition, Elizabeth seems to have been removed from the category of "volunteer" by the team and placed in a category of "student social worker". She herself perhaps had an investment in perceiving differences between volunteers and social workers because of her intention of entering the profession.

(b) Professional performance
Although none of the ex-volunteers gave professional incompetence as a reason for their dropping out, some of them were critical of social workers' handling of cases, notably unsatisfactory operators. Some of the criticisms were based on commonsense ideologies of treatment which saw people in trouble as responsible for their situation and social workers as "too naive" in dealing with them. One unsatisfactory operator describing the training course said:

"... one or two of us got the impression that, eh, no matter how bad the youngster was, the social work people never ever saw them in that light ... I remember thinking, well, I know what that lot are needing anyway."

There were opinions that in some of the cases the children should have been in care rather than remain at home, that battered wives "get too much handed to them" and that "it's their own fault" and "criminals are a nuisance to society". However, although such views continued to be held, unsatis-
factory operators saw these attitudes as failings in themselves, and qualified them by comments like "I can only admire these people (the social workers) for being so cool and calm where other untrained people would jump in with two feet and do and say the wrong thing", and "I don't have the patience. No, I would be saying 'Just sort of get on with it and stop complaining', which is not really the thing to do". In other words, as citizens, the ex-volunteers did not feel strongly enough about social workers' activities to take radical action such as consulting their members of parliament or complaining formally to the social work committee of the local authority, or approaching the team's area officer or even challenging the social workers directly. Indeed, if one compares the unsatisfactory operators' confidence in their skills and experience which I described under a heading of volunteers' expectations with their uncertainty here as to the validity of their attitudes, we might conclude that the gap between opinions they could express as independent citizens and those they were expected, according to the formal ideology at Hilltown, to hold in relation to their clients, was too wide for them to reconcile the two. May and Smith, in their observation that lay panel members selected in the Children's Panel system to preside over hearings, were oriented towards social work and ready to acknowledge the central role of the social worker, emphasised the importance of the "rhetoric of welfare" (May & Smith 1980). They quoted Mapstone's work which showed the "systematic and ruthless exclusion from lay office of those unable to manipulate the language of welfare" (Mapstone 1972). As we have seen in this study, ideological positions of social workers and volunteers cannot be reduced to uni-dimensional models, and it is therefore spurious to suggest a dichotomy in terms of their orientations. What the ex-volunteers lacked, according to their own descriptions was skill in the use of a "rhetoric of welfare", which may have been one factor which led to their dropping out. The potency of such a language is demonstrated by the
ex-volunteers having concluded that the ideas it embodies are "right" and others "wrong". The conflicts which were present for these ex-volunteers led them to conclude that, although their opinions about clients were held firmly, they were the "wrong" ones for involvement in voluntary work. These unsatisfactory operators therefore presented no threat to the taken-for-grantedness of the social workers' world. They were not significant enough to threaten the professionals' self-identity. Their discontinuing as volunteers was significant for professionals since the existence of "judgemental" attitudes confirmed social workers' professional identity and provided for them a recipe for "correct" drop-out.

The criticisms of social workers by ex-volunteers which we considered above were based on lay ideologies of treatment, but there were also a few ex-volunteers, again among unsatisfactory operators, whose criticism could be viewed as born out of a professional ideology of treatment. These centred mainly on the ways in which social workers dealt with their clients. The image of volunteers presented by ex-volunteers in this respect was one of fulfilling the function which Seebohm envisaged as "exposing defects in the services ..." In the main however, ex-volunteers felt that they could not make claim to this definition vis-à-vis social workers and chose the path of least resistance, which was to withdraw their services. Brian was an exception to this and his experience illustrates how such external challenges were negotiated and negated. Brian had been a volunteer for 3½ years, three of which he had spent attached to a children's home. He reported that over a long period a concern grew in him that the home was being run on too regimental lines which was detrimental to the children. In his own words, "I felt the home was run for the staff and not for the kids". Eventually he wrote a letter to the worker in charge of the children's home, outlining his reservations. He received no reply and noone attempted to
get in contact with him. He was uncertain as to what to do and in the end felt unable to resume his connection with the home. Brian said it never occurred to him to approach anyone else in the department, "I thought that was purely and simply between me and the staff. It wasn't really anything to do with anybody else". He had kept copies of the letters and said that re-reading them confirmed his views and he would "still do the same if I was doing it just now". At the same time he expressed a fear that perhaps he was interfering in things he should not be interfering in

"... they're faced with problems every day whereas a volunteer is probably faced with a problem once a week of a particular nature, so that, eh, when it comes down to it professionals are probably thinking, 'what's this volunteer going on about?', you know, I mean they face it every day."

He was also left with a sense of guilt that he had disappeared from the children's lives virtually overnight.

The points to be made here are firstly that the atmosphere in which he worked was such that the volunteer was not encouraged to define his role as concerned with professional standards of work, and secondly, when he did adopt such a role he could simply be "dropped". His uncertainty as to his function and his judgement ensured that he would not take his complaint elsewhere. Although this example relates to a children's home and not the area team direct, there were also a small number of examples from among the team social workers where volunteers were "dropped" as a result of their criticisms of staff. This action was legitimated by an ideology that held that the volunteer was not really acting in the client's interests but "to meet his own needs".

In considering the failure of Brian's challenge and comparing it with the success of Elizabeth's which I described earlier, there are two observations which can be made. Elizabeth's challenge was made on grounds of professional areas of responsibility (as to who was the most appropriate person to write a SER) while Brian's was on grounds of professional
competence. Linked to this, and perhaps more important in terms of the action taken was the fact that in Elizabeth's case there had to be a practical outcome in the form of a report for a court hearing. In other words, it seems that volunteers carry little by way of personal authority, nor are they in a position to make any great impact on the world constructed by the area team, unless there is the added pressure of practical necessity. Seebohm's concern to expose defects in the services as a goal of community participation in the social services is clearly not in evidence here in the operationalising of social policy statements.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have attempted to illustrate that the range of ideologies concerning volunteers was similar among the teams and current volunteers and to show how a limited repertoire of images of volunteers was used to operationalise these ideologies. For the teams, two goals were accomplished in their use of images of volunteers: (i) to facilitate the flow of work and (ii) to sustain their professional world. These images assumed "differences" between social workers and volunteers both in terms of functions and personal characteristics, although there was evidence that in practice the differences were not as clear as the rhetoric suggested. At Hillside an image of volunteers as intuitive, inferior and inexperienced and carrying out low status work with low status clients allowed the team to tolerate the presence of volunteers as part of its everyday existence, and to perceive them as having something of value to offer in social work. Such an image also provided a legitimation of the control and repression of volunteers by professionals. At Lakeside a similar image of volunteers was used to justify their exclusion from the team's operations. Although the formal
ideology at Lakeside excluded volunteers because of their inappropriateness in local authority social work, informally the team's construction was one of volunteers' unsuitability because of their lack of insight, skills and experience. It was held at Lakeside that the social work task could be carried out by "the ordinary man in the street", yet the collective reality assumed a particular attitude and special skills for social workers. Perhaps the professional self-image which existed at Lakeside was not well enough developed to allow the presence of volunteers in the team without threatening the assumed distinctiveness of the team and its function. In any case this duality was effective in that it allowed social workers to lay claim to certain client territory as professional ground.

It is interesting to speculate as to the outcome if a different construction had been used in the teams to build images of volunteers. For example, what would happen if the public rhetoric had sustained an image of volunteers as suitable for high status work with high status clients (an image which never appeared publicly)? In those instances in which such practice was made known to social workers in Hilltown the response was either a criticism of professionals for allowing it ("counselling is quite inappropriate to give to volunteers to do"), or that the volunteer must be exceptional to undertake it. It was never a consideration that volunteers in general might undertake high status work with high status clients. Whatever happened in practice, it was important to leave the public language unpolluted by images which conflicted with the everyday reality of the team. To allow such pollution would permit volunteers to lay legitimate claim to territory seen to be that of the professionals, and indeed would threaten the collapse of the professional world. Instead we have seen how those images which prevailed held volunteers in a position of powerlessness. This is demonstrated particularly by the situation of the office volunteers. It may be significant that those
volunteers chosen to work most closely with the area office were prepared to be accepting of and acquiescent to the team's construction of the world. One might ask whether a more critical or assertive volunteer would have been invited to join the Elderly group. In any case evidence may be brought to bear from other research to argue that the behaviour of the office volunteers was shaped through the agency. Galper for example, claimed that "the workplace is one of the key institutions in which values of conformity and obedience are inculcated, and that social service staff, like other workers, are controlled by the conditions of their work which foster discipline, encourage the acceptance of hierarchical and authoritarian structures, and create passivity and disengagement from others" (Galper 1975, page 56). Barneis too in his study of social work teams, found that even those social workers who held a radical view of social need conformed to perceptions of need which predominated in their area offices (Barneis 1982, page 292).

Since volunteers in this study identified themselves closely with the area office, it seems reasonable to conclude the possibility of office volunteers having been constrained by similar controls, and therefore discouraged from a more assertive approach. But even if those volunteers who were external to the team felt inclined to comment or to affect the team's practices, there existed no machinery for them to do this. Their contact with each other was sporadic and regulated from the area office, and their liaison was likely to be with one social worker, or none.

In addition to the regulatory realities of organisational functioning, the constraints on volunteers were compounded further by the prevalence of images which involved a process of "deskilling" and resulted in the duality which I described, which effectively placed volunteers in a classic "double-bind" arrangement. This demanded of volunteers attributes which were at the same time claimed as exclusively professional, a result of professional training and not to be found among
volunteers in any case. Any discovery of such attitudes was rationalised by claiming the volunteer as a potential social worker.

This analysis demonstrates some of the dangers feared by the Lakeside team whose formal reason for excluding volunteers was that their independence and autonomy would be inhibited as a result of control from the area office. Munday and Turner, in an evaluation of professional-volunteer collaboration where volunteers were organised from outside the social services department (SSD), addressed this question (Munday & Turner 1981). Throughout the study there was a concern on the one hand from the voluntary agency supplying the volunteers, to continue their role in order to protect volunteers from exploitation, and on the other from the social services professionals for supervision, accountability and control of the volunteers. Unfortunately the researchers did not explore the implications of a decision on the part of the SSD to appoint a member of staff to organise volunteers from within the department, claiming it instead as a measure of the success of the project.

Clearly the issue of volunteers functioning within social work organisations is one for further examination and debate. What is of interest to the subject of this thesis is, that of the range of ideas put forward by Sebeohm regarding the purpose of community involvement in social problems, those chosen by Hilltown to define volunteers not only resulted in a facilitating of the voluntary contribution to the team's work, but, whatever the content of the work they carried out, the images provided could be used to sustain the professional identity of the team's social workers. All in all, for both teams of professionals, their subjective identity was a precarious entity, and their organisational base provided a means to "explain" challenges to that identity. Those images of volunteers which gained dominance in their separate universes served in different ways to maintain the plausibility of their existence and were among
a number of means used to negotiate and accomplish their view of themselves as professional people.
CHAPTER 6

KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

The description of the two teams in chapter 4 categorised their respective formal ideologies as resting on a "welfare" model and on a "therapeutic" model of social work intervention. Here I shall discuss patterns within Lakeside and Hilltown concerning their constructions of professional knowledge and skills and how these constructions functioned to accomplish professionalism for the social workers. Ideologies put forward by volunteers concerning knowledge and skills in social work will also be examined and compared with those of the professionals. This chapter will consider too social workers attempts to sustain their perceived professional role against organisational demands, and their efforts to define qualitative differences between their own and volunteers' contributions to the meeting of social need.

An analysis of the data collected revealed that the respondents' use of knowledge was of two orders; (i) technical and (ii) informal knowledge. I have used this perspective to facilitate the discussion in this chapter.

(i) Technical Knowledge: Such knowledge may be understood along the dimensions of (a) procedural and (b) formal theoretic knowledge. By "procedural" knowledge, I refer to the "know-how" of functioning within the organisational setting, which includes a grasp of the scope of various kinds of relevant legislation and statutory powers of local authorities; it also includes understanding of the functions of other agencies such as health, housing and fuel authorities, social security departments and the courts and children's panels; it entails comprehension of internal
bureaucratic rules such as administration procedures and purposes of committees. Formal theoretic knowledge is concerned with that derived from those behavioural and social sciences on which social work draws, and also with the range of "helping approaches" available to social workers.

Along with these different kinds of technical knowledge go skills which were seen by the respondents to be either "acquired" or "innate", though there was much uncertainty as to what exactly the skills are, and whether those which are acquired are a result of special training or of experience on the job. I shall return to this point later in the chapter.

(ii) Informal knowledge: Again this order of knowledge is on two dimensions, (a) fireside knowledge and (b) common sense knowledge. I have coined the phrase "fireside knowledge" to try and capture the "sociability" aspects of this kind of intelligence exchanged over coffee or in social discussion. It refers to information shared within the teams about their clients, about local gossip and the locality in general. It is not readily accessible to outsiders and is not documented but grows with familiarity with the area and the area team.

Commonsense knowledge on the other hand is meant to relate to that knowledge which is in no way esoteric or private, but is shared by all people in a society and which is accumulated by the experience of living in that society, and which leads to the "obvious" interpretation of situations. Schutz described such common knowledge as socially distributed or "what anyone knows" (Schutz 1955, pages 195-196). Thus, tacit knowledge, or "background expectancies" (Schutz 1962 and Garfinkel 1964) inform routine practical activities of everyday life, and provide us with ready-made recipes for interpreting and labelling our daily actions (Cicourel 1968, page 105). The typifying interpretations that prevail in our society come to be accepted by us as patterns to be followed unquestioningly (at least until we are confronted
with a situation where they are challenged and must be changed). The same holds for fireside knowledge, which allows for typifications within a sub-culture such as that of an area team, for example.

Schutz commented "... I bring into each concrete situation a stock of preconstituted knowledge which includes a network of typifications of human individuals in general, of typical human motivations, goals and action patterns" (1964, pages 29-30).

The implication of Schutz' remarks is that what I have termed "technical knowledge" is not outside the scope of socially derived knowledge. The work of Szasz (1961, The Myth of Mental Illness), Goffman (1961, Asylums), Becker (1963, Outsiders), and others demonstrates this. It could be argued that theoretically, in some situations one might utilize only that knowledge which has come to be accepted as formal theoretic knowledge. Empirically however, it becomes part of our stock of knowledge to hand, and contributes to the network of typifications. To make a distinction between these different types of knowledge in any analysis of "what people know" is misleading since in practice they are intimately linked. Cicourel made this point when he claimed that rules and theories have their roots in common-sense or folk typifications which make up (in his study) law enforcement officials' stock of knowledge. He commented:

"practical theorizing based on extensive day-to-day contacts with various types of juveniles and adults in the community, provides the police with the only basis with which they feel comfortable and knowledgeable for tacking legal rules onto their routine activities" (Cicourel 1968, page 123, emphasis original).

He observed further that his study of cases reflected the ways in which the actors' theories were combined with organisational rules and practices (procedural knowledge), for purposes of discovering "what happened" and preparing the scene for further inference and action.
In other words, the elements of procedural, formal theoretic and informal knowledge, are crucial ingredients in the "cookbook" knowledge (Cicourel ) with which social workers and volunteers in our study viewed their world. It is with these thoughts in mind that the following analysis attempts to describe ways in which they made sense of their daily activities and how different kinds of knowledge were used to legitimate their performance.

Knowledge and skills in the teams' formal ideologies

At Lakeside, the "welfare" model of social work intervention which was projected as the mode of functioning for the team emphasised the "external" and material aspects of clients' lives. Within this model the main and most important function of the team was concerning its statutory responsibilities and as I observed in chapter 4, there was a pride in the fact that all referrals containing requests for such action were allocated and dealt with quickly. The ideology suggested by this model is epitomised by the following quotes from the members:

"social workers are employed to do certain things ... engaging these clients in a particular way, that way being governed by the type of case it is. For example, someone on supervision, there are certain things that have to be done. There's the administration thing, reports have to be prepared, there are hearings that have to be attended, there are steps that have to be taken if things are not going as they should ...

"I don't believe you can fundamentally change people ... social workers are deluding themselves that they can effectively use those techniques (which concern "therapy"). They're not trained in them at all adequately ... I don't think it's been show that those techniques they've been trying to use can be adequately used by those who are supposedly qualified in their use ... if he (the social worker) thinks he knows more about a person's functioning than the person knows himself, and that it's their job to analyse that person's behaviour and then begin to treat, eh, that behaviour, that to me is wrong ... because (clients) are coming saying 'this is my problem', I think its in-
credibly arrogant for us to say 'that's not your problem, I'm going to tell you what your problem is'. No, I think in effect we're employees, and if they're saying this is the service that they want, then I think this is the service we should give."

"the most valuable thing I felt from my training was the opportunity to go and work in other agencies, em, and to see if the approach which I felt was the right approach was appropriate only to the area that I was working in ... that I think gives you confidence when you come back to carry on with what you've been doing ...

"... if the psychiatrist came along and said 'could you help this guy?', what he means isn't 'Can you act as a therapist for this guy?', but I think what he means is 'Can you see that his social situation is OK? Can you see that he's got a roof over his head and that he's been able to pay his bills' ... and that, I think perhaps it's not very glamorous, but it's a job worth doing."

"No, I would say social work training isn't necessary ... some sort of training in the social sciences is certainly background for this sort of thing."

The main aspects of technical knowledge which are implied here are those concerned with procedures, such as knowing one's way through bureaucratic processes, or making available material resources, or familiarity with statutory requirements. The skills commensurate with such knowledge are those which are acquired through "actually doing it", in the words of one social worker. Fireside knowledge is also implied in the build-up of information regarding the locality and its inhabitants. Technical knowledge which is excluded from this model is that which purports to "treat" or to administer "therapy", where the "overriding philosophy suggests that social work is a very big job" and the skills which are involved are intended to achieve fundamental changes in behaviour and relationships.

The social reality thus constructed at Lakeside was reinforced by public behaviour in the team where discussion about cases centred on the mechanical functions of the social work department and the routine aspects of the work, such as report writing or assessment for residential care. The team's collective professional identity was based on a sense of an efficient, no-nonsense approach, and on a dis-
couragement of discussions on the emotional and "internal" aspects of client need.

In complete contrast the formal ideology of Hilltown, with its "therapeutic" model orientation, viewed the most characteristic professional activity as concerned with the "internal" and relationship needs of clients and we have already considered tactics used to "push" this ideology among various staff groups and among other agencies and individuals. The following opinions of social workers express the meaning of such an ideology for them:

"I'm quite clear that social workers are trained to be therapists, and therefore their task is quite clear. It means assessing a person's or a family's capacity for change and working actively on them and their situation to bring about those changes."

"... I go in with a set of family therapy ideas or concepts which help me in my work, and I think that's professional training which gives me that. The idea of problems having a kind of circular nature, if you like, rather than a cause and effect thing, which I think the general public tend to envisage ... we're actually dealing with a whole series of interactions in the family which are very complicated ... and I think it's a very complicated thing to deal with."

"In family therapy we're talking about (intuition and an ability to relate to people) plus a whole set of techniques, intellectual input."

What is suggested by this model is little or no emphasis on informal or procedural knowledge, but a stressing of formal theoretic knowledge, particularly that concerning explanations of individual behaviour and family "dysfunction". The social worker possesses a set of skills commensurate with such knowledge, acquired almost entirely through intensive training which equip her or him to enable families to correct their dysfunctioning. In public discussion of cases, referrals were "reconstructed" to fit into this way of seeing the world, scarce resources were channeled towards such work with families, and family therapy was accepted as superior on the team's hierarchy of
methods of intervention. Those aspects of client need which were perceived to relate to the client's "external" world were discussed publicly among the social workers only when they could be defined as symptomatic of "relationship problems". I have given examples of this in chapter 4.

Knowledge and skills in practice

What these very different professional ideologies have in common is an individualised approach to client need, and an assumption that cases are dealt with according to the principle of matching client need to social work skills. In practice however, the allocation of work in both teams was highly routinised (found in other organisations also by researchers such as Zimmerman 1966, Sudnow 1967 and Barneis 1982), as a result of pressure of work and efforts to maintain manageable caseload levels. One consequence of this was that work claimed to require intervention by social workers might be carried out by unqualified staff. At Lakeside for example, a social work assistant was dealing with cases requiring statutory procedures. Her senior social worker admitted that "she's not supposed to", but offered her competence and her welcoming the experience in preparation for social work training, as justification for her involvement. When she was required to attend a regional allocation group seeking a place for a child to be admitted to residential care she was told to "keep her mouth shut" as to the fact that she was dealing with the case alone. Likewise in Hilltown, social work assistants were involved in carrying out "joint family therapy" with social workers. A social worker explained about Gill (a social work assistant), "... I have no qualms about working with her. I've heard her talking about cases ... she's open to ideas. I think she can handle it and I feel I could work with her ..."

Carlen distinguished between "constitutive" rules, ie: the
formal rules which constitute a practice, and "situational" rules (such interpretive action popularly called rules-of-thumb) (Carlen 1975). In the case of these two teams the formal rule declared that social work was a specialised activity to be carried out only by those qualified to do it, but strategic rules allowed for exceptions, and indeed the continued efficient functioning (in terms of processing work) of the teams depended on such conditions. As Carlen pointed out, "playing to rule" and "making the rule fit" are difficult to isolate and identify, yet at Lakeside and Hilltown informal rules were employed routinely in the teams' activities. Although discussion of such practice was not made public, its identification does weaken the claim to professional exclusiveness. However any attempts to raise the issue publicly were quoshed (see chapter 4).

In this also is provided potential for a mix of technical and informal knowledge, or for fireside or commonsense knowledge to be presented as technical knowledge. A family who was notorious in the locality in which the Lakeside team worked, as "layabout, manipulative and conniving" could be denied help on grounds that the team had no statutory obligation to respond to their particular need. At Hilltown, the knowledge that "old folk are lonely" allowed the team to involve volunteers with that client. (Tony Hall described the wide use of discretion made by social services staff at Intake, and referred to their use of the stereotype of a "procedure-bound bureaucracy" as a means of justifying action or inaction. Hall 1974, page 67). In addition, the formal ideologies of both teams were challenged, either implicitly or explicitly, by the ways in which social workers saw their day-to-day practice. At Lakeside, despite the formal "welfare" ideology, social workers did see themselves as concerned with the "internal" world of clients:

"somebody outwith the family needs to be there to sort out their guilt feelings ... in that respect I have a bit of satisfaction ... I'm perfectly clear about my role in that
case ... it's a very complex family situation and it seems to need someone who can think a wee bit more clearly about what's best (for their daughter), and what's best for every individual ...

"I had a woman that was an alcoholic and I was sort of supporting her and we had to take the children into care a bit, and I enjoyed working with that towards the end because I felt I knew what I was doing and that she was staying off drink and there was a very positive change ...

"I mean when I initially came into social work the help I saw myself as giving was very practical, now I think I've moved on, eh, become more sophisticated ... I see myself as a sort of advisor, counsellor and an aide ... I've been on the go for four years, and you develop. Initially you go in and you're presented with them and slowly you begin to work with them and suddenly you uncover different things and as a relationship develops other things come out and you're faced with a very complex, complicated situation ...

At Hilltown too, the formal "therapeutic" ideology was questioned:

"I'm very much of that school of thought that a lot of practical advice can really be very helpful rather than tackling some of the internal things that other people say we should do ... I'm much happier I think with practical areas ...

"There is pressure actually (to practice family therapy) ... I mean I do feel that ... and to be honest I don't really feel I have some of the skills of being a family therapist ...

"I've always thought it was in being able to eh, sort of relate resources that are there - match them up with needs ... em, I suppose there's the financial thing, what people might be entitled to, how to help them go about it, eh, transporting them I suppose ...

In both teams then, there was a disparity between the formal ideologies and what social workers perceived as the "core" of social work, and a range of ideologies concerning knowledge and skills appeared in both teams. This is not to say that each social worker held firmly to a particular ideology, but rather a dominant ideology was held, while the phenomenon of multiple ideologies appeared in both teams in legitimisation of action taken. I shall return to this point presently. First, a question which arises and must be addressed concerns the "gap" between the formal ideology of each team and the
beliefs expressed privately by social workers about the nature of social work. Why were the formal ideologies never challenged publicly in either team? The power and dominance of the formal ideology of each served to ward off threats in an efficient way. An explanation may be that, in order to continue to exist as area social work teams, both Lakeside and Hilltown needed credibility which required them to project an image which was of a distinctive character. If it had not been apparent both to team members and to the community in which they operated that what they had to offer was "different" and unique, it would become impossible for them to function as a team, and both their training as professional people and the authority invested in them by their employing agency would be called into question. Thus, the construction of the teams' world in this way served to keep outsiders out while persuading them to accept the legitimacy of the teams through various propaganda efforts. It was also highly effective in ensuring that those within the teams conformed. Since the "body of knowledge" which was adopted (at Lakeside "procedural" knowledge and at Hilltown "formal theoretic" knowledge) was objectified as self-evidently the "correct" approach, those who disagreed were at risk of being labelled "deviant" and were therefore socialised into conformity. Studies of small group interaction reveal the manner in which pressures are placed upon those who deviate from group conceptions of reality, for example those of Festinger (1952) and Lewin (1952). Shibutani's comments on the subject are worth quoting in full:

"Once a definition is accepted, group sanctions are brought to bear against those who remain skeptical. Once a person has reconstructed his cognitive orientation, as Janis (1959) points out, he tends to ignore or avoid information that is negative or to misinterpret negative evidence. He also tries to alter the perspective of others so that they will co-operate or at least understand what he is doing. Dissenters are subjected to ridicule and occasionally even to violence. Their motives are questioned and they are treated as deviants. Overt acceptance of a rumor may even become a
symbol of loyalty to the group. Only a few are able to withstand such pressure, and even those who privately remain unconvinced acquiesce in their overt conduct. Thus, once a trend develops, there is a tendency to end disagreement by imposing sanctions" (Shibutani 1965, pages 143-144).

In the light of this one can understand how the position of dominant ideologies at Lakeside and Hilltown is virtually unassailable.

As to why a "welfare" ideology at Lakeside and a "therapeutic" ideology at Hilltown came to be adopted as the most prestigious symbols towards legitimating the teams, one can only speculate. One factor may be the type of geographical area in which they operated. Lakeside for example, was located in a grossly socially deprived rural community, with a mainly ex-mining population. The two health centres which I visited and with which there was close co-operation in the team, had a highly pragmatic approach. These influences combined with the leadership of the team and perhaps the selection process of staff may have combined to ensure that the particular ideology employed had the potential to be both acceptable and perpetuated. Hilltown, although the area was also one of poverty and high unemployment, was a large town with a greater range of social classes and included in the team's territory was fashionable commuter housing for managers working in the nearest city. In the vicinity was the psychiatric hospital which served the area and there was a wider range of other kinds of helping agencies all of which may be significant in the development of the team's therapeutic ideology. The area officer was very forcefully in favour of a therapeutic approach and I understand when a vacancy arose some months before my arrival, much debate as to what kind of worker would be most appropriate resulted in his preference for a family therapist specialist.

In both teams it is likely that the selection and induction of new staff was carried out in a way which ensure per-
petuation of the dominant ideology. Differences between the two teams as to the characteristics of social work staff lend themselves to some conjecture. The basic grade workers in both teams were all professionally qualified and there was no significant difference in proportions who were university trained and those not, though a majority in both teams had been trained at institutions other than universities. But the Lakeside team tended to be older, to have been longer qualified, longer in the team and far more likely to have worked in the same team before training than social workers at Hilltown. The figures below show the comparison:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>LAKESIDE</th>
<th>HILLTOWN</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of basic grade staff aged under 30 yrs</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of basic grade staff in the team before training</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average number of years qualified</td>
<td>5 yrs</td>
<td>2½ yrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average length of time working in the team (before &amp; after training)</td>
<td>6 yrs</td>
<td>2 yrs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At Lakeside the fact that the overwhelming majority of social workers had been with the team for several years before and after training and the practice to second them and locate them again in the same office may help to explain the perpetuation of a welfare ideology. The outlook and attitudes of the staff were presumably predictable and their willingness to return after qualification shows implicit agreement with the office norms, resulting in a continuation of the team's culture.

If this is an accurate analysis, then clearly there was an expectation on the part of the team that staff would not
change their ideas radically as a result of professional training and on the part of those undergoing training a confirmation of the accuracy of this expectation. Of course there were practical reasons as to why they wished to return to Lakeside, such as having made their homes in the area, but even so the point stands that at least at this stage of their relationship with their team, there appeared to be no conflict in their view of it and the job for which they had been trained. Indeed several of the staff said they had gained from their training a confidence that they were already going about their work in the "right" way.

One is reminded of Wilding's comment that "the training experience produces a professional solidarity and the self-confidence professionals need to perform their work" (Wilding 1982, page 73). He suggested that training is explicitly to inculcate knowledge and implicitly to establish a professional identity. In view of the socialisation taking place in Lakeside doubts arise not only about the knowledge base in social work, but as queried by Goldberg and Warburton, about the use to which it can be put in the world in which social workers have to work (Goldberg & Warburton 1979).

The process of socialisation at Hilltown was different, and I would like to postulate a link between a perpetuation of the dominant treatment ideology and the way in which specialisation was used in the area office. The team projected itself as dynamic and innovative, and the existence of various specialist posts gave substance to this claim, such as those of volunteers organiser, social worker with the elderly and latterly, family therapy specialist. The social worker for the elderly and the volunteers organiser had been appointed from outside the team and had worked in their chosen specialisms elsewhere before appointment to the team. Their jobs were very much peripheral to the team's activities, with the social worker for the elderly based mainly in a geriatric hospital and the volunteers organiser,
though physically based in the team, not a member of and not attending any of the staff groups. Both these workers subscribed to the overall ideologies in the team concerning the elderly and volunteers and in any case neither of them functioned in a way which might influence or challenge the office culture. The family therapy specialist on the other hand, had been selected from within the team for training in family therapy and was a member of the Intake team, the most prestigious of the teams in the office, in a position to affect definition and allocation of cases. In addition, two other social workers had been encouraged to, and were currently undergoing training as family therapy specialists, thus ensuring continued dominance of definitions of need as "therapeutic". A danger of all professional definitions of problems, and one which was a risk at Hilltown is, in Berger's phrase "cognitive imperialism" (Berger 1977), where an elitist vision prevails over all other ways of viewing the world, as was the case at Hilltown.

Knowledge and skills as objective facticitities: Whatever the reasons for the teams' different formal ideologies, with their assumptions about a body of knowledge and attendant skills, the image projected served to hold together within the organisations a disparate group of human beings who collectively could become visible and identifiable as a social work team. However as to what in fact made them distinctive as professional people, and as to what in fact was the nature of their knowledge and the specifics of their skills, I found a great deal of uncertainty amongst individual social workers in both teams. Although knowledge and skills were presented as objective facticitities, that is, they appeared as "fact-like" and were endowed with an external existence to be apprehended by social workers, their identification presented difficulties.

In chapter 2 I discussed some of the complexities which have arisen in the social work literature as a result of
theorists viewing professional knowledge and skills as objectively determinable attributes without acknowledging the problematic nature of such concepts, and of the difficulties which result from assumptions such as those of Goldstein of "knowledge, values and techniques lodged in the person" of the social worker. The empirical evidence of this study confirmed the confusion which exists around these very crucial aspects of the professional identity.

In view of the dichotomy between the formal ideologies of the two teams, it was remarkable that social workers' attempts to define themselves as professionals were very similar between the teams, as was the phraseology used to express their "angst" regarding the nature of their knowledge and skills. The quotations in the following section have been drawn equally from both teams, but to make them less cumbersome for the reader I have omitted to identify the teams. They are also purposely lengthy to emphasise their significance. The discussions I had with the social workers centred on what made them distinctive from unqualified people, the kinds of knowledge and skills they possessed and the relative merits of training and experience on the job. The views expressed here are overwhelmingly representative of all the social workers I interviewed:

"(training) broadened by whole attitude ... the insight into how other people operate, being more aware and more sensitive to other people's needs ... an awareness of how other people are affected by you, which is a lot of common sense anyway ... but we, social workers are guilty ourselves for saying, yes this is just common sense. As I say there is a difference (between us and volunteers). I was touching on it earlier and that was something to do with the training aspect for the social worker, hopefully it helps you become slightly more objective, and everything in social work isn't sheer common sense - um, you know, I - it's difficult to define, the difference, but I think there are differences, you know, I'm quite positive about that ..."

"a lot of it's just sort of local knowledge ... a lot of the time you're not sure whether its the right thing that you're doing ... there were certain - I got a lot from my tutor personally at university, just talking to her about things and there must have been certain parts of the course that I
got quite a lot from. I mean I know there were, I think the bit on child abuse and em, I just can't think. (Skills) were more general things, just sort of relating to people, em, we just sort of learned about interviewing and how you'd approach things. Em, and I learned I think a fair bit about children's hearings. I wouldn't say I learned anything in particular ... I think quite a lot of it's experience you know. I do think a lot of it's common sense. Well, things like legal work, that's just experience ..."

"(I got from training) a bit of confidence actually, but that's no' what you're wanting, eh? A better understanding perhaps, rather than gut feelings about things. I think I had a lot of gut - I still do have a lot of gut feelings ... I don't think I'm a different person. I think I work the same way to be honest. I haven't changed my practice to a great degree, which is a bit damning, but - confidence. I feel a bit clearer about what I'm doing ... there's quite a lot of common sense in it, but there's got to be something else with common sense, eh, caring, you know? Your common sense can do the bare work but if you care you sometimes take it home with you. OK, I suppose a common sense social worker out there, but the one that has the most results I would say would be the caring one ..."

"I think the first year (of training) was trying to get to know yourself a bit better ... feeling a bit stronger yourself. What skills have I developed? I think basic learning about different client groups and - you know, learning about psychology and sociology and just broadening your views about things ... it's difficult (to say what the social work element is). That's something I can't quite work out. If you look at (the social work assistants) I think they have an awful lot to offer and I think with certain kinds of cases they have more to offer than trained younger social workers, they just are basically quite good with people and they just bring themselves to the work, you know. It's quite difficult really. I think that more or less we do much the same job and we just bring different things to it ... (volunteers) are offering something different and yet it's the same you know. But you know, I can't put my finger on what it is ... I suppose I think I'm doing much the same as they are. Despite our training I tend to see clients on - sometimes I feel I speak to clients and view their problems just as I would if I was speaking to a friend about problems ..."

"My training didn't change what I was doing - em, it helped me think more clearly about what I was doing and where I was going and to plan strategies I suppose, em, rather than going from week to week wondering whether I really was doing anything, getting anywhere. Getting more confidence, that's it. Otherwise I honestly think that practice is the only way to really get there. So much of social work is really learned skills, isn't it?"
"I feel I do have skills. I mean when I say that, I feel I can talk, and quite often say the right questions and be helpful ... but that question comes up a lot in my mind, wondering where social workers' skills are. I mean, where are they? I've always thought it was in being able to eh, sort of relate resources that are there - match them up with the needs, and sort of finding out needs by all the sorts of areas of knowledge that we have - how people experience grief, or loss, you know, how their upbringing affects them. I'm not too sure, you know, I'm not sure really. I never used to think when I was actually training, what are the skills? What am I being taught here? I'm not sure actually ..."

"I just feel I do have skills - they're kind of internal. I don't really know what they are ... I have them I'm sure ... I think there are a lot of things where I can't really see the difference between our skills and the skills of a layman of any sort, except the confidence, sometimes, to phone agencies and know a bit about the background, knowing how to go about things ..."

It will be clear from these quotes that the "taken-for-grantedness" of knowledge and skills which projected them as objective facticities in the public performance of the teams was not sustained when individuals were asked to define those characteristics which constituted their "difference" as professional people. In response to questions concerning their training and the nature of their knowledge and skills, all of them replied first in terms of their own personal development, using phrases such as "self-awareness", "sensitivity", "objectivity", and claimed a newly acquired confidence in their work, whether they felt their practice had changed or not. Indeed many of them said their confidence had come from a realisation that they had indeed been "doing the right things" before training. There was a greater emphasis on procedural knowledge which was felt to be acquired through experience mainly, than on formal theoretic knowledge. Indeed references to the latter were confined to vague comments about "psychology and sociology" and included little as to the range of more structured "helping approaches" which might be available to them in their practice. Skills were equated with self-knowledge and
the "use of self" in engaging clients in relationships. One curious aspect of this was that although much uncertainty was expressed when social workers were asked directly about knowledge and skills, their discussion of cases or volunteer involvement revealed their belief in their professional judgement and assessment of social situations. Such attributes were assumed, except when a request was made for social workers to define the nature of their knowledge and skills. It was then that confidence failed and anxiety emerged.

What is problematic in all this in addition to confusion as to professional identity, is the difficulty which arises in sustaining a claim to autonomy over work on grounds of definitive profession attributes when the attributes themselves cannot be defined as distinctly professional. This leads to the question of what in fact social work is, one which I shall return to later in this chapter.

Legitimating strategies: How then did the social workers set about making their claim subjectively plausible and explaining the disparate elements of their practice within the organisation? By what means did they leap the qualitative gap between their uncertainty about the nature of their knowledge and skills and their claim to control work on grounds of the existence of that knowledge and those skills? And how did they explain the presence of the unqualified on territory said to be exclusively that of the professional? I referred in chapter 4 to the "techniques of neutralization" employed routinely by delinquents studied by Sykes and Matza (1957). These consisted of a series of denials regarding their behaviour and actions. The legitimating strategies employed by social workers in this study could be described similarly, since staff regularly "sharpened" accounts and rejected information which challenged their view of the world. I suggest that there were at least three ways by which they achieved integration, (i) trivialisation; (ii) privatisation and (iii) personal-
isation. These notions are of course inter-linked and are separated only for the purpose of developing the discussion.

(i) Trivialisation: Both teams, by a process of typification and polarisation of the respective roles and attributes of professionals and volunteers, constructed images of social workers as "knowers" and volunteers (and other unqualified people) as "non-knowers", of social workers as "skilled" and "confident" and volunteers as "unskilled" and "anxious". Volunteers' "knowledge" was seen as of a different and inferior order from that of the professionals, in that volunteers "drew on their own life experience" rather than formalised theories, "brought their own problems" to the work and were unable to pick up the wider implications of behaviour. They were viewed as excluded from any technical knowledge, either procedural or in terms of formal theory and endowed only with informal knowledge, both fireside and commonsense. At Hilltown public interaction between social workers and volunteers for example, and the process of supervision of volunteers reinforced this view of the professional/non-professional split. In allocation of cases phrases such as "this one only needs a volunteer" (my emphasis) and "perhaps this is too complicated for a volunteer to take on" emphasised the qualitative "difference". Asked whether volunteers might be able to cope with the work of the area office in the event of a social workers' strike, one of the main objections put forward was that the quality of service would "inevitably" suffer and standards would be lowered by the professionals' absence. So what volunteers had to offer was not only different but also of lesser value to clients.

This technique was used not only in relation to volunteers but to other unqualified workers. When confronted with the fact that unqualified people were involved in areas of work felt to be unsuitable for "non-knowers", justifications consisted either of personalising (about which I shall say
more later) or denial that the area of work being tackled was more than peripheral to the clients' perceived needs. For example at Lakeside where the homemaker and the social work assistant were dealing alone with families seen to have multiple social problems, the following explanations were given:

"... if it's simply a collection of money, she'll get on with that and that's OK ... but if it's court orders, pending orders, demands and letters saying the electricity's going to be cut off, she'd bring that back for my intervention..."

"the homemaker and assistant do basically very practical tasks ... when a social worker decides what action has to be taken on a case they work out what they want the homemaker to do ... she's quite clear where her remit lies or what she can't do, and if she has a client that wants social work she says 'I can't do that. I would need to go and tell, you know, your social worker and then he can talk to you about it, because that's not my job. I couldn't do it, I'm here to do such-and-such' ..."

"... I've noticed (the homemaker), the more experienced she's getting, the more she's asked to go out on a case prior to a social work visit. And again there's implications in that, and difficulties, but she would never ever be left on her own if there was any great difficulties in a case. She comes back with things, and certainly if there was anything she felt wasnae her remit, like advice about divorce, she would suggest that she ask me to go ..."

These explanations sustained a professional ideology of social workers as skilled "knowers" and unqualified workers as practical "non-knowers". When it was suggested to the social workers that unqualified staff or volunteers would need to have the capacity to assess cases to the point where they would "know" when to call in professional expertise, it was acknowledged that such assessment abilities are the result of experience but in any case "coming to a decision about a case is one thing, but knowing what to do with the information is another". In other words even if the unqualified were able to reach a "diagnosis", they were unlikely to have the technical knowledge or skill to take whatever action was required.
Similarly at Hilltown, the contribution of unqualified people was trivialised, sometimes to the point of denial. For example, in an incident which I discussed in chapter 4, a social work assistant (SWA), attached to the OT group claimed that she was carrying out counselling work with clients and asked for supervision from a senior social worker to help her develop her skills. In the public debate about her request and privately afterwards, social workers did not acknowledge that indeed she was counselling her clients. The discussion centred on whether or not she could be permitted to take on such work and the conclusion was that she should not since she was an unqualified worker. A public acknowledgement by the team of any such activity on her part (a) would have threatened the balance of work allocation by leading to a shifting of professional resources either by calling for the allocation of a senior for supervision of the SWA or by accepting that counselling was taking place in other cases dealt with by the OT team and therefore required professional social work intervention; and (b) would have implied that counselling, claimed as professional territory, was in fact taking place elsewhere in the team, thus threatening the social workers' elite and powerful position in the team. As it was, the work of the SWA was trivialised, the work pattern was unaffected and the professional ideology sustained. The fact that other SWAs in the office were carrying out family therapy work was justified by personalising in that they had "potential" as social workers, and in any case they were working closely with social workers who supervised their work, and were in the "right atmosphere (ie: the Intake team) to pick up social workers' attitudes".

As we have seen, the trivialisation process was characterised by a stereotyping of the characteristics of volunteers and of unqualified staff, particularly in the sense of "what they do not know" and "what they do not do" and on assumptions of inbuilt "difference". Volunteers and other staff accepted
these definitions as indicated by comments such as, "a trained person would know what to write down, what is significant, but we don't ..", and "I find myself responding spontaneously to situations where social workers are able to look behind the superficial ..." I have already discussed volunteers acquiescence in the last chapter, so will not repeat it here. What seemed to be the case however, was that for volunteers and for the two teams of social workers, the word "volunteer" appeared to be synonomous with "non-knowing", with inexperience and lower quality skills, even with inferior academic and intellectual capacities. But even if one were to view the roles of social workers and volunteers as "complementary", such a concept also depends on the stereotyping of the differences between them and on a polarisation of attributes. Such differences and attributes we have as yet not been able to define adequately. Such a "double bind" appears to be inbuilt in the notion of "the volunteer" as it was conceived by the professional social worker.

(ii) Privatisation: The reverse side of that coin which trivialised the contribution made by volunteers was that of privatisation of certain areas of work, client groups and attitudes. Along with this went a mystification of the knowledge and skills which were possessed by those initiated through professional training. An interesting aspect of this process was that in the main, justification for privatisation rested on the possession of formal theoretic knowledge by social workers. Even at Lakeside, where the formal ideology emphasised procedural knowledge, only three social workers made reference to this type of technical knowledge as reason for excluding volunteers.

In both teams the justification for exclusion of volunteers on these grounds may seem curious in the light of their uncertainty as to the nature of their knowledge and skills. This is a crucial point in considering the ways social workers constructed their professional identity and I shall
discuss it more fully later in the chapter when describing volunteers' perceptions of professional knowledge and skills. At this point suffice to say that perhaps we have a clue pointing to a tension between organisational demands and social workers' self-identity as professional people.

I suggested that privatisation took place in relation to areas of work, client groups and attitudes.

(a) Areas of work: Social workers saw one of their main tasks as that of assessment of problems, as a result of this assessment they reached a conclusion as to the type of intervention necessary, and theoretically at that stage an unqualified worker or in the case of Hilltown, a volunteer, might be involved:

- "(the social worker) does the assessment bit, and it might be after that stage that volunteers can come in - when you're still very much in the assessment stage bit, em, you'd be inclined to say no."
- "... what tends to happen normally ... if there's a case comes in, the social worker pays a visit, finds out the extent of the difficulties, and in a way sometimes picks up other things, then a joint visit (with the homemaker) sometimes that happens..."

In theory, in both teams there was a potential social work offering in all kinds of cases, though there was not that same potential for unqualified people to become involved in all kinds of cases. Fostering or adoption work, for example, were unquestioningly professional territory exclusively, ("volunteers should never do fostering or adoption assessments"); statutory work was also excluded for non-professionals, sometimes on legal grounds ("doing supervision, taking kids into care, because it's statutory it has to be a qualified social worker"), and sometimes on grounds of knowledge and skill ("(SWAs) remit goes as far as she wants it to go as long as it doesn't get to the statutory level ... hers is of a more basic, more routine nature, still very necessary but not requiring as much skill"). Writing official reports was also professional ground ("...
you can rule that out completely ... they wouldn't be able to pinpoint issues ... I suppose anyone could write a report, but it's what is contained in the report that's important ..."). In addition, working with relationships was privatised as illustrated here:

"I wouldn't see it appropriate to involve volunteers in an on-going relationship with someone, where that was the precise area of the difficulty - the reason they were referred to the department. Those people where there are personality disorders, or, you know, very grave relationship problems, em, or where it seems to be a very skilled task to relate to ..."

In Hilltown it was felt to be important for a social worker to sit in on groups such as the Elderly group and OT groups, in the words of one social worker, as a "consultant". But there was not a reciprocal representation of these groups in say, the Intake team, or the Long-term team. The assumption was that professionals had much to offer other groups, but that there was nothing the OT team, or the home-help section or volunteers from the Elderly group could offer to the two groups of professionals, and were therefore excluded. (Smith and Harris also noted this practice in their discussion of the proper assessor of social need: Smith & Harris 1972).

(b) Client groups: We have noted already that social workers saw their remit as concerned mainly with high status client groups such as families and children though they did not exclude work with low status groups. As we have observed though, their involvement with low status client groups was minimal since the needs of these groups were defined as mainly practical and instrumental whereas social work skills were required in the "more complex" problems of families. One can only speculate as to whether the situation where high and low status client groups existed was as a result of definition by professionals, or whether an existing organisational structure expedited the typifications. The point is that the professional social workers were in a
position to define other staff and volunteers and their roles vis-à-vis clients on the grounds of having special insights as a result of their training and qualifications. What happened in practice may have contravened the formal ideology in that unqualified staff and volunteers did work with high status clients, write reports and deal with "relationship" problems, but was legitimated by personalising or trivialising the contribution made, or by claims of close professional supervision of lay persons' activities.

(c) Attitudes: Along with privatisation of areas of work and of client groups went a set of attitudes said to be distinctive of professionals and unlikely to be found in the unqualified. I suggested earlier that one of the reasons given for social workers not involving volunteers in cases was the anticipation of attitudes which might be detrimental to the clients' interests. This carried with it an assumption that social workers on the other hand were, per se, "accepting", "non-judgemental", "observed confidentiality", "aware" and had a "broad outlook", which hung together to produce a "professional attitude" acquired through training. One social worker declared "let's face it, your average human being is judgemental and it has to be trained out of you". Even when social workers admitted to disliking some clients they were able to sustain their professional identity and legitimate actions towards clients by "having acted in the clients' best interests". Consider this quote from Bert:

"... I haven't so far come across a case where I have said, 'I couldn't work with that person because of what they are or because of what they've done'. The sort of case where I've said that I don't think I could work with them, are cases where I've felt it would be better for someone else to be involved ... for example, there was a lad whose parents were demanding extremely high standards of behaviour from him ... What I was saying basically was, 'Look, your boy isn't any different from anyone else, he's not the bad lad you make him out to be ...' They just wouldn't accept this from me ... I reckoned that the problem was that I was too young, so I transferred the case to another social worker who pushed the same message and, you know, got
through. Certainly, I didn't like those parents, I was getting very angry with them ... I felt though that I was justified subsequently, it wasn't just the way I felt, you know, my feelings around in it."

In this illustration, although Bert admitted that he disliked the family, this was unacceptable as a reason for transferring the case. What seemed a legitimate "casework" reason was found in his inappropriateness to work in the case because of his age, and this allowed him to transfer and later to claim retrospective justification on the ground that the succeeding worker had used the same approach to good effect. The social workers' "professional attitude" provided an enduring and private legitimation of action, whereas no such device was available to volunteers and so they could be reasonably excluded from the teams' work.

Admittedly, in theory volunteers could refuse work offered to them whereas social workers were obliged to work with those clients who presented themselves regardless of personal preference. Nevertheless there were various means by which social workers might withhold or deflect help and exercise discretion in their work. Some of this is examined in the next chapter on "Images of Clients".

In addition to trivialisation and privatisation as legitimating strategies, social workers had access to a third:

(iii) Personalisation: I have alluded to this both in the above discussions and in chapter 5 when considering images of volunteers held by the team, in terms of the volunteers' personal characteristics. It was used as a retrospective ad hoc explanation as to why certain unqualified staff and volunteers were undertaking work marked out by public rhetoric as professional territory. In terms of unqualified staff in the team personalisation was used as a kind of initiation into social work where some SWAs for example were located in both teams in offices with the social workers, in a position to listen to how professionals went about
things and under their influence and supervision. In addition however, these SWAs were seen to have exceptional personal qualities which suited them to grooming as prospective professionals. This was not open to all unqualified staff or SWAs and we have considered already how that was declared publicly in Hilltown. We have also seen how the public rhetoric transcended what actually took place in practice by all three devices of trivialisation, privatisation and personalisation.

Similarly with volunteers, although their functions and characteristics were stereotyped, and the resultant images prevailed to exclude them from professional territory, where exceptions were found these were explained in terms of individual skills and personal excellence rather than in terms of a generalised volunteer potential. In other words, in the context of the relationships between volunteers and professionals, the word "volunteer" was defined by what the volunteer does not "know" and does not "do". There is no space within such a frame for meanings attached to "volunteer" which convey notions such as "knowledgeable" or "skilled", or ideas such as "autonomy", "independence", "freedom of choice" and other self-affirming concepts. By a projection of such ideas as objective facticities, the strategies of legitimation used by the two teams combined to maintain the professionals' world and to afford them a powerful "self-defining" and "other-defining" role in both area offices.

So far in this chapter I have compared the teams' formal ideologies with those which appeared informally in practice, and considered the ways in which social workers constructed professional knowledge and skills, and how these were projected and legitimated as objective facticities. Further insights may be gained by the examination of volunteers' perceptions of professional knowledge and skills.
Volunteers and professional knowledge and skills

The nature of social work knowledge: There was remarkable similarity in the views of professional knowledge and skills expressed by current and ex-volunteers. When asked what they saw to be the differences between social workers and volunteers the majority referred first of all to procedural knowledge as distinctive to social workers, and to experience as the best way to acquire such knowledge, although they did not dismiss training, taking the view that "it's there, so it must be important". There were fewer references to formal theoretic knowledge, though knowing "how to handle different situations" was seen as an important element in the social workers' repertoire. The following quotes from a current and an ex-volunteer are representative of the replies offered:

"(social workers) are supposed to know how to handle different situations and how to organise access to different contacts. Someone like us wouldn't know how to go about organising things, we wouldn't necessarily know the background to get in touch with all sorts of organisations .... I think the fact that social workers are trained means it's a necessity. You'd have to be quite clever to cope with situations you have never been informed about. I think you'd fall to pieces ... you really need the administration side too ..."

"On the organising - being a volunteer now, you can go and meet people, and assess them and think they could do with things, but you can't put your finger on where you were going to get it from, you know, where it could be supplied, or where the help, you haven't got the addresses and the know-how ... they've got books there in the office, with addresses and what have you ... they've got the know-how, it's their career ..."

The volunteers were quite clear that they could not replace social workers and for example, in the event of a strike by social workers few of them envisaged volunteers being able to cope. The social workers when interviewed, thought likewise. But the difference was in the reasons given. Social workers had referred to lowering of standards in the service offered, and by this they meant the withdrawal of
their relationship skills. Volunteers on the other hand all referred to an absence of procedural knowledge as the reason why they would be unable to cope. One of them said for instance,

"No, no, we haven't got the knowledge ... we could keep our own little bits going, our own little area, but, which covers nothing really ... all the new cases would never be looked into. Mind you, I can't speak for the ones that are connected with the office because there's one lady there, she's been doing it the length of time I have so her knowledge must have increased just actually being there ... she might be able to run social services quite adequately and organise us, because she's learning all the time as it goes along."

So the volunteers did see social workers as professional people, but the ideology put forward by them to express this was closer to the formal ideology of the Lakeside team (ie: the emphasis on procedural knowledge) than that of the Hilltown team (which emphasised formal theoretic knowledge). However we noted earlier that a range of ideologies appeared in both teams for different purposes and I shall discuss this again later in the light of volunteers' perceptions.

Social work skills, acquired or innate?

In addition, the volunteers were clearer than the social workers as to their views on professional skills, and those most often mentioned revolved around social workers' ability to interview people and make quick assessments of their circumstances. Some volunteers said they spoke from direct experience of seeing social workers in action, as in these examples:

"... I went with (the social worker) to this Mrs Y and she was able to sit there and extract all the information, what the doctor had said, all the other channels that had been explored, well, I wouldn't have thought of half these things. You've got to be trained to do that and to ask all these questions and to know all the different departments and make sure they've all been thoroughly explored..."
"... they've got skills of eliciting information from people, which I haven't had enough experience to do yet. Em, when I'm with (the social worker), I notice the way in which she attacks a problem from several angles, without appearing to do so to the client, probably, and gets the information. I probably get some of the information, but I'm not as good at it as she is ... you know, how to look at a situation and assess it properly, using all the different angles ..."

Such assessment and interviewing skills were seen as acquired through training as well as experience. These apparently obvious functions of social workers were referred to much less often by the professionals, though clearly skills in interviewing and assessment were assumed in their descriptions of their daily work. Some authors have conjectured that knowledge and skills may have become so much part of social workers' functioning that they seem to them to be no more than common sense. The social workers in Carew's study is one example (Carew 1979). Stevenson et al reported that many social workers were "accustomed to working on an intuitive level" (Stevenson 1978, para 5.262). That study suggested that a constant switching between different levels of work may have diluted any attempt to consolidate practice or conceptualize in certain ways (para 5.270). The point is that those social workers, like ours at Lakeside and Hilltown, experienced great difficulty in describing their approaches and their skills. Volunteers were much more articulate in their perceptions of the social work task. However their definitions held ingredients which would not have been acceptable as "professional" traits by the social workers. What was interesting in the volunteers' responses was that although they felt social workers should be "good with people", have a "good outlook on life" and be "understanding", they did not see such qualities as peculiar characteristics of social workers nor did they afford them a monopoly of engaging clients in meaningful relationships. Stephen, on being asked what social work training might have to offer him replied,
"the legal aspect, the ins and outs of the social work department and of probation, the actual law of the land ... I don't think it would teach me anything in my approach or how I get on with people because I think you either get on with people or you don't, and if you don't then I don't think you're the right person for the job."

Nearly all the volunteers saw this aspect of social work as practical common sense, and for them the aim of "relationship" was not seen as "self-actualisation" or "insight" for the client, but the practical ends of providing resources available in the community or controlling the clients' behaviour.

The issue of control as perceived by the volunteers is an important one since they saw this as a major function of social work, while the social workers themselves put far less emphasis on it in their descriptions of their professional role, or as a goal of the employment of their knowledge and skills. Jean is typical of volunteers' responses when she gave this reply to the question, "If you went for training as a social worker, how would you be different?"

"Well I think you would know how to handle problems, like talking about a filthy house, I wouldn't know how to handle that now, because I imagine it's a very delicate subject. I wouldn't like to come in and say, 'Your house is filthy, it's about time you cleaned it'. I suppose training would teach you how to do that best without being too rude."

or Alistair:

"Welfare workers are indispensable and in fact more money should be withdrawn from education and put into welfare services. Neighbours can do a lot but there's a limit. What about commodes and other aids? What about children who've been neglected and battered? You need to keep a sharp eye on those, and welfare workers can tell these families to get houses cleaned up and children deloused. If it wasn't for the welfare we might have bubonic plague ..."

The discussion will return later to the notion of control in social work. It is referred to here merely as part of a description of the different views of social workers and
volunteers regarding professional knowledge and skills.

Organisational demands and professional identity

Let us recapitulate on the comparisons:

(i) The volunteers' ideology concerning professional knowledge was similar to the formal ideology held by the Lakeside team, but which appeared also at Hilltown in different contexts.

(ii) Volunteers regarded social workers as indispensable but mainly because of their procedural knowledge and experience, and again this conformed to the formal ideology at Lakeside. A majority of social workers in Hilltown agreed with this privately, but both teams legitimated their actions by claims to formal theoretic knowledge and relationship skills.

(iii) Social workers equated "skills" with personal qualities such as "self-awareness", and "acceptance", acquired through their training, while volunteers saw "skills" much more in terms of assessment and interviewing techniques, acquired through training. Those personal qualities claimed by the social workers as professional "skills" were regarded by the volunteers as innate.

(iv) The social workers regarded "the professional relationship" as a distinctive characteristic of social work, (resulting from a grasp of formal theoretic knowledge) while volunteers appeared not to recognise this qualitative difference in relationships, attributing success to common sense knowledge.

(v) The concept of "the professional relationship" was seen by social workers as a means towards the goal of self-actualisation in the client, and by volunteers as a means towards provision of services, or towards control of behaviour.
The reader will recall that the volunteers who were interviewed had contact exclusively with the Hilltown team, and the Lakeside team did not involve volunteers at all in the work of the area office. The question then arises as to why the volunteers adopted an ideology of professional knowledge which was closer to the formal ideology of Lakeside with which they had no contact, than that of Hilltown, with which they had exclusive contact (though only about one-fifth of current volunteers actually operated within the area office itself). A second question is, why were there discrepancies in social workers' and volunteers' perceptions of professional skills? And again, how did it arise that social work's "most characteristic act" (that of engaging clients in "relationships") was not recognised by the volunteers? Finally, why were the goals of social work intervention construed differently by the two groups?

It might be argued that the intricacies and the subtleties of operationalising a "therapeutic" ideology were missed by volunteers attached to the Hilltown team, or that they were not close enough or informed enough to make such observations. But this argument loses some of its force when one learns that other unqualified staff shared their perceptions of the dominance of procedural knowledge in the team's activities, as expressed by this SWA:

"the difference (between me and the social worker) is that if we have to use statutory powers to take the children into care then he will use them, I don't. But apart from anything else, I'm as capable as he is, in handling the situation and sorting out (the client's) financial and other problems along the way."

The argument is weakened further by the social workers themselves stressing the procedural aspects of their work and expressing uncertainty as to the skills they possessed as professional people.
Procedural knowledge in the teams

In the light of volunteers' and unqualified staff's perceptions and of social workers' uncertainties, we are led to consider whether in fact after all, there was a much greater routine use of procedural knowledge with attendant skills in both teams, than was reported to be the case? This also raises questions concerning the role of "the professional relationship" and the extent to which control of behaviour was a goal of social work intervention.

We have already considered how the Lakeside team prided itself in its use of procedural knowledge and techniques, and how the work was highly routinised to expedite the speedy processing of various kinds of reports and administrative requirements, with no "opening up" of referrals at allocation. At Hilltown although there was a greater "unpacking" of referrals, this did not mean that the outcome was necessarily different from decisions about cases in Lakeside. Although the organisation's main function was projected as therapeutic work with clients, and family therapy regarded as prestigious, in fact the number of families to whom this service was offered was very small indeed, and the majority of referrals received were dealt with in a routine fashion by the provision of aids, assessment of the elderly for residential care, or reports for courts or children's hearings (an analysis of referrals over a six week period confirmed this). Below is a description of a typical allocation meeting of the Intake team, taken from my fieldnotes:

(1) A telephone call from a woman who was worried because her 16 year old son was having sexual intercourse with a 14 year old girl and she wondered whether a probation officer could speak to him and ask him to stop till the girl is old enough. The senior said he thought the best thing was to advise the woman to put the girl on the pill but Jane said "we can't really advise that because it's illegal". She said she couldn't do much except listen to the woman. After about three minutes discussion it was decided that no further action would be taken.
(2) There was a request for an adoption placement supervision. The senior explained that this is where a child has been placed and during the 3-month period pending adoption it has to be supervised. He said it consisted of a quick chat and a cup of tea and asked "who wants a cup of tea a month for three months?" Jack said the job should be done properly if it's to be done at all. Nobody was interested in the case and the senior asked Jack if he would take it on. After some pressure Jack said he would.

(3) There was a fostering enquiry and the social worker said a group is to be started for foster parents and the enquiry would be passed to the person running it.

(4) Three letters from the Gas Department which notified intentions to disconnect clients' gas. There was no discussion and standard letters were to be sent in every case.

(5) Two cases regarding elderly folk, for assessment for residential care. Without discussion the social worker said "Hold". Everyone agreed.

(6) A request for a SER, to be done for 9 February. No offer from the team to do it, but a lot of pressure on Robert to take it on, since he was already doing an SER for another boy charged with this one. He agreed to take it, but reluctantly, saying he also had two other court reports to do.

In addition the social workers, when asked what their caseload consisted of, in the main mentioned first those cases concerned with statutory responsibilities, as illustrated here:

"Em, well, I have supervision orders - home supervision orders on four separate families. One or two are unusual in the sense that we have used supervision orders as a tool to enable us to finance a situation. Em, what else? Elderly, at the moment I'm undertaking three assessment for services ... one or two families, a young family which I've been working with for more than a year now. One of the children is now in care, another one is under supervision ... I work with the IT group and two of the kids are on supervision order ... we have the statutory or set down priorities. I suppose it's the most vulnerable in the community, the very young, the very old, young families ... So there's a range of priorities, NAI (non-accidental injury), right down the scale ..."

By suggesting that social workers at Hilltown made use of
procedural knowledge to a greater degree than was reported by the team, it is not my intention to rule out the use of formal theoretic knowledge by the team. The concern here is with the question as to why procedural knowledge was not used by social workers in either team to any great extent, to legitimate their claim to professional autonomy over work. Indeed their attitude to the organisational demands which are implied in the use of procedural knowledge was one of ambivalence. This applied particularly to the aspect of control over clients' behaviour.

Social workers as agents of social control

At Lakeside for example, one might expect that, since the formal ideology relied mainly on procedural knowledge, social workers would feel comfortable in a role which pressed clients into socially acceptable behaviour, but there were various examples of their decided discomfort. Several of them expressed confusions as illustrated by this example, where the social worker was comparing her role to that of the homemaker in the team:

"She's stricter than I would be, sort of saying 'You've got to get back to school', or 'You're using too much gas', or something, whereas I would feel that often I'm dealing with other aspects and it wouldn't be helpful to be sort of telling them what to do ... (the homemaker) is older and has sort of different standards and she's managing in this area having lived here, you know, and maybe it's training that you get to kind of be more tolerant. You then realise that it would be easy for you to get yourself into some of these positions. I mean I think she sees very clearly what she's got to do a lot of the time, and doesn't have any doubts about doing it, whereas our role is a lot kinda broader you know, and a lot of the time you feel not really quite sure whether it's the right thing you're doing."

Even those social workers who were most verbal in articulating the formal ideology of the team had anxieties about their controlling function in relation to court cases, for example:
"I think the biggest single thing in relation to children in trouble is just not to exaggerate the problem ... I think it's quite wrong to see somebody who commits an offence as an offender. I'd far rather see them as an ordinary person who commits an offence, and what you're trying to do is boost their ordinariness ... I suppose my approach is a denial that problems exist in many ways, em, I spend a great deal of my time, you know, denying that problems exist that other people perhaps are very interested in."

In the first of these two quotations the social worker approved of the homemaker's approach which aimed at controlling the behaviour of her clients, but at the same time she (the social worker) suspected that she ought not to approve, or, be seen to approve, as a professional worker. In the second example the social worker was confronted with "problems" which were societally and organisationally defined, but which conflicted with his image of himself as a professional worker. What emerges for these workers is a tension between organisational demands and professional identity.

The Hilltown team too were uneasy in their role as social control agents as expressed by Fiona:

"...I find sometimes that social work is rather frustrating, you're only dealing with the surface, you know, patching things up a bit. I tend to try and just cope by saying it's a job and I'm trying to help people as much as I can, sort of thing. Yeah, I mean, I see social work as quite a controlling thing, you know, you're always linking it to the police, no matter how much we're in it to help people, you know, we do use it as a means of control ..."

Philip had a similar view:

"I know of one case personally, this was a chap who chucked an axe at a member of the residential staff in a hostel, and the problem could have been solved in terms of statistics in that the guy could have been removed, he would have been locked up, ended up in court, probably inside, and em, the problem would have been dealt with. But we interviewed and we tried to help the guy understand, well we tried to come to some talking about what had happened. We didn't involve the police at that stage, we recognised that the kid couldn't stay where he was so we planned for him to go
to another residential place and there was a follow-up and people were talking about trying to help the guy in social work terms and to figure out why this happened ..."

Here both Fiona and Philip, by attempting to deny the controlling role of social workers, expressed some of the confusions which are present for social workers concerning conflicting ideologies of "care" and "control". Several authors have addressed this question, notably Parsloe (1979), arguing that care and control can be made complementary, and Harris (1980) who maintained that the theoretical problem lies in the attempt to reconcile them. Harris, referring to the probation service, pointed to the impossibility of sustaining a simple ideology (of welfare) in a complex work environment. I suggest here that the discomfort of social workers both in Lakeside and Hilltown reflected a sense of incompatibility among the social workers between their employment as local authority workers and their perceived professional identity. But if this was the case, how did such a tension arise? Why were the social workers ambivalent as to their role as local authority employees and therefore social control agents? Why for example did the Lakeside team need to legitimate their action in other ways than the team's formal ideology? After all they had succeeded in gaining distinctiveness as an area office on grounds of their "welfare" ideology, and if the views of volunteers are representative, their possession of procedural knowledge and attendant skills of assessment and interviewing were a perfectly respectable claim to professional status.

And at Hilltown, why was it necessary to project a "therapeutic" ideology implying formal knowledge when the major part of the work concerned the routine application of procedural knowledge, and the latter type of knowledge was seen by volunteers and others to constitute adequate professional identity for social workers?
The Sacred Canopy

The possession and application of procedural knowledge and commensurate skills served the major purpose of meeting organisational requirements by the efficient processing of duties imposed on local authorities by various legislation. By their own admission volunteers and unqualified staff were excluded from such knowledge along with the power and authority which accompanied it. But where procedural knowledge in itself was ineffective was as a claim to autonomy over work, nor did it justify a long period of training for the job. The volunteers' comments indicated that they saw procedural knowledge as acquired through experience and day-to-day working with legislation and with other organisations and resources. This implied that they or others who could devote sufficient time to practising the social workers' job would also eventually become as skilled as they, though they did not disdain training, assuming that since it exists it must have some useful purpose, though with extremely vague notions as to what it entailed. The following quotations from volunteers illustrate their attitude:

"I couldn't personally (continue the work if social workers went on strike), but then Mary B, I feel she could because she's been doing it a lot more for a longer time ... but I couldn't because I havenae been doing it long enough'...."

"the social worker is a sort of professional in the sense that they're faced with problems every day whereas a volunteer is probably faced with a problem once a week of a particular nature ..."

Procedural knowledge provided no justification for privatisation of work or for role segregation within the organisation. It provided no territory which could become the exclusive domain of social workers. It might make a team "distinctive" but not "professional".

I have borrowed the title of this section from Peter Berger
who in his book "The Social Reality of Religion" (1973), but writing in a different context, commented, "religion legitimates so effectively because it relates the precarious reality constructions of empirical societies with ultimate reality" (page 32). In the context of social work, the claim to the ultimate authority of professional knowledge and skills is presented as irrefutable. It means that even if a lay person were to practice social work, that practice would be illegitimate and of inferior quality. There have been several examples of this in the fieldwork material, the most notable discussed in chapter 4, where a SWA who claimed to be carrying out "counselling" was told she was not counselling and that she remained excluded from the "internal" world of her client because she had not been initiated through training to the realms of formal theoretic knowledge and counselling skills. For legitimation of this position resort was made not to the organisational structure ("this is how things are done here") but to an authority which was unanswerable, the sacred canopy of professionalism.

The analogy of the religious theme may be carried further. Social workers undergo training leading to "ordination" through qualifications; they are then entitled to enter into mystical relationships with their clients which are by their nature exclusive and cannot be replicated elsewhere; within the relationship the social worker may administer the sacrament of therapy leading to insight and self-actualisation in the client.

It is now possible to answer some of the questions I raised earlier in the chapter concerning discrepancies between volunteers' and social workers' perceptions of professional knowledge and skills, of the concept of "relationship" and of the goals of social work intervention. The sacred canopy provided social workers with that essential qualitative difference which was ineradicable whatever the performance of the unqualified and the lay person and offered
ultimate legitimation for their position of power.
Berger spoke of "the precarious reality constructions of empirical societies". We have discussed various ways in which the worlds constructed by the two teams were challenged and how those challenges were "managed" by the social workers, and rationalisations offered as explanations. In the same way as for example, the canopy of religion provides a shield against catastrophe or untimely death, the canopy of professionalism became a shield against uncertainty around lay participation in social work territory in a way which threatened chaos. And that same canopy which shielded social workers, also justified the entire institutional structure with its role segregation and "caste" system, alienating both unqualified staff and volunteers in the process, even though both groups may have been operating in a similar way to the professionals.

Conclusion

It would be misleading to imply that the problematic nature of the notion of professional knowledge and skills is confined to social work. The work of Strauss and Schatzman on psychiatry (1964), Bankowski and Mungham on Law (1976), Friedson on medicine (1970) lead to the conclusion that different occupations present similar complexities in the construction of the professional image.

But social workers are employed by local authorities on the basis of their special knowledge and skills acquired through training. They are endowed with a great deal of power and authority in their day-to-day work which may have profound and far-reaching effects on the lives of their clients and others. It has been assumed in social policy documents such as Seebohm and Kilbrandon, in the resultant legislation and in the employing criteria operated by social work and social services departments, that the training they receive
is appropriate to the duties they will assume as employees. But we have observed here a worrying amount of uncertainty amongst them, supported by other research such as that of Stevenson and Parsloe (1978), as to the nature of their knowledge and skills, and an uneasy relationship between the professionals and the department for which they worked. The projection of knowledge and skills as objectively determinable attributes, while difficult to sustain on close examination, in these two teams was a highly potent force towards privatisation and autonomy over work, and towards the right of "self" and "other" definition. Perhaps the question to which we are leading should be not to what extent social workers were in fact experienced bureaucrats who were good interviewers, but how it came to be that the rhetoric concerning their professionalism was so persuasive. Part of the answer may lie in the reflexive relationship between the organisation and the social work staff. The notion of professional knowledge and skills justified and sustained the hierarchial order and it allowed the work to be processed unproblematically. At the same time it provided the social workers with a medium for making "visible" evidence of their professionalism. As a result, the uneasy collusion was maintained because it offered gains to organisation and to professionals.

The question which is still unanswered concerns what indeed social work is, and information drawn from social workers, from volunteers, from unqualified staff, and implied by the requirements of the organisation have all contributed to a conflicting picture. However what emerged from the analysis as something of a surprise is what I have termed a "professional bonding". The formal ideologies of Lakeside and Hilltown were at opposite extremes of a spectrum, and the cultures within the teams entirely different, yet when they were asked to define their professionalism, all of them resorted to the image of the professional as a caring,
self-aware person who has access to formal theoretic knowledge and special skills who engages clients in meaningful relationships towards a goal of insight and self-actualisation. There was little or no reference to the controlling and bureaucratic function or to their accountability as public employees. Apparently they were all covered by the same sacred canopy.
CHAPTER 7

IMAGES OF CLIENTS

In Chapter 4 I attempted to convey a flavour of the different office cultures at Lakeside and at Hilltown by describing the overall ideologies which were projected as dominant within the teams. Under a heading "classifying clients", the discussion centred on typifications of clients which rested on an ideology which viewed the needs of low and high status client groups (ie: the elderly and physically handicapped, and families and children respectively) as essentially different. Here the aim is to examine the practices in the teams more closely by considering how different ideologies concerning images of clients were brought into play in a variety of contexts in the teams' accomplishment of their professional task, and to compare these with the images of clients presented by current and ex-volunteers.

In his book "Social Need", Gilbert Smith rejected what he called the "traditional" approach to social need, which sought for universal criteria, and which treated "need" as an unambiguous, static and objective phenomenon, a measurable property of the individual client (Smith 1980). He pointed to the conceptual confusion which resulted from researchers' employing the traditional notion of "need" and argued for a theoretical reforulation of the concept. He made use of the notion of professional ideologies of social need and demonstrated from his empirical material that "at different times, in different places in different situations in social work practice, several quite different notions of need are actually employed" (page 99). Need was viewed as socially constructed and the subject of enquiry was the ways in which need thus viewed, was practically managed or
accomplished. Smith developed a framework for this which distinguished between ideologies about the nature of social need along three dimensions, those concerning (i) the unit of social need; (ii) the causes of need; and (iii) the appropriate assessor of need. As in the previous two chapters of this thesis I have considered images of volunteers and professional knowledge and skills as the objectification of subjective phenomena, so the topic of images of clients will be similarly treated. Smith's framework has been adopted as a conveniently appropriate one within which to examine the ideologies of social workers and volunteers and their uses in the operationalisation of social work activities, and the chapter will be constructed around the model.

THE UNIT OF NEED

A major point made by Smith stemmed from the dilemma of social work teams to on the one hand deal with referrals by matching the particular needs of clients with the special skills of social workers in a highly individualised way, and on the other, meeting the management requirement of allocating cases rapidly and repeatedly in standard ways. He suggested that the dilemma is resolved as follows:

"While 'meeting the needs of clients' remains the predominant requirement of professional activity throughout an agency, the ways in which 'the needs of clients' are constructed by professionals varies with the practical and organizationally situated purposes for which the notion is being used at any particular time" (page 191).

At Lakeside and at Hilltown patterns emerged in the practices of the teams which expedited the processing of work through typifications of client need. The most common typifications among all the respondents held the individual client as the
unit of need, but an image of "the family" as the unit of need also appeared. At Lakeside the "community" as the unit of need was implied in the establishment of two areas in which the separate groups of social workers operated, and found expression in the allocation of cases according to "patch".

At both Lakeside and Hilltown, where social workers were asked to describe their caseloads, the list of tasks they gave were some indication as to how they viewed their work. A social worker at Lakeside for example said, "... I have elderly, families receiving support and I've got quite a lot of offenders ..." A typical response from Hilltown was "... I think it's a hard core of families and a bit of children in care and under supervision, very little of the elderly and not too many offenders ..." Here it will be noted that the ideology concerning the unit of need which was employed depended on the client group being described, and as a result groups such as the elderly, offenders, children under supervision (and it is possible to add physically handicapped, psychiatric patients, single parents and adolescents) were seen, not as a part of a family upon which social work intervention might be focussed, but as to be acted upon as single clients. Social workers adopted organisational classifications to describe their work and classified it in terms of institutional categories and/or statutory responsibilities.

At Lakeside, in public discussion of cases such as in allocation meetings, an individual ideology was used almost exclusively to allocate work, but privately social workers stressed a family ideology equally with an individual ideology.

While at Hilltown, in public the ideology which was employed varied among the different work groups in the team. The Intake and Long-term teams for instance, emphasised a family ideology but also used an individual ideology, while the OT group and the Elderly group focussed largely on an individual ideology of need. Indeed throughout the agency, in all work
groups, where the elderly were discussed it was entirely in terms of the individual as the unit of need. This is illustrated by Ed,

"... if you have a presenting problem with a 13 year old you do a family assessment - but if it's the grannie that's the presenting problem, that's different, it's an assessment for residential care ..."

At Hilltown a community ideology was expressed mainly in the volunteers organiser's involvement with various community groups, an activity which was on the whole invisible to the rest of the teams. One social worker in each team described her/himself as a communist, and privately both said they saw the origins of social need in the structure of society, but the ideologies which they used in their practice centred on the individual or on the family as the unit of need. This was rationalised by a reference to their activities outside the organisation, in trade unions or other political groups, and to a claim that social work was not a political activity. (Barneis also drew attention to this division of the world by social workers and explained it as an accommodation of pressures from their teams to construct understandings of clients that sustain the teams' vocabulary of understandings, Barneis 1982, page 276)

None of the current or ex-volunteers viewed the community as the unit of need, and all of them focussed on the individual or the family. They used similar classifications to the social workers to convey their images of clients, such as elderly, offenders, battered wives, physically handicapped and families as suitable for volunteer involvement, though for them "families" meant involvement with individual family members. Jane for example described her voluntary work, "I was asked to sit in with a (mentally handicapped) boy ... he was heavy going for his parents so I said I'd sit in occasionally in the evenings, so the parents could go out ..." Ex-volunteers on the other hand, widened the types of client thought to be suitable for volunteer intervention. As well as the elderly they included "offenders" and "battered wives".
A far greater proportion of ex-volunteers were in favour of their dealing with such groups than among current volunteers. An instance was where an ex-volunteer said her choice would have been to work with families because of her own experience of bringing up a family and having gone through a rough patch with them, and she saw volunteers as "very useful" in involved family cases.

Ideologies of the unit of need in practice

In both the teams, ideologies of need were used prospectively to facilitate the passage of work, and retrospectively as justifications and rationalisations for action taken. They were also used to sustain a professional identity among social workers and to provide legitimations for control over the work. I shall consider each team separately.

LAKESIDE: At Lakeside public discussion and allocation of cases followed a pattern of an exclusive image of the individual as the unit of need. Emphasis was laid on the efficient processing of hearing reports, SERs, "at risk" investigations and supervision of statutory cases, and centred on the individual client. Of lesser priority, but still viewed as individuals in need, were those where the elderly, evictions or financial problems were involved. It was curious that when an ideology of the family as the unit of need appeared in public, it was neutralised by derisory comments about the family ("they are despicable"; "should be put down"). As a result it was likely that no action need be taken by the team unless statutory involvement was required. Yet when I interviewed social workers individually, a family ideology figured prominently in their perception of their professional role.

One explanation for this apparent inconsistency may be in the relationship between organisational structure and the professional identity of the team. I suggested in chapter
4 that Lakeside operated on a unidimensional and linear basis, with little "unpacking" of referrals and a limited range of intervention techniques available to them. By viewing the individual client as the unit of need and statutory work as the main thrust of the team's functioning both efficiency and legitimation were achieved. Those non-routine "interferences" in the system such as families presenting problems could be dealt with by two rationalisations, both acceptable within the world of this team. These were, first, that the team had no statutory responsibility (eg: for evictions) and second, that in any case the family were "undeserving" of social work help. At the same time, as we discussed in chapter 5, the procedural knowledge implied in statutory work was insufficient to sustain a professional identity and it was therefore necessary to construct a different reality to accommodate that aspect. As to why a family ideology was important in that construction, I shall return to later in the chapter.

In their rationalisations for the exclusion of volunteers in their work, the images of clients projected by the Lakeside team implied a qualitative difference between individual and family ideologies of need which viewed the family as the unit of greater importance and complexity, as in this quote:

"... I think volunteers could be involved with the elderly ... I would be concerned about the type of family, I mean, I wouldn't see myself involving volunteers with a multi-problem family ..."

Again this view of volunteers working with low status clients marked out the territory of the professionals, at least in theory. Even though an individual ideology of the unit of need was universally employed within the team to accomplish the work, it was also widely accepted "knowledge" within the team that a family ideology predominated and that operationalisation of such an ideology implied a more pro-
found application of professional skills than that of an individual ideology.

HILLTOWN: I suggested earlier that in this area office the ideologies of need which were employed varied according to the work groups within the office. In the two teams of social workers a family ideology featured far more prominently than in Lakeside and indeed "the family" was viewed as the proper focus of professional social work. Statutory responsibilities were seen as a bothersome but unavoidable duty. They were nearly always allocated in a way which implied the individual as the unit of need and in the case of SERs and hearing reports, in anticipation of their early disposal. Also, where the professionals discussed cases of elderly or physically handicapped it was in terms of an individual ideology, even if it was known the client was part of a family. A case in point was a referral of a young man and his elderly mother. A social worker in this situation saw the son as the client and commented, "I'd really like to help him (get his mother into residential care) because he's under a lot of stress at the moment". In the OT group, although an individual ideology of need was used most often, a family ideology also appeared. The OT herself suggested that her staff and volunteers found themselves doing counselling work with families of which a member was a disabled person. But in the Elderly group the emphasis was exclusively on the individual as the unit of need, whether or not the elderly person lived alone.

A striking pattern in Hilltown was that an individual ideology was associated in the main with low status clients, and emphasised the external, material and instrumental aspects of need. A family ideology was always associated with high status clients and emphasised the internal, psychological and interpersonal aspects of need. One outcome of this was that where an individual ideology was employed, the helping agent was more likely (but not always)
to be an unqualified person, staff or volunteer, and where a family ideology was employed, the public rhetoric suggested that this was exclusively professional territory. Administrative procedures accommodated this by allowing for cases of elderly for example, to go direct to the Elderly group without prior discussion on allocation unless an assessment for residential care was involved, and for OT cases to go direct to the OT group. Yet as we discussed in the last chapter, social workers at Hilltown did see all client groups, including the elderly and physically handicapped, as needing their professional skills and knowledge, and the presence of a social worker in all the work groups was a token acknowledgement of this, as explained by the social worker attached to the OT group:

"... It's essentially liaison between the OT group and the Intake team to pick up, I mean, if there was an area where social work rather than OT, straight OT work looked to be necessary I would then communicate that back to the Intake team. So it's really a recognition of the need to be more involved with the physically handicapped, that the social needs are as important or more important a lot of times than the physical handicap, and that's why I'm there ..."

But although social workers maintained a claim on low status groups, their degree of involvement with them was minimal. An interesting feature of the rationalisations used by social workers (and this applied to both teams) to explain their non-involvement with these groups, was that they found it unnecessary on the whole to call on professional norms, but rather expressed personal preference. The selection of quotes below is representative of a large majority of social workers interviewed:

"... why am I not too keen on working with the elderly? I've found that they, they put you in the role of a young boy, something I'm not too keen on ..."

"... particularly the elderly, can make you think, 'Gosh, am I going to be like that in so many years?' And that's one of the things that put people off. Yes, there's a lot of that I've heard being said. And for the physically handicapped too I suppose they remind you of what could happen to you ..."
"... we don't all experience handicap in our private lives, you know... some of us don't even experience a problem with elderly, but we are all in a family situation ..."

At Lakeside, where decisions were made for the teams not to become involved where the family was seen as the unit of need, the reason given was on grounds of the team's having no formal or statutory responsibility to intervene, but not on grounds of personal preference. At Hilltown, such decisions were made on grounds of professional assessment. Why was it not found necessary in either team to call upon professional norms to explain non-involvement with low status clients? I suggest that because the image of the client in terms of a family ideology was held by all the social workers as the key client group, and work with families as the core of professional social work, any expression of preference not to work with them would have been tantamount to a denial of one's professional identity. At the same time, expression of preference not to work with the elderly and physically handicapped for example, implied that there was a potential for the application of professional skills to those groups, but an explicit admission of this held the danger of professional staff being inundated with work. As a result of all this the workload in both teams was managed, unqualified staff and volunteers shared the workload of clients, but in a way that did not challenge professional status and was therefore relatively powerless, and the professionals themselves maintained control of and definition of their work.

In all this we are left with a "chicken and egg" question. Did social workers' ideologies determine the images of client need which appeared in the organisation, or did social workers turn an organisational expedient into a professional opportunity? In the latter case might it be argued that professionalism is the institutionalization of patterns of conduct, dependent on the organisation for its existence, rather than as it was constructed by the social workers, as
an independent, objective state of being? But even if we accept that those social policy documents upon which social work departments were formed, and whose content was profoundly influenced by professional social workers, identified those clients requiring social work skills, we must also ask why, from the range of ideologies which we have already identified (chapter 2), did an image of the family gain prestige as a unit of social need? After all, Seebohm had called for social work to "attempt to meet all the social needs of the family or individual" (para 516). But again as I discussed in chapter 2, Seebohm was ambiguous in its definition of the family, differentiating between "families" and "others", assuming different "needs" and advocating different forms of intervention. Because of this confusion and Seebohm's emphasis on a unified family service, it is not surprising that the teams here concentrated their professional efforts on the image of the nuclear family. The diagram below traces a circular movement among policy documents, organisation and professionalism, a movement which may be seen both as clockwise and as anti-clockwise.

If one considers the diagram in relation to images of clients it may be said that the images which appear in social policy documents are used selectively to determine organisational structure, which in turn allows for the development of a professional identity among social workers, which in its turn influences future policy documents, and is influenced by them.

The point being made is that the relationship between the organisation and professional identity is one of interdependence, and images of clients, rather than conveying the "objective"
needs of clients, is a tool of negotiation in achieving the balance between them. But by locating the source of need within the client, the judgment as to the source of need, and about need itself, is obscured. By regarding "need" as demonstrably clear, an objective "fact", that part of the phenomenon of need is obscured which concerns its negotiability, its political aspect. Becker in describing deviance, expresses this succinctly:

"... social groups create deviance by making the rules whose infraction constitutes deviance, and by applying those rules to particular people, and labeling them as outsiders. From this point of view deviance is not a quality of the act the person commits, but rather a consequence of the application by others of rules and sanctions to an "offender". The deviant is one to whom that label has successfully been applied; deviant behaviour is behaviour that people so label" (Becker 1963, page 9).

Because need is presented to us as an objective facticity we are prevented from seeing that its definition, as expressed in policy documents is socially determined and that part of the process of its management involves bargaining, compromise and modification among those influential in enforcing the definitions.

The virtual absence of a "community" dimension in images of clients is an indication that such an ideology was not a crucial element in the construction of a professional identity, as was for example a family dimension. Again there was no statutory obligation towards the community as such (though Seebohm exhorted "involvement" of the community) as there was in the way teams made use of an individual ideology of need. In other words, there was no pragmatic outcome from the inclusion of a community ideology, and it was therefore lost as a legitimate focus for social work intervention. This is important in the light of the Barclay Committee's recommendations, and I shall return to it in the conclusion.

VOLUNTEERS: Both current and ex-volunteers adopted an
individual ideology in relation to their own intervention in client need and while they acknowledged the family as a unit of need, seldom saw family work as appropriate for volunteers. But there were differences in the two groups of volunteers in terms of the images which they projected as an expression of their ideology of the individual as a unit of social need. For example, in discussing those client groups thought to be most suitable for volunteers to work with, current volunteers mentioned the elderly, the physically handicapped and families (ie: individual family members such as "children" or "single parents"). But the ex-volunteers widened the repertoire and were far more likely than the current volunteers to include, as well as the elderly, offenders and victims of domestic violence as suitable groups for volunteer involvement. Compare the opinions of current and ex-volunteers as quoted below:

Current volunteer: "...Volunteers might do damage, for example where there's a violent husband. A volunteer might make things worse ..."

Ex-volunteer : "...there's that much of (wife battering). It's quite normal, it's just a different way of life ... it's just a matter of talking to somebody, just speaking about it can help a lot ..."

Current volunteer: "...with children, young offenders or that, you have to be very careful, you know, you've got to be very experienced to handle that sort of thing, that's why I wouldn't really leap up and volunteer to do that. You've got to be very tough, I mean you cannot just put anybody in with somebody that's going about beating up old ladies and that ..."

Ex-volunteer : "...if it's child abuse, mental illness or offenders, it depends entirely on the experience of the volunteers and on their attitude..."

CURRENT VOLUNTEERS: It is interesting that current volunteers were in agreement with social workers as to the most appropriate client groups with whom they might work, especially since there was evidence that they did in fact
become involved in situations of domestic violence or where offences had been committed. The difference between the projected image and the reality was that the label of "battered wife" or "offender" was not attached to the cases, so they were not construed as such by the volunteers. For example Laura was a volunteer befriending three children in a two parent family which had a number of social problems. Throughout the interview she repeated that she "did not get involved in the family's problems" yet she described several occasions when she had found herself in the position of having to take action to resolve family difficulties. Here she describes one occasion:

"... it was one night the young girl Elaine, her uncle was babysitting and the parents were out, and she must have been annoying him and he had hit her on the head and she was crying her eyes out and wouldn't go back in the house, and things like that, so I took her in again and got her parents round because I knew where they were. The father came quite readily with me, there wasn't any problem at all. We came back to the house and sorted it out. But I phoned (the social worker) and told her about that. I think probably it was as much Elaine's fault as her uncle's fault. I think she had been annoying him and then he got angry and walloped her and, you know, she got a bit frightened ..."

Jack was dealing with a case which had been designated "elderly", but here is one of his experiences with the old man he visited:

"... when we were at the stage when we were going to take him into a home, he, I was sitting with him this afternoon when (the social worker) came in, and I had to stop him. He chased the social worker and, you know, he had an axe, one of they woodcutters and he was behind the door and he was going to use that on the social worker ..."

So although volunteers were engaged with family work, offenders and domestic violence, neither was there any public acknowledgement of this by the Hilltown team nor did the volunteers themselves acknowledge such involvement, instead confirming an image of their clients which implied unskilled work with the instrumental needs of low status clients. I said earlier that in the Elderly group the focus was almost entirely on
the material needs of individual elderly clients and seldom were cases presented as complex or requiring any degree of skill. The reality thus constructed was never challenged and when it was pointed out to volunteers that perhaps some of the interpersonal work they undertook exhibited a fair degree of skill they tended to trivialise and play down their contribution as did Laura as we saw above, who "didn't get involved in the family's problems". In this way current volunteers contributed to the legitimation of the organisational structure, to the unproblematic flow of work and to the maintenance of the social workers' professional identity. They found it possible (and indeed necessary, for their own survival within the agency) to select those activities which they undertook with their clients, which sustained an ideology of the individual as the unit of need, and of that need as requiring minimal skill in its resolution.

EX-VOLUNTEERS: I suggested in chapter 5 that many of the ex-volunteers' perceptions did not equate with those held by the teams and that this may have contributed to their dropping out of the volunteers' project. They had not been socialised into the team's norms as had current volunteers and were external to the persuasive techniques which characterised the Hilltown team. They were therefore able to hold a wider repertoire of images of clients. Also in chapter 5 I observed that ex-volunteers fell into three categories, with equal numbers in each category, non-operators, unsuccessful operators and successful operators. There were differences among them which it is useful to examine. The non-operators and the satisfactory operators both held a wide range of images of clients, all in terms of an ideology of the individual as the unit of need. Both groups also listed very few negative images of clients, that is clients with whom they would not wish to work. Interestingly their list of positive images included mainly high status clients such as families, offenders, the mentally ill and victims of domestic abuse. The satisfactory operators said they had been quite
firm in communicating their preferences to the social work department, had been persistent in their requests, had been highly motivated to operate, and had eventually been allocated work which they deemed satisfactory. Nearly all of them went on to do social work training. The non-operators were unable to sustain their images of clients in the face of images projected by their training. Some of them said they were discouraged that there was no input on for example the mentally handicapped or offenders, and those who were offered cases (and not all were) said they had requested for instance, a mentally ill client and were offered an elderly person. Of course it may be that some of the non-operators used these stereotyped images of clients to rationalise their non-involvement. On the other hand we have already seen how such typifications were employed within the team to legitimate a division of work. Such legitimations also operated to keep out all but the brave and the strong amongst the volunteers.

In the light of this it is not surprising to learn that the unsatisfactory (and unsatisfied) operators had very vague images of clients. They were all able to offer long lists of what they were not prepared to undertake (and nearly all mentioned the elderly, the most likely client group to be offered them), but there were few indications of what might be acceptable. The distinctive feature of this group was that they were in the main "therapy seekers" (though therapy seekers were not absent from the other two groups) and at the time of the interview did not recall any positive images of clients which had attracted them to voluntary work in the first place. What is worth noting is that in spite of their vagueness, these were a group who were offered work and who embarked on it, only to withdraw, while those who held a wide repertoire of positive images of clients became non-operators. Admittedly there may have been a variety of personal reasons why the non-operators never got started, but it is worth making the point that a system which had become habitualized and therefore inflexible, offering a narrow
repertoire of images of clients, acted as a deterrent to a group of potential volunteers who might have made a worthwhile contribution to the agency, and paved the way for the inclusion and subsequent ejaculation of a group with perhaps less potential. At the same time however, the internal world of the team was maintained by the exclusion of the non-operators with their wide repertoire of images which might have impinged on social workers' territory, and the professional identity preserved by the fact of the "drop-out" of the unsatisfactory operators.

To sum up, it is not surprising that at Lakeside an individual ideology of the unit of need predominated. Its concern with efficient functioning and speedy processing of court and children's hearing reports or assessments for residential care for the elderly, made an individual ideology the obvious choice. A family ideology implied more time-consuming, messy and importantly, unpredictable work. The more narrow the choice of alternatives, the greater is the reduction in uncertainty and ambiguity, (Cicourel 1973, page 38). At the same time, as we considered in the last chapter, the operationalisation of the procedural knowledge associated with a fast workflow is inadequate for the construction of a satisfactory professional image. By employing a family ideology as the unit of need, Lakeside were able not only to define themselves as "experts" but also to evade uncomfortable questions as to why a lay-person would be unable to do their job.

At Hilltown, by a clear association between the administrative structure and socially relevant attributes of clients (such as age, social location in a family or whatever, physical handicap, etc) staff were able to discover where their efforts should be directed. The organisation, in the words of Blau and Scott (1962, pages 36-37), limited their scope of decisions and therefore rationalised their work by allowing them to designate clients according to ideologies of the unit of need. As Schutz reminded us, typification involves other typifi-
cations (1964, page 49), and so for social workers it became "obvious" that, for example, the elderly were suitable for volunteer intervention and families needed professional intervention. What was taking place was a social process in which volunteers had no part in the negotiations, and in which the conduct of the actors must be seen against a background of the contextual relevance of the normative rules of the area teams.

THE CAUSES OF NEED

I have classified the ideologies which appeared among the respondents concerned with the causes of need as relating to psychodynamic, (emotional functioning) systemic (interdependence of the individual and her/his environment*), material (material resources), moral character (inherent 'goodness' and 'badness'), structural (located in society) and organic (fundamental biological state) factors. Ideologies of psychodynamic, material and moral character causes of need were used far more often than the others. A systemic ideology appeared only at Hilltown, and only among the ex-volunteers did an organic ideology appear at all. At Hilltown an ideology of moral character was excluded from the repertoire and at Lakeside a psychodynamic ideology appeared hardly at all in public though it was used privately by social workers. A similar feature of both teams was the way in which ideologies about the causes of need were used to control and restrict workloads of social workers. At Lakeside, because there was a heavy emphasis on the material causes of need, intake was restricted by calling on an ideology of moral character which excluded certain clients as "undeserving". At Hilltown on the other hand the professionals were concerned with the systemic and psychodynamic causes of need, and restricted their caseloads by a

* I have based this classification on the work of systems theorists such as for example MILLER & GWYNNE (1972).
rigid division of client groups and by attributing to some of them material causes of need.

At Hilltown there was no necessity to adopt moral character as a cause of need since the workload was controlled by other means. In other words, the stereotyped images which were constructed by both teams, although used in different ways, had a pragmatic outcome, that of limiting and channeling work through the offices. I shall consider the teams individually in greater detail.

Ideologies of the causes of need in practice

LAKESIDE: The widespread use of an ideology which held an image of the moral character of clients as the cause of need was characterised by a negative view of clients. Moral character never appeared as a positive reason for intervening in social situations (such as that the client "deserved" help), but was used entirely to achieve negative goals. The outcome of the employment of such an image can be viewed on at least three dimensions, those of (i) providing a justification for "punishment"; (ii) towards the withholding of services; and (iii) as a rationalisation of "failure".

The notion of "punishment" as "treatment" can of course be traced back to policy documents such as Kilbrandon, as we noted in chapter 2 (pages 81-83). Other authors such as Smith (1977) and Asquith (1983) have discussed it in the context of the Scottish Children's Panel system. Here I draw attention merely to one outcome of ambiguity in Kilbrandon, that is that the interpretive procedures developed at Lakeside, for example, provided prescriptions for action which, although inconsistent with much of the spirit of Kilbrandon, can also be traced back to that Report for their justification.

At Lakeside, moral character as a justification for "punishment" appeared mainly as recommendations in reports for court, or as an endorsement of the activities of other
agencies in cases of, for example, eviction or disconnection of fuel supplies. The following examples illustrate this:

(A request for an SER came up for a man known to Mike). Mike said, 'Oh good, I've been looking forward to doing that.' Hilda said, 'why, are you going to say something nasty?' Mike replied, 'Well, it won't be an optimistic report. This boy has been on the loose for a long time and has done a lot of damage to other people's property.' Hilda said, 'we don't often get people like that, thank goodness.'

A client had fallen into arrears with payment of her electricity bills, and had been notified the supply was to be disconnected. The senior social worker said 'She has spent the money she had to offer towards the arrears. Tell her we're not bailing her out again'. The social worker replied, 'Oh good, I'll tell her'.

But punishment was not always viewed as a final resort in the Lakeside team and first time referrals were often dealt with by a reluctance to investigate, rationalised by comments such as "rent arrears is the result of bad management or of no management" and "the housing manager must have felt this family needed a salutary experience so is going ahead with the eviction". This was an effective neutralising technique which avoided the necessity for action by seeing the "punishment" as just retribution for the client's deficiencies of character.

Moral character as justification for "punishment" was closely allied to the employment of this image towards the withholding of services. Comments about "deliberate manipulation" and "inadequacy" of clients often were enough to end discussion about cases and to lead to a "no further action" decision. Here a social worker explains why she did not offer financial help to a family:

"I think that people come to expect that if they go to a social work department they will have a magical answer ... it's difficult putting the responsibility back to people ... it's amazing how many people think it's up to the state to provide. They seem to think that if they run short it's anybody's fault but their own."
The following advice was given by one social worker to another in discussion of a case:

"You'll have to tell her the only basis on which you'll work with her is that she's truthful about all her debts".

As I said earlier the main thrust of this team's activities was towards restricting caseloads and controlling the flow of work through the office. An ideology of moral character as a cause of need was operationalised more often to this end than as a justification for "punishment", though the end result was also a "punishment" in the sense of withholding services. The third dimension of the use of this image was to rationalise "failure" in some cases. Here a social worker explains why an adoption placement broke down:

"... it's very sad but I think the fault lies with the foster parents. The adopters are OK because (their social worker) has done a lot of good work, also (a private adoption agency) placed a child with them before, and they work to a very high standard. So the adopters are alright, and we know the kind of work that (the child's social worker) does, so it must be the foster parents' fault. They've been giving mixed messages to the adopters who've never seen the child alone ..."

The above example illustrates the team's urge to seek "cause and effect" explanations and to allocate blame, always in a way which justified the team's activities, and sustained a "professionalism" which was synonymous with unerring judgement. In addition it served to avoid considering complexities in cases which might have led to the possibility of other causes of need, centring for example on a psychodynamic ideology, one which remained of limited use in the team's repertoire.

Moral character as an ideology of the cause of need in the process of decision-making is not peculiar to Lakeside area team. Rees (1978) and Smith (1980) both pointed to this phenomenon in social work, and studies of other professions have produced similar evidence. Sudnow for example found that the perceived moral character of some patients in
hospital was a factor towards a decision as to whether an effort was made to attempt revival when clinical signs of death were detected (Sudnow 1967, page 103). Becker described deviance as a "master status", where a trait labelled deviant may have a generalised symbolic value so that it is automatically assumed that its bearer possesses other undesirable traits allegedly associated with it (Becker 1963, page 33). Cicourel underlined the arbitrariness of police officers' decision-making in labelling an act or a person "delinquent", arguing that the reasoning contains "many jumps, leaps, imaginative filling-in of what could have happened ... and continual retrospective interpretive readings ... so the member can settle the business at hand and move on to something else" (Cicourel 1968, page 165).

What all these quotations reveal is the amount of discretion allowed to officials and professionals in their day-to-day work and the contextual nature of their decisions. Rees warned of course that sometimes it is difficult to discern social workers' moral character calculations, since their performance is often constrained by other factors (such as their knowledge of resources, their assumptions of appropriate roles for trained staff and pressures from other agencies), which were often intertwined with their use of value judgements and difficult to disentangle from them (Rees, page 111). What concerns us here are the consequences for social work and for clients when individuals are in a position to apply their own notions of morality to their clients' behaviour and have power to withhold services from them.

As Smith observed, an ideology of moral character depicts a social work organisation as an agent of social control and moral reform (Smith 1980, page 109). Their action in operationalising a moral character ideology brings the professionals' actions into direct conflict with social work principles such as that of "self-determination", and value judgements about clients violate the principle of "acceptance". But as Becker pointed out, and as we have seen,
values are poor guides to action (Becker 1963, page 130). Becker argued that, (i) we find it difficult to relate the generalities of a value statement to the complex and specific demands of everyday situations; (ii) it is possible for us to hold conflicting values without being aware of the conflict. Becker continued:

"since values can furnish only a general guide to action and are not useful in deciding on courses of action in concrete situations, people develop specific rules more closely tied to the realities of everyday life ... the rule framed to be consistent with the value states with relative precision which actions are approved and which forbidden, the situations to which the rule is applicable, and the sanctions attached to breaking it" (page 131).

Although social workers at Lakeside held values embodying concepts such as "acceptance" and "self-determination" of clients, they also held values embodying images of themselves as gatekeepers and guardians of the public purse, pressures of their work situation, which perhaps are consistent with their use of a moral character ideology. In any case, consistent application of a material ideology or a psychodynamic ideology would potentially place unmanageable demand on both the material and the personal resources available to social workers. An ideology of moral character as a cause of need provided a very convenient and effective check to such an occurrence.

As far as a psychodynamic ideology was concerned, it appeared almost exclusively in private among the social workers at Lakeside, and was closely associated with an ideology of the family as the unit of need. Although a psychodynamic ideology and that of moral character as causes of need appear to be incompatible, the social workers were able to find ways

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*I am aware that there are varying definitions of "value". I have taken that proposed by Talcott Parsons: "An element of a shared symbolic system which serves as a criterion or standard for selection among the alternatives of orientation which are intrinsically open in a situation may be called a value" (Parsons 1951, page 12)
of rationalising what happened in practice. Here one of the senior social workers explains her view of things:

"... I don't find it easy to spend money and the team know that if they want to spend money for a client they've got to have worked the case out ... I think money is a tool and that unless alleviating the problem just now is going to relieve pressures on relationships that they can then work to a longer term comfort in the family or whatever, then I don't think it would be solved ..."

This approach rather than seeing the financial need as evidence of moral inadequacy, views it as the "presenting problem" and the focus of intervention becomes relationships within the family. This is consistent with our discovery in the last chapter that although social workers at Lakeside used procedural knowledge in their day-to-day work, privately they saw theoretic knowledge and commensurate skills as predominant in what they viewed as their most characteristic activity as professional people, that of working with relationships. A psychodynamic ideology of the causes of need is compatible with this attitude, and towards the construction of their professional identity.

A material ideology in practical terms was the most "inclusive" in that it allowed the team to accept and deal with cases which were presented to them and which did not have statutory constraints. Prominent among referrals to which such an ideology was applied were the elderly, and this client group was unlikely to be seen in terms of moral character or psychodynamic images.

It is possible again to see the interactive process between organisation and professional identity in all of this and to detect a certain consistency in the patterns which emerged. For example, in this team the elderly were regarded as of low status as a means towards the most enhanced professional self-image but they were high status towards the efficient processing of work because the cause of their need was viewed in terms of a material ideology and therefore non-complex and economic of staff time. Families on the other hand were
regarded as high status towards the construction of a professional identity and the application of a psychodynamic ideology to them confirmed the need for formal theoretic knowledge and skills, but such an image rendered them uneconomic as a unit of intervention in terms of organisational need for efficiency and speedy processing of cases. The existence of an ideology of moral character was powerful towards confirming the potential application of professional knowledge and skills to a wide range of client groups, while controlling the demand by allowing for a justification of "punishment" rather than "treatment" and for the withholding of services to certain clients.

HILLTOWN: In our consideration of the Lakeside team, one may be tempted to dub the area office as "judgemental" or "condemning", but such an approach is in danger of missing the point. If, rather than taking a pejorative view of the Lakeside team's use of ideologies of causes of need, we regard it as a technique to process and deal with work and towards the sustaining of a professional self-image, we are in a better position to examine Hilltown's ideologies of the causes of need. For although an ideology of moral character as a cause of client need did not appear overtly at Hilltown, the ways in which the social workers employed controlling, restricting and legitimating techniques implied a subjectively "evaluative" approach which was objectified and used to exclude clients and withhold certain services, as was the case at Lakeside.

Before I discuss the general ideological divisions at Hilltown it is useful to reflect that although this team did not permit the use of moral character as a cause of need in terms of clients, the reader will recall that moral character was employed as a technique to exclude volunteers from involvement with social worker cases. In other words, an ideology of moral character was employed to typify volunteers as being concerned with clients' moral character! Not only so, but this was used as a justification for disallowing volunteers
contact with clients. This instant recipe regarding volunteers may have been in conflict with other constructs in the daily existence of social workers but it was effective in accomplishing their intentions which were to explain the absence of volunteers, in a subjectively satisfactory manner. Several writers have observed that rules governing behaviour are negotiable. Strauss et al noted that most rules "can be stretched, negotiated, argued, ignored or applied at convenient moments" (Strauss 1964, page 314). I referred in an earlier chapter to Cicourel's use of the term "surface rules" to describe prescriptive and proscriptive norms which advise the actor about "an infinite collection of behavioural displays and provide him with a sense of social structure" (Cicourel 1973, page 51). Becker's comment is particularly apt:­

"Because a rule may satisfy one interest and yet conflict with other interests of the group making it, care is usually taken in framing a rule to insure that it will accomplish only what it is supposed to and no more" (Becker 1983, page 132).

Social workers' use of a moral character ideology regarding volunteers is one example of how, in an environment of ambiguity they were able to render the typical "homogeneous and non-problematical", and therefore taken for granted in their everyday activities.

The administrative division of work in Hilltown also supported the shared assumptions of the staff. By considering these divisions among the Elderly, OT, Long-term and Intake teams, it becomes possible to trace the general ideological divisions. In the Elderly and OT groups, for instance, the elderly and the physically handicapped were in the main associated with an individual ideology concerning the unit of need, and with a material ideology as to the cause of need, the combination of which legitimated in social workers' terms, low-skilled intervention by unqualified staff and lay persons. In the Intake and Long-term teams clients were associated with a family ideology concerning the unit
of need, and with a systemic ideology as to the cause of need, calling for professional skilled intervention by qualified social workers.

As a result social workers were able to view for example, financial problems of clients in different ways according to their categorisation of the client. Referring to financial problems in a family, a social worker commented, "obviously, you know, most financially-based work relates to relationships, the result of the breakdown of relationships ...", and to an elderly woman with debts, "to what extent is this a priority since she's elderly, and living with her daughter? I reckon the daughter's family should be able to help out ..." This view which on the one hand regarded material need as the "presenting problem" and on the other regarded material need as the major problem, served to commit social worker intervention to the former but legitimated its withholding from the latter, since social work knowledge and skills (ie: formal theoretic knowledge and commensurate skills) were associated with a systemic ideology of the cause of need.

This pattern was evident throughout the agency, and as a result the Elderly group dwelt almost entirely on the material needs of clients. The following excerpt from my fieldnotes depicts a typical "reporting-back" session in the Elderly group:

Volunteer 1 : "Mrs S has had her rewiring done at last and all her electric appliances are in order ..."
"Mr D is OK but he's fed up with meals-on-wheels. He's cooking for himself ..."
"Mr N was a vagrant but has now been housed. He's happy but has only one cup, teapot and a saucepan. Should I contact WRVS?"
"Mr A is fine, he needs clothes. I haven't managed to get any yet, but I'll keep trying and I will ..."

Volunteer 2 : "I sat in this morning with Mrs P while her
daughter went shopping ... her tongue was all ulcerated and the doctor has stopped the tablets ..."

"I visit Mr M who has settled in fine in the old people's home. He didn't come out for a walk today ..."

It is interesting to note that attempts were made in the Elderly group to introduce an ideology of the moral character of clients, but these were effectively quoshed. Each time the initiator was the home-help organiser (HHO), and both the social worker and volunteers moved to exclude such an ideology as a legitimate image of client need. The following short illustrations demonstrate this:

A volunteer reported that Mr Y was drinking a lot and taking sleeping pills:
HHO: "He's a right booser".
VOLUNTEER: "If he sleeps a lot at least he's not getting the booze".
SOCIAL WORKER: "I suppose it's his way of escaping from things".

Another volunteer reported that Mr K stayed in bed until one o'clock and suggested that was why the home-help couldn't get in:
HHO: "He's a lazy sod. The home-help has stopped going, that's the end of the story as far as we're concerned. He's had three chances and he's getting no more".
VOLUNTEER: "That's fair enough, but he's still vulnerable. When I went in the pan was on the cooker and it was full of fat. That worried me a bit. He can't really cope on his own".

A volunteer reported that an old woman had been admitted to hospital:
VOLUNTEER: "Will she be in that ward till a permanent place is found for her? She doesn't know".
SOCIAL WORKER: "I wish they'd tell her".
VOLUNTEER: "She doesn't like the treatment she's getting".
HHO: "She's just a difficult old woman. Who is she at 90-odd to complain about the treatment she's getting".
VOLUNTEER: "She doesn't fit into the routine".
SOCIAL WORKER: "Good for her".
VOLUNTEER: "Yes, why should she fit into the routine just to suit everyone else?"

The HHO had said privately that she was concerned about cutbacks in the home-help service and had anxieties about the role of volunteers, who she felt were usurping the work of the home-helps. She had concerns about their accountability and felt she was losing her grip on territory she claimed as hers, that is the work with the elderly. She did have some power in the team in that she decided on home-help placements and did exercise her discretion to withdraw or withhold the service. But the presence of volunteers undermined the effectiveness of such action, because volunteers continued to visit the same clients. The HHO's appeals to a moral character ideology were not admissible as a legitimate means of negotiation (notice how the volunteers understood the normative rules), and the HHO continued to be a disgruntled and frustrated member of the organisation.

This illustrates that an ideology of moral character as the cause of need had no bargaining power at Hilltown and in the Elderly group a view of material causes of need appeared both to fulfil the demands of the organisation to offer a service to the elderly and to be sufficient to allow the volunteers a satisfactory rationalisation of their intervention.

The administrative structure protected the social workers from being inundated with work because although they maintained an ideology of psychodynamic or of systemic causes of need in relation to all clients (which as Smith showed had ambiguous implications in that almost any problem could be seen as indicative of an underlying need; Smith 1980, page 108), the systematic sifting of elderly and OT cases and the routine processing of statutory cases avoided this possibility. The division of work groups in this way may be one reason why an ideology of moral character was not necessary. What was interesting among the various work
groups was that a psychodynamic ideology as to causes of need was associated mainly with an individual ideology as to the unit of need, and was seen to require "counselling". A systemic ideology was always associated with families who were seen to require family therapy, and always appeared among the professional social workers.

The teams of professionals stressed a systemic ideology particularly in public discussion and saw such an approach as the main thrust of their work with families. There have been several examples of its operationalisation already, particularly concerning the shift the social workers were able to make in moving from a frame of reference which centred on the "external" world of certain clients, to one which centred on the "internal" world of those clients with whom the professionals involved themselves. For them a systemic ideology of the causes of need saw school absenteeism as related to fights between parents, financial problems as related to family relationships, glue sniffing to family dysfunction, and so forth. But although a systemic ideology was projected as describing one of the main client images employed by the professionals, there was also a highly routinised employment of an ideology of material causes of need. This is indicated by the use of "standard letters" to deal with notifications of debt by the various fuel boards and the housing authority. These letters were issued by the team in a way which implied that if the client wished a social worker to intervene on her/his behalf she/he should contact the department, and it was expected by the team that the intervention would be limited to negotiating with the authority concerned. One incident serves to demonstrate this. Four referrals came to the Intake team concerning gas and electricity debts. In three of them the team agreed without discussion to send standard letters. The fourth case was already known to a member of staff who recommended that a home visit be made, because the financial problem was "the tip of the iceberg" and that there were other family problems. Now, according to a systemic
ideology, all four cases would have been treated similarly but the fact that one of these was treated as an exception confirmed that the others were seen as concerned with a material ideology. But this departure from routine procedures was treated as an "exception" and did not represent any change in the practice of regarding financial referrals as related to material causes of need. The assumptions which dictated the practice were never questioned, only "particular mundane existents" within the commonsense world. (Schutz 1966). The general belief continued to be held, neither doubted not questioned, but taken for granted, allowing for maneuverability on details without threatening the world of the team itself.

Indicentally, I would like at this point to refer to Rees' comments about what he called a "service ideology" (similar to my ideology of material causes of need). Rees observed that typical of cases which reflected the service ideology were those involving old people and the disabled. He went on, "inexperienced social workers considered that aged people only required ... a straightforward service" (Rees 1978, page 56, my emphasis). This quote from Rees implies that the author anticipated that these social workers would change their views of the elderly as they become more experienced. Rees did not acknowledge here the institutionalized nature of these attitudes, which allowed for decisions to be made not only on the basis of acceptability but more likely, of habit, on the grounds of what social workers assumed to be known in common and taken for granted about the elderly in their everyday activities. The basic normative order at Hilltown allowed for social workers' constructs of images of client need to be used throughout the agency to facilitate the passage of work and to confirm social workers' self-identity. One outcome was very similar to that at Lakeside in that ideologies of the causes of need were used to legitimate the withholding of a professional service to certain clients at certain times. The point is not the nature of the ideologies used, but their effect. At Lakeside an ideology of moral
character was used to exclude certain families from social work help, and at Hilltown a systemic ideology excluded groups such as the elderly and physically handicapped from social work help. Both were equally restrictive in their operationalisation. By labelling the unit of need and the causes of need, staff in both teams were able to place a frame of interpretation (Sudnow 1967, page 66) round a person which entailed certain concrete activities in relation to them. One's age, social location (ie: whether or not one was a member of a "family"), one's perceived moral character, were all factors towards a professional accomplishment of social need. Examined in its contextual dimension we see not only variations in this usage, but as Smith noted, the emergence of a pattern of usage related to practical day to day problems faced by agency personnel in accomplishing the task of client management (Smith 1980, page 110).

VOLUNTEERS: Among the volunteers those ideologies of the causes of need which were most frequently called on concerned psychodynamic, material and moral character factors. There were however, differences not only between current and ex-volunteers, but within these classifications which it is useful to consider.

Current Volunteers
In considering ideologies as to the unit of need I said earlier that current volunteers held an image of their clients which embodied an ideology of the individual as the unit of need whether or not they were involved with families. It will not come as a surprise that they were also concerned with an ideology of material causes of need. However there were some differences among them, and I have found it useful to examine their perceptions by looking separately at those current volunteers who attended meetings in the area office (mainly through the Elderly group) and those who were external to the office, seldom if ever appearing there in
person. The "office" volunteers were consistent in their view of the causes of need as relating to material factors, both in public at the Elderly group as we saw earlier in the chapter, and privately in individual interviews. The "external" volunteers, although also concerned with a material ideology as the cause of need, were in addition able to allow for both psychodynamic and moral character causes of need. Gavin is an example of volunteers who perceived the "internal" needs of clients:

"(Social workers) solve the immediate problem - the immediate problem is, needs a home, or needs a home-help, that's solved, then out, it's hit tactics ... you give them what you want them to get ... the mentally handicapped for example need to be regarded as human beings with needs and desires and frustrations, and trying to come to some sort of terms with them ... with adult handicapped, several problems, they're phenominal, but they're very much under the counter ... you would really need to get them all into some sort of hostel accommodation where you could slowly allow them themselves to bring up their own sexuality. They're almost in asexuality ... There are a few mentally handicapped who are married, but again, it's married, it's formalised, if you like. Its frowned upon if they have any relationships outside marriage, yet in this they're just like ordinary people ..."

Moira felt able to employ an ideology of moral character as the cause of need:

"There's a very disturbed family over here and a social worker goes in but does absolutely nothing. The parents spend £100 on drink, the kids lie in a room where windows are broken and the fire is dangerous. Social workers are frightened to take any action. Volunteers are different, they would tell this family what to do, or take other action, and face any repercussions."

These "external" volunteers held a subjective identity which was not dependent on relationships within the organisation, and their self-apprehensions as volunteers were located among significant others who were not associated with the world of the area team. Therefore they were in a position to hold a range of ideologies of the causes of need. For the "office" volunteers, on the other hand, a "correct"
subjective identity as volunteers within the team required them to see the needs of their (elderly) clients as material and instrumental. Their socialisation into the team confirmed for them that an ideology of moral character as a cause of need was unacceptable, and an ideology of psychodynamic causes of need was not their domain. In order to continue their existence as volunteers attached to the Hilltown team, they were required to accept the team's culture and to legitimate their own oppression by adopting ideologies which confirmed their peripheral and minimal contribution.

Ex-volunteers
With regard to ex-volunteers, again there were differences among the satisfactory operators, the unsatisfactory operators and the non-operators. Earlier we observed that the satisfactory operators and the non-operators, while holding an individual ideology as to the unit of social need, also held images of those clients with whom they would wish to work, as high status groups such as families, offenders, the mentally ill and victims of domestic abuse. This similarity between these two groups of ex-volunteers was not carried through to their ideologies as to the causes of social need.

The satisfactory operators all emphasised a material ideology and only once did a psychodynamic ideology appear among them. This is curious in the light of the fact that a majority of them were undertaking social work training at the time they were interviewed. An examination of the transcripts revealed that their images of social workers was of their providing material help. "I think the client sees the social worker as what they can provide in practical terms. I don't think they think of the social worker as a counsellor". This may reflect the kind of professional training they were undergoing, which would be confirmed or modified by their experience as qualified social workers in an area team.

The interesting aspect for our present purposes is that this group of ex-volunteers who had operated satisfactorily and
had pushed for and were allowed to work with high status clients, did not also see themselves as having carried out high status work with those clients, work which would have involved adopting a psychodynamic or systemic ideology of the causes of need. This is consistent with our discovery in chapter 5 that within the Hilltown team there never appeared in public an image of volunteers which allowed for their carrying out high status work with high status clients, but here we see that even retrospectively, ex-volunteers were unable to adopt such an image. It is tempting to conclude that these prospective social workers had some personal investment in perceiving qualitative differences between professionals and volunteers, but this did not appear to be the case, as here Sylvia comments:

"... training (for social workers) leads to commitment to their clients, more so than a volunteer has ... I don't think much of the theoretical side. Students are far more likely to read all kinds of things into situations which are a bit airy fairy instead of seeing their clients as normal people. The other difference is that social workers work for an authority and have to be in touch and get to know other authorities and also about the various administrative procedures".

Perhaps one explanation was, rather than these volunteers having been persuaded by a socialisation process that the voluntary work which they were undertaking was that which was suited to volunteers, the meaning of the work for them was as a kind of apprenticeship to social work, and this was the reason for their satisfactory operation. In this case, one must ask whether they were led to this conclusion by their observations that the area office, whether or not working with high status clients, adopted in practice an ideology which centred on material causes of social need, rather than as the public rhetoric suggested, the more prestigious (in their terms) ideologies of psychodynamic or systemic causes of need.

The non-operators who on the unit of need had been similar to the satisfactory operators in that they held an individual
ideology of client need and included high status client
groups among those with whom they would like to work, held
a wider range of ideologies of the causes of client need,
which as well as material, included moral character, structural
and organic. The structural and organic ideologies were
referred to by only one person each. The structural was
in the context of government policy on unemployment, with a
conclusion that "you can't really do anything for those
people anyway because their problem is poverty", and may have
been offered as a justification for the volunteer's not having
operated. The organic ideology was offered in the context
of the mentally handicapped, and by a woman who had gone on
to train as a nurse and was working in a hospital for the
mentally handicapped. She suggested that volunteers would
find difficulty in working with this group because of the
unlikelihood of improvement, "it doesn't have much in the
way of rewards, nothing that looks good on paper..."

What was most interesting about the non-operators was the
way they used an ideology of moral character as the cause
of need. Apart from material causes of need, moral
character was referred to most often by this group. But it
was used, not as a judgement on clients of the social work
department, but rather as a criticism of social workers.

Two examples illustrate this:

Vicky: "... to be honest I didn't have the confidence to go
ahead with it... I was a bit put off by the descrip-
tion the social worker gave me. She said the reason
for this family's problems was that the father had
been in prison and there were six kids... the house
was dirty, one of the kids had been expelled from
school, the whole set-up sounded fairly hairy... another
thing that put me off was the fact that the
social worker said I couldn't bring anyone with me
to visit because it would take a long time to build
up a relationship with the family and they would be
suspicious of anyone else coming in... (the social
worker) believed that the children should stay at
home because that's where their place was and she
said if at any time I felt strongly that the
children should be in care then I must tell her so
that she could withdraw me, because in that case I would no longer be of any use to the family. Well, judging by what (the social worker) said I felt the children should be put in a children's home, so I just couldn't take it on ..."

Angela: "... some people don't like the word 'social worker', the thought that they're going to come and say they're bad parents and take the children ... take social workers who have just left school, gone to university, come out of university and just started going into people's homes that are, you know, really bad - they're just going to be shocked right away ... some social workers - it's just a different way of life altogether ..."

In the above quotations Vicky had been offered work and Angela had not been offered anything. Vicky said she had asked to work with "offenders", but the family offered, although it included someone who could be labelled "offender", did not fit her image of the voluntary work she wanted to do, and the way in which it was presented to her she found frightening and off-putting. Angela also had requested to work with offenders, and felt her background and life-style were such that she would be able to offer support to people in trouble or in poverty. Generally non-operators said they felt bitterly towards social workers for the treatment they had received and an ideology of moral character as a cause of need was used on the one hand to criticize social workers' powers of judgement in their handling of volunteers and of their cases, and on the other hand implied that social workers were "judgemental" and coercive in their dealings with clients. The adoption of those attitudes no doubt provided for the volunteers a nonproblematic legitimacy for their own ideas and actions (Douglas 1970, page 15), but the fact remains that the area office itself remained ignorant of their opinions and were therefore able to rationalise their non-operativeness as evidence of their unsuitability as volunteers.

I said earlier of unsatisfactory operators that they held the individual as the unit of need, that they had vague images
of clients and that they were more certain of what they would not have been prepared to accept as volunteers than what they would have been prepared to accept. The ideologies of the causes of need which appeared among them included material, psychodynamic, moral character and (to a lesser extent) organic. One of the interesting things about this group was that an ideology of moral character was brought to bear in discussion of those clients with whom they had had contact, while they found it possible when generalising about social need, to attribute it to material or psychodynamic causes. Below are some examples of the way's an ideology of moral character was used to explain their non-continuance with clients:

"... The job was a one-parent family. The social worker said the 11-year old boy needed someone to take an interest in him. There was already another male person visiting the home... the mother said the boy needed training shoes, and while we were discussing that I noticed three bottles of whisky beside the chair, and I began to wonder what I was doing there - if this woman can buy three bottles of whisky what's she doing complaining about shoes for the boy for? I felt another family could do with help more than this one who seemed to be drinking their money instead of buying practical things for the children ..."

"... (a women's refuge) ... some people were just using it as a, as a refuge, when I felt there was nothing particularly wrong, and they were abusing the system ... the problems of this kind of work, it's incredible because people do take a loan."

At the same time those ex-volunteers who held an ideology of moral character to justify their withdrawal, advanced for example a psychodynamic ideology when considering other "client groups". Here again is Lila, who was quoted above regarding her experience with battered wives:

"... whatever they're in jail for - doesn't matter - if it's theft or murder, or what, there often is a social problem; because that person has gone off the rails, there often is, em, and a lot of people say they should be punished and I used to think that, I used to have a one-track mind, but now I see that there are problems, social problems that have to be sorted out and I think some of these people are fine people, and they've just never had the chance to flower,"
you know, because the situation they were born into, or their parents, or the way they were treated when they were young, they have absolutely no self-respect ..."

Again, in speaking of the elderly, for example, Lila brought to bear an ideology of material causes of need, such as proper housing and an adequate income.

So for the unsatisfactory operators, as with other groups in the study, ideologies of the causes of need were used to a pragmatic end, that of justifying action taken. Although some of them admitted to feelings of guilt as a result of their withdrawal from the volunteers scheme and conceded that the agency's expectations had been violated, my presence as a researcher called upon them to give account of their behaviour. Their efforts to relieve themselves of the negative interpretation of their intentions resulted in their offering justifications which "asserted the positive qualities of their action in the face of a claim to the contrary" (Scott & Lyman, 1970). In the same way as for example the Lakeside social workers legitimated the withholding of help from certain clients prospectively by drawing on concepts of the "deserving" and "undeserving", so the ex-volunteers offered justification accounts retrospectively. The appearance of such notions should not lead us to conclude that the clients were in fact of weak moral fibre or that the social workers and volunteers were uncompassionate. Rather, if the concepts are viewed as situated objective facticities and legitimation strategies, it appears as less of an inconsistency that the people involved employed other ideologies of the causes of need to different purposes in different contexts.

So by viewing ideologies of the causes of need as constructs to achieve pragmatic ends by a process of typification and objectivation, we can see that the teams at Lakeside and Hilltown legitimated their apparent discrimination against
some clients, and achieved the smooth processing of work, while maintaining and sustaining their professional identity. The volunteers, current and ex-, were able to rationalise and legitimate their activities, or non-activities with clients. In this for all the groups a social identity was preserved intact.

THE APPROPRIATE ASSESSOR OF NEED

In my discussions in chapters 4, 5 and 6 on the team settings on images of volunteers and on professional knowledge and skills, material on the appropriate assessor of need was included, at least where it concerned social worker and volunteer assessments and the negotiations which took place. In this chapter I shall examine ideologies of the appropriate assessor of need more explicitly, but with particular emphasis on the uses made by social workers and current and ex-volunteers of an ideology of the client as the appropriate assessor of need.

The range of ideologies which appeared were those which viewed (a) the social worker, (b) other agencies, (c) the client, (d) the volunteer, and (e) other lay agents as appropriate assessors of client need. A volunteer perspective never appeared at the Lakeside office, and at Hilltown only within the elderly group.

Ideologies of the appropriate assessor of need in practice: As we have seen throughout the study, making decisions in social work, rather than emerging as idiosyncratic responses to apparent client need, is a highly routinized activity and depends on typifications of social work knowledge and skills and of different aspects of client need. The
purposes at hand of the participants have been seen to be a crucial determinant of the construction of need, which meant that different images concerning assessment of need appeared at different times to different purposes and their legitimation had to provide integrative meanings which made objective sense to social workers in their social experience. The part played in the social order of the "appropriate assessor of need" was to create images of clients (and others) which facilitated the work and which made sense of professional activities and practices, as the following descriptions demonstrate.

LAKESIDE: An ideology which predominated at Lakeside in the allocation of cases was that of other agencies or professionals as the assessor of need. These were most likely to be either the courts, or children's panel or a medical practitioner, and referrals were processed routinely. Requests for SERs or hearing reports for example were never questioned by the team and the legal authorities as assessors of need were regarded as unchallengeable, "they're a priority, everything else is dropped to get them done ..." Likewise, requests by general practitioners (GPs) for residential care for the elderly were accepted at face value, and although of lesser priority than court work were allocated unproblematically. This habitualized acceptance of other agencies' definitions of client need ensured efficiency in getting work done, while any threat which there may have been implied to the image of the professional social worker as the assessor of need was dealt with by the assumption among the team that the social worker's judgement as to the suitability of the elderly person for residential care or the appropriate action to be taken in cases where clients were involved with the courts, was likely to be carried in any decision made. One social worker for instance, commented that "the sheriff usually accepts our recommendations, though he might not always agree with them". She went on to quote one sheriff
who was heard to mutter, "I know what I would do with him ..." The implication in this is that the sheriff was powerless to take any action other than that recommended by the "expert" social worker who had produced the report, and its effect was to project the social workers' judgement as paramount.

In other contexts an ideology of other agencies as the appropriate assessor of need was used to restrict and limit the work flowing through the office. We have already noted some ways in which this took place. For example a request from a school that a 16-year old was not attending was met by acceptance of the definition of the need, but led to a decision that "she (the child) has only 6 weeks to go so we're not likely to be able to do anything ..." I have observed elsewhere also, that events such as evictions were dealt with in a way which endorsed the housing manager's action and justified non-action on the part of the professionals. At the same time however, the professional image was maintained by a technique of replacing an other agency ideology with a social worker ideology. The following comments from the team illustrate this:

"... that housing manager would rehouse anyone ..."
"... Child Guidance make weird judgements about situations ...
"... that attendance officer is not at all impressive ..."

Referrals from the lay public (neighbours, friends, etc of clients) were treated similarly in that those who complained of child abuse were "exaggerating" and "jealous". Attempts by the lay public to define client need were the most likely to be answered by an ideology of the client as assessor of need, in comments such as "we can't do anything without the client's permission ..."

An ideology of the client as the assessor of need was used by the Lakeside team in two main ways, to restrict the work-
load and to justify actions taken. Both work restriction and justification were mediated through a construct of client "self-determination", acknowledged to be one of the fundamental values in social work. Interestingly, it appeared most often in private justifications by social workers who said they were concerned "not to be running other people's lives for them", and conscious that they "don't have a right to go in ..." in the event of a disconnection of fuel, for example. They regarded it as inexcusable to impose an "expert" social worker ideology on clients who came defining their own needs, and saw "intervention" as acceptable, but "interference" as inadmissible. At the same time as holding this respect for client freedom, social workers were able to hold images of them which saw them as "inadequate", "bad managers", "needing custody" or a "salutory experience". These latter negative images appeared most often in public debate and as I pointed out earlier in the chapter, legitimated the withholding of services. The value of self-determination was upheld in private discussion on the whole. Perhaps one reason why it was unlikely to appear publicly was because it would have created demands on the services which the social workers were unlikely to be able to meet and on unrestricted admission of clients' determination of their own needs would have put serious stress on the administrative arrangements within the office. Consider an incident in an allocation meeting, as recorded in my fieldnotes:

"A young man had come in to see the duty officer about his father who is aged 60 and has failed to pay his rent and is now faced with eviction. He has £89 of arrears. The duty officer said she had advised the son to see the housing officer, but he had left 'in a huff' because she wasn't giving him the help he wanted, i.e: money to meet the arrears. She phoned the housing officer who said he had contact with this family and commented 'They've got problems, but they just won't work at them'. The duty officer said 'the son was pissed off at me and said the welfare are supposed to help you'. A second social worker said 'That's an old-fashioned idea'. Everyone laughed, and the story of that final comment was told on several
occasions afterwards. No further action."

Here the constraints of the organisation were a major factor in the way this case was dealt with, as the adoption of a client perspective would have cost the team's budget the amount needed to meet some of the rent arrears which they were not prepared to contemplate, so they resorted to another agency ideology which implied also an ideology of moral character as the cause of need, which the team found acceptable as a reason to withhold services. The laughter which followed the "what an old-fashioned idea" comment was a final legitimation of the decision to come. Afterwards, one of the social workers said what a perceptive comment this had been, since too many people nowadays expect a "magical answer" from the social work department and how important it is for social workers to say to them "Look, you must go and do this or that ..." So the need to limit the demand for services required that notions of the client as assessor of need should not prevail in the day-to-day work of the agency, unless they embodied a request which was seen to come within the remit of the team. But the notion of client self-determination was indispensable in the repertoire which made up the social workers' professional identity and though in practice severely censored, was potent towards maintaining the professional self-image.

Another way in which a client perspective appeared in the team, to justify actions taken, was where the client's perception of her/his need and that of the social worker were seen to converge and agreement reached as to appropriate action. Here a social worker explains:

"... I've never really been involved in a case where the parents have disputed at all ... I've managed to take the family along and reach the same conclusion, rather than me imposing my views on them ... one practical case, em, I was clearly saying that this boy needs to be put in borstal, there's no question in my mind about that ... and really, before I was making the recommendation he was saying to me, 'I'm really going to have to sort myself out', and he saw the only way of sorting himself out was to be
away from home. I was trying up until then to look at alternatives but he had it fixed in his mind that he had to leave home and he needed to be away. Mum was saying, you know, 'I'll be upset about it', but was saying the same."

I suggested in chapter 6 that social workers found difficulty in coming to terms with their organisational role as control agents. The illustration above was one of the ways in which they were able to reconcile such a role with their image of themselves as caring professionals. The assessor role was attributed to the client, while nothing was lost of the "expert" evaluation of need, and the end which was achieved satisfied the societally-defined need for progressive punishment, since the social worker had said the boy had already been fined, and had a deferred sentence, and borstal was the next step in his "criminal career". So indeed a recommendation for borstal was in accordance with the resources available, but was legitimated by being projected as the clear choice of the social worker and her client as the most likely one to meet the boy's "need".

The technique of appearing to put forward a client perspective while in fact propounding a social worker ideology was one which, in the phrase of Berger and Luckmann, justified the institutional order by giving a "normative dignity to its practical imperatives" (Berger & Luckmann 1966, page 111). In the example above, the "practical imperative" was the recommendation for borstal treatment, and the "normative dignity" was the notion that borstal was what the client required and indeed wanted. This is an important point, because again it throws into relief the tension which we noted earlier between organisational requirements and the professional self-image, and the ways in which social workers strove to reconcile the two elements of their role. An examination of the use of a client perspective is important too, because it is revealed as an objective facticity rather than an objective fact. Since it is clients for whom the social services
were formed, the question remains as to to what extent the Lakeside team were acting in their clients' interests. Lakeside's need to restrict referrals to reconstruct information according to administrative categories, to meet statutory demands and to uphold their view of themselves as professional people rendered ideas of the client as assessor of need impractical except where such an ideology could be employed to legitimate current activities. Social workers' theories, combined with organisational rules and practices helped them to make sense of their everyday work. By locating client need in some organisational context their intervention or withholding of help was directed and legitimated. Their position as officials with wide discretionary powers put them in a position to enforce their perceptions and rules in handling requests for assistance.

HILLTOWN: This team was similar to Lakeside in that an ideology of other agencies as the appropriate assessor of need was prominent in the team's day-to-day functioning. Again, acceptance of requests from the courts or the children's panel, or those for residential care assessments for the elderly, meant that such work could be processed unproblematically and routinely. I observed earlier that court work was taken on reluctantly by team members, implying that there was more important work to be done, and elderly assessments were sometimes "held" for several weeks before allocation. But there was never any question that this was work which could not be refused and the definition of need as stated by the other agency was seldom queried. However any negative impact for social workers of this imposition of an other agency ideology was neutralized by the taken-for-grantedness that an expert assessment was required and so such tasks could not be delegated to unqualified staff or volunteers. In the words of one social worker, "statutory work I wouldn't involve volunteers in - they wouldn't understand the implications". Further, although work with the elderly was low status towards any
maintenance of the professional identity, the process of referring them to the Elderly group for "support", highlighted an assessment function by social workers which was widely accepted by the members of the Elderly group. Within this predetermined need for "support", a variety of ideologies was permitted to circulate concerning appropriate treatment for the client, but these did not challenge the overall professional assessment.

Apart from statutory reports or assessments for residential care for the elderly, referrals from other agencies were dealt with in a variety of ways, each of which served to uphold a social worker perspective. They might be dismissed or met with routine responses (such as standard letters in response to information about arrears from fuel authorities), or accepted but with reservations, or accepted unreservedly. Some referrals were dismissed without comment as quite obviously inappropriate. Raised eyebrows, resigned sighs and shrugged shoulders all indicated that the circumstances did not merit discussion, and social workers explained this as agreement that some referral agents "didn't know what social work was all about". An example of this was a referral from the police of a woman who contacted a telephone counselling service "somewhat the worse for drink". The police thought there were alcohol problems and the social work department should be involved. After the meeting one of the social workers explained that no children had been mentioned in the referral, and there had not been any particular pressure on the team to accept the case, so it was possible to dismiss it. What was interesting was that almost always, when the reasons for referral given by another agency were accepted, there was some query about the referral agent's judgement before agreement to allocate was reached. Here are two examples from the fieldnotes:

"A school referred a 6-year old child who was said to be nervous and upset because his father was beating up his mother at home. A social worker had spoken to his teacher who said she was 'worried'. The social worker commented, 'the
school is probably worried because of their own expectations of their children. If this had been another area the boy might not have been considered to be upset or being harmed"

"Referral from a health visitor of a family with problems where the children were said to be 'neglected'. One of the social workers said she thought the health visitor had 'flapped' and made a judgemental statement about neglect."

Both of these cases were accepted however, on the 'at risk' definition offered by the referral agent. Although investigating possible child abuse or neglect was not popular with social workers in this team because it involved adopting in Zimmerman's terms, "an investigative stance" (Zimmerman 1969), nevertheless it was seen as a clear statutory duty, and they were obliged to accept an other agency perspective. But they were able to preserve their own "expert" image by making it clear that such acceptance was provisional on their own assessment of the circumstances, thus allowing the work to get done while projecting a social worker ideology and sustaining the professional identity.

Where referrals were accepted unquestioningly from other agencies, apart from statutory requirements, it was likely to be because the team recognised that the referral agent had made an "appropriate" referral which acknowledged and called for the social worker's professional skills. A local GP referring a family specifically for family therapy, and a hospital social worker referring a couple for marital counselling, both met with acceptance by the team of their definition of need. One of the social workers explained, "if the referrer is saying clearly that, you know, we're having problems in the family, then it will come up for allocation as a family-orientated way of working "

In other words, an other agency perspective was not attributed to the referral agent, who was seen as recognising vaguely "problems in the family" and their approach to the team for help was viewed as embodying a social worker ideology.
Throughout this thesis there have been numerous examples of how requests for help directly from prospective clients were reconstructed by the Hilltown team to conform to their perception of the nature of their knowledge and skills. It happened frequently that where self-referrals were accepted, it was on the basis of a social worker ideology rather than the client's definition of need. Interestingly, a client perspective appeared most often in the context of discussing residential care for the elderly. The principle of self-determination was brought to bear in comments such as "the client has a right to make her own decision", or "they have to be given the chance to say no". This is not to say that other ideologies were not applied to this client group. A social worker ideology appeared regularly, as revealed in comments such as "this old man needs to be helped to see that it would be good for him ..." or "we must help this old lady to come round to the idea of home-help...". Rees has pointed out the relationship between assessment of need and availability of resources, so that for instance, when places in residential care for the elderly are in short supply, old people may be pressed into accepting the home-help service (Rees 1978, see ch.2) One senior social worker in this study told me that when a new residential home was opened in her team's area, the number of recommendations for residential care from social workers increased accordingly. So a factor in which ideology of the assessor or need was adopted, was workers' perceptions of the agency's resources.

But a social worker ideology was the one which was most prevalent in this team, and in discussions about those clients with whom they were involved, social workers seldom used a client perspective. Why then did such a perspective appear regularly in relation to the elderly? One explanation might be that since the elderly were viewed almost entirely in terms of a material ideology of causes of need, a client perspective could safely be applied since material need was readily recognisable and required
no "expert" diagnosis. Systemic causes of need on the other hand (attributed to families) required expert intervention even to identify them, and therefore an ideology of the client as assessor of need could not be made available in the social world of the teams, to those clients on whom the professional identity depended. The elderly carried the least status towards maintenance of the professional self-image and as a result a client perspective could "safely" be attributed to them. The appearance of a client perspective within the team was important towards a need for the professionals to perceive themselves as upholding the social work value of self-determination.

In private conversation social workers at Hilltown held an ideology of the social worker as the appropriate assessor of need almost entirely, and regarded their own judgement as paramount in relation to their clients. One social worker here explains how he saw his job:

"... I think social workers should be given, as a professional responsibility the power to make the decisions as to what happens to the client, rather than someone imposing, 'this is how it should be done' ... in some situations it takes you three months to do an assessment, to know how the family functions and what the problem is ..."

A social worker ideology assumed at least three "rights" which social workers in this team held in respect of their clients. These were (a) the right to decide what was to be beneficial for the client, (b) the right to educate the client, and (c) the right to withhold information and insights from the client.

(a) In the first of these "rights" there was an assumption that the social worker had special information as to the proper course of action the client should take, and saw her/his job as helping the client towards that end. One social worker referred to the "parenting role" of the professional, which was seen as counselling clients towards a more stable life, or leading them towards
recognition of certain aspects of their relationships "which they don't want to acknowledge", or helping them "begin to understand that the move would be good for them". An image which appeared a great deal was that of the need to provide role models for clients to help their growth. These models were usually based on images of the conventional nuclear family. Below are some examples:

"... There's just a mother. We need a male volunteer who could become like a parent-figure, a father-figure to teach the child that families are normally mother and father ..."

"it was a classic one with single mum and growing boy, coming to terms with adolescent boys. That's always difficult in terms of boys in relationships with men ... it was to offer an experience with an adult male ..."

This illustrates how rules and theories, in Cicourel's terminology, "have their roots in commonsense or folk typifications" (Cicourel 1968, page 113), making up social workers' stock of knowledge. Berger pointed out that "most socially objectivated 'knowledge' is pre-theoretical. It consists of interpretive schemes, moral maxims and collections of traditional wisdom that the man in the street frequently shares with the theoreticians" (Berger 1969, page 21). "Everyone knows" what "right" behaviour is, or what constitutes a "good" family, and the recipes brought to bear by social workers maintain assumptions as to that reality. And by locating meanings of "the family" within a professional frame of reference, the meanings are given subjective plausibility and objective facticity, thus sustaining a particular form of social order and legitimating social worker intervention. The point being made is that social workers' "knowledge" is socially derived (though this is seldom acknowledged), but power differentials make it possible for them to apply the recipes and rules
to their clients. Indeed Becker would take this statement further and claim that certain groups in society "force" their rules on others (Becker 1963, page 17).

(b) The second "right" assumed in the social worker ideology, that of "educating" the client, is closely related to the one outlined above. It projected the social worker as a "knower" with knowledge as to what the client needs to grasp, and a capacity to help the client move towards that. Here is an example:

"... Long-term cases are about taking on almost an educative role ... and I think you have to say at times that you'll work on the case over a 2-year, 3-year period ... after a couple of weeks you should tune in to where they are, and how quickly you can bring about some change ..."

Much of what I have written concerning the first "right" applies here, but I would like to add a word about what Pearson termed the professional's claim to "moral veracity" (Pearson 1975, page 69), that is, to being a "good person". Pearson pointed out that this reified appearance of morality is a source of absolute legitimation for welfare professionals. Douglas took this argument a step further by claiming a necessary and opposite linkage between morality and immorality. In other words said Douglas, "in constructing a moral image of the self, either upgrading the self or downgrading others may be employed but one or the other moral tactic must be used" (Douglas 1970, page 6). As a result of this, status categories take on moral meanings, so that the "knower" is a "good" person and the "non-knower" an "immoral" person. By this reasoning, which concerns the moral meanings of status categories, the social worker's "moral veracity" must be paralleled by the client's "moral mendacity", thus compounding the latter's disadvantage and stretching the plausibility of her/his being a "person of equal worth". Rees did of course show that moral character is negotiable and described
clients' efforts to make a favourable impression on professionals (Rees 1978, page 114). Nevertheless the fact remains that clients were placed in a position of having to prove moral character while social workers' professional position legitimated their social superiority.

(c) The third "right" concerns the withholding of information from clients "for their own good". This emerged for example, in discussions as to whether clients should see their files (and incidentally, very similar discussions appeared at Lakeside). Generally there was agreement that they should see files, but always there was the qualification that "there will be occasions when it's not in the client's interests to see files". This qualification of course implied that the social worker would be the best judge in the event of any such decision needing to be made, and since the criteria for allowing access to or withholding files were never defined, power was left effectively in the hands of the social worker. Such power served not only to create a state of what Cicourel termed "informational imbalance" (Cicourel 1968, page 118), but also to allow for professional determination of the unit and the cause of need and its proper resolution. Control of information was essential if the team were to sustain the definition of reality which its activities nurtured. Goffman tackled this problem by presenting a typology of "secrets" and their function (Goffman 1956). For him "strategic" secrets were those which "pertain to intentions and capacities of a team which it conceals from its audience in order to prevent them from adapting effectively to the state of affairs the team is planning to bring about" (page 87). At Hilltown the strategy of affirming social work values while at the same time allowing for the denial of such values (we saw it in relation to client self-determination and above in relation to clients being people of equal worth), was an effective way of legiti-
mating professional control over work and of limiting the boundaries of definitions and controls by others.

A further purpose of secrets, called by Goffman "inside" secrets, is to mark an individual as being a member of a group and to help the group feel separate and different from those individuals who are not "in the know". "Inside secrets give objective intellectual content to subjectively felt social distance" (page 88). In other words, for social workers at Hilltown (and at Lakeside), withholding information from clients served an exclusionary function in maintaining their visibility as distinctly professional people, and consolidated their position of power. Consider how Ed for example, was able to justify withholding insights and information from clients. His approach was that he would not share insights with his clients, at least not at the beginning, though he might later as the case progressed. He said there were times when he would "tell lies" to a client if he felt it was in their interest, saying he had no qualms about doing so if, in his professional judgement such action was merited. As we saw in chapter 6, the ultimate authority of professionalism could be used to legitimate behaviour which in other circumstances not shielded by the sacred canopy, might be viewed as contravening basic social rules governing social intercourse. Thus it becomes clear that although all the social workers upheld values which held the client in respect and of worth as a human being, the rights assumed in Hilltown's social worker ideology, those to decide on the "good" of the clients, to enlighten or to withhold information, confirmed the ascendency of the professional identity and were in danger of alienating the client.

In this discussion of the ideologies of the appropriate assessor of need which appeared in the Lakeside and Hilltown teams, the main observation must be that ideologies were used in a highly routinized way by social workers to produce a taken
for granted world created by their own activity, but in which power differentials operated to make images of clients as assessors of their own needs impractical, except to legitimate current practices of professionals. That clients received help there is little doubt, but the question remains as to whether the process involved in the delivery of that help contained a general thrust towards aid - or alienation. I shall return to this topic in the conclusion to this chapter.

VOLUNTEERS: It was only amongst the volunteers that an ideology of them as the appropriate assessors of need appeared. Although as I discussed in chapter 5, an image of the volunteer as possessing assessment skills appeared in the two teams, it was within a social worker ideology as to the appropriate assessor of need. We considered in chapter 5 the example of a social worker who said she would involve a volunteer "where I have wanted more information about a client ...", but it was the social worker who outlined the kind of information she would require, and saw the volunteer as being her "eyes and ears".

Current Volunteers
All of the current volunteers, whether "office" or "external" volunteers, employed a volunteer ideology to explain happenings in the lives of their clients by reference to their own experience, or to call on their experience as the only valid criterion for offering help.

In the latter case there was also an implicit criticism of social workers who were seen as not having had "experience of life". Comments such as "only people who have been in a situation know what it's like and only they are in a position to help others ...", and "a student social worker doesn't know anything about life - they're learning what I've learned over my married life ...", constituted a challenge to a social worker ideology, although a volunteer
perspective was not expressed in public discussion, rather in private conversation. Again, a volunteer perspective helped volunteers to make sense of what they experienced happening in other people's lives. Here Norma explains:

"... social work is just life ... all the people you become involved with, you've probably had all these problems yourself anyway ... I mean you get people that have had things happen in life and they just cannae face up to it ... well, I mean, if the same thing had happened in your life, that are terrible illnesses, and the sort of things you've had to cope with yourself ... you ken how you feel if someone dies or the likes of people having cancer ... I can sympathise with them because I ken how it was with me ..."

Both these ways of using a volunteer ideology helped the volunteers to feel they were making a worthwhile contribution. Although they tended to trivialise the work they did and "deskill" themselves in their perception of themselves as volunteers, by calling on their own experience they were able to imbue their dealings with clients with some significance. The claim that "half the problems I can relate to my own" (a concept which was used widely by the current volunteers) served to legitimate their presence in the organisation and in the lives of their clients by providing for them a unique space which they saw as "different" from that occupied by professional social workers.

Adoption of an ideology of the socialworker as the appropriate assessor of need by volunteers on the other hand, allowed them to affirm the ultimate accountability of the social workers. There were numerous examples of volunteers' acknowledgement that social workers assess client need towards making decisions about the meeting of that need, and in the end of the day, "carry the can" if something goes wrong. In this volunteers recognised their own lack of authority and the importance to them of social worker back up:

"... they make the decisions really, if we have any problems, any doubts, of any kind, I mean they are there to guide us, that's what they're there for. I mean, you don't take on
too much, or if you have any worries they're at your back, That's very important to me ..."

"... (volunteers) might give the wrong impression - somebody goes in there and gives a load of advice, and it all goes wrong, and then of course it's the social services that'll be blackened, you know ..."

There were indications that volunteers welcomed the fact that they themselves were not responsible for work with clients and that often they sought the social workers' judgment in order to help them extract themselves from difficult encounters. An example of this was where an old man constantly asked for clothing, which the volunteer acquired for him week after week. She said that eventually "the social worker helped me to say NO". Or in the event of withdrawal from a client who was thought no longer to need volunteer help, a volunteer said she would leave decisions about that "to (the social worker's) judgement".

So by the use of a volunteer perspective and a social worker perspective these current volunteers made their own contribution towards validating the institutional order. On the one hand they rendered plausible their own contribution as appropriate assessors of client need (their use of a volunteer perspective) and on the other they neutralised any challenge this might hold for professionals by negating any bargaining power this might afford them in relation to the social workers (their use of a social worker perspective). This was made public by their acceptance in the Elderly group of referrals from social workers. As a result they were able to continue as unpaid workers within or attached to the organisation, while endowing that state with meanings which allowed for subjectively satisfactory explanations.

There were differences in the "office" and "external" volunteers in their use of a client perspective. It was used by the "office" volunteers to uphold the principle of self-determination and was often referred to in the context of the volunteers training course, as something which was emphasised
by social workers organising the course. One volunteer explained:

"... you see they explained to us that you didn't phone the doctor just because you thought it was what was needed. I mean it's up to the individual person, they must say - you can't force the doctor on them ..."

A client perspective was upheld in the Elderly group and as I observed earlier often appeared where a social worker and a volunteer supported each other against attempts of other staff to operationalise ideologies which appeared to deny clients their right to determine their own needs, and which at the same time challenged the professionals' view of the world.

The "external" volunteers on the other hand, projected a client perspective as a criticism of social workers imposing their values on clients. Len was of the opinion that they constituted a "do-goodery mafia, coming in taking over the 'Year of the Disabled', instead of asking the disabled people what the hell they wanted. It was somebody else's idea of what they wanted."

In the following example the volunteer asserted the futility of a social worker ideology in certain circumstances, and defended the right of the client to define her/his own needs:

"... social workers like success and they'll often do things that they know are perhaps not right for that family just to get a success on a very short-term basis. For instance, if someone was having difficulties budgeting, (the social worker) would try and take the budget out of their control by getting the electricity and the gas paid for, the rent paid for and leave them only the basic to survive on, knowing perfectly well that this is probably not the right thing to do because you're not learning anyone to budget because they've no money to budget with. It's poverty level, and you're asking them to budget. And can you really blame them if they freak out now and again and go out and spend a tenner? ..."

Some "external" volunteers spoke of their own experience
of having been clients, and their attempts to resist the imposition of a social worker ideology by the professionals. Here are two examples:

(A volunteer whose mentally handicapped daughter had been a member of a club for the mentally handicapped)-
"... their lemonade and crisps were put down on the table, they don't have any choice of what they could have. They didn't go to the bar for instance to buy an orange or a lime or something like that - it was done for them. I had to start immediately and fight that. We don't have to have that ..."

(A volunteer's experience of having undergone psychiatric treatment)-
"... when I first took ill and went to the hospital they got a social worker to come here, and the questions at that time, I thought, "you're just a nosey so and so" and I was glad to get rid of her ... especially a psychiatric hospital, they automatically think you're no' capable of dealing with your own affairs ... she came here, prying at my back, coming down here having a look at my little boy to see how I reacted with him ... and then she had to come and speak to my husband and how he got on, and as I say she was just prying too much for my liking ... I thought, 'what's she doing for people that are in need of help?' I'm not in need of help in that way, if I was a poor manager I might have needed help where that was concerned, but that wasnae the case with me ...

In considering the use made of a client perspective by current volunteers, it is notable that the "office" volunteers were less likely than the "external" volunteers to adopt a client perspective in a context of conflict with a social worker perspective. In chapter 5 we had the example of a volunteer who attempted to advocate on behalf of her client's right to remain at home rather than enter residential care, and her capitulation to the social worker's definition of the client's need. But then, amongst the "external" volunteers, although they were more voluble in their propounding of a client perspective, there was no evidence that this stance had any practical impact on the life of the team or on the world as constructed by the team. None of them gave instances where, in relation to their current activities as volunteers, they had successfully
operationalised an ideology of the client as assessor of need to challenge a social worker ideology. A certain "distance" from the area office may have allowed them more freedom to articulate a client perspective, but the impact of this on the office was no greater than the "office" volunteers' passive and tacit acceptance of a social worker ideology as dominant.

For all the groups we have considered so far, the social workers in the two teams and the current volunteers (particularly those attached to the office), ideologies of the appropriate assessor of need were effective in legitimating organisational processes and in explaining "why things are as they are". Most important, their use allowed all of the workers, professional and voluntary, to believe that they were operating in the best interests of their clients.

Ex-volunteers
Among the ex-volunteers, surprisingly the client as appropriate assessor of need did not figure prominently at all. All three groups, the non-operators, the unsatisfactory operators and the satisfactory operators, emphasised a volunteer perspective and in the case of unsatisfactory and satisfactory operators, a social worker perspective, though each to different ends.

The satisfactory operators were similar to the current volunteers in that they used a volunteer perspective to make sense of clients' lives from their own experience and to sustain an image of themselves as "helping people". They referred frequently to commonsense knowledge and the experience of family life which led them to understanding of the nature of client need and therefore to making a worthwhile contribution in meeting it. One of them commented:

"people gain more from life experience than from theory and I feel I can put myself in place of the family -
that's much more valuable than theories in my head ...

At the same time, the satisfactory operators put forward a social worker ideology in that they saw social workers as being able to assess situations, to know about services available and about law and clients' rights. This stressing of social workers' procedural knowledge is consistent with ex-volunteers' material ideology as to the causes of social need. The ways in which they were able to hold both the social worker and the volunteer as appropriate assessors of need allowed them to uphold the uniqueness of the profession (which the majority of them intended to enter), while simultaneously valuing and justifying their own contribution as people with experience of life and therefore able to offer "understanding" and "support".

While the satisfactory operators used a social worker ideology to express the professional function of making services available to clients, the unsatisfactory operators (and incidentally also the non-operators) used a social worker ideology to describe the social worker's function of investigating the circumstances of clients' lives, as in this quote:

"Oh, I think you need your social worker ... the social worker comes in to see how they're living, how they eat and all those things ..."

But the unsatisfactory operators also held that volunteers were "as good as trained personnel" in recognising need, and like the satisfactory operators referred to their own life experience to confirm this. The difference between their use of a volunteer perspective and that of the satisfactory operators however was, whereas the satisfactory operators used such a perspective to make sense of their clients' lives and confirm their own worthwhile contribution, the unsatisfactory operators used it to challenge any notion of superior competence embodied in a social worker ideology. The tension resulting from efforts to hold these conflicting
ideas is illustrated by this ex-volunteer in her attempts to reconcile the two:

"the (social worker) I met was very young, I mean she must have been in her early 20's and I would think at that time in life you would need the training to be able to guide you through other people's situations. Maybe as you get older, into your late 30's and 40's I would think probably experience in life would be a big advantage. I would think probably if you had both the training and the experience ... but I definitely think you do need the training to see problems and be able to assess a situation ..."

Here the volunteer dealt with uncertainty by shifting the frame of reference from one which concerned the "difference" between social workers and volunteers in terms of training and non-training, to one which viewed experience or inexperience as the operative factors. As a result she was able to avoid an implication that her own unsatisfactory performance as a volunteer was attributable to any personal deficiency. As we saw on considering the use made of ideologies of the causes of need by unsatisfactory volunteers, the deficiency could be located in the character of the client.

The non-operators were interesting in that among them was found the least emphasis on an ideology of the social worker as the appropriate assessor of need and their concentration was mainly on a volunteer perspective. I said earlier that moral character as an ideology of the causes of need was used widely by this group to two ends (i) to question social workers' judgement as to their choice of clients to whom to offer volunteers, and (ii) to imply that social workers were themselves "judgemental" in their dealings with their clients. Non-operators' rejection of a social worker ideology was consistent with this strategy in that, for example, social workers' "coming from a different life-style" was viewed as an indication that that were not likely to carry out accurate assessments and that they were likely to impose their own values on their clients. The assertion was that because volunteers are more closely identified with clients
they are in a better position to give positive help. It is of course impossible to determine whether non-operators held these sets of ideas retrospectively to rationalise their non-involvement as volunteers. It seems feasible however that a volunteer perspective held prospectively and expressed during their training for example, might be one reason why some of them were not offered work at all by the team.

If one were to classify the images projected by the ex-volunteers as to the appropriate assessor of need, one might suggest that for example the social worker ideology emphasised for satisfactory operators the social worker's service provision function; for unsatisfactory operators it emphasised her/his investigative function; and for non-operators it emphasised the social worker's control function in relation to clients. The image projected of volunteers by satisfactory operators stressed the value of their practical contribution to clients, that projected by unsatisfactory operators stressed their equality with social workers, and that projected by non-operators stressed their identification with clients.

It was curious that a client perspective appeared minimally amongst ex-volunteers, and one must ask why this was so. Only one person in each of the three groups of ex-volunteers put forward a client perspective. A satisfactory operator said "client consent is crucial", in order to give help; an unsatisfactory operators said, "people don't like to have a social worker visiting"; and a non-operator said, "people don't like social workers - they have an arrogant attitude and intrude". It is an interesting exercise to link these images of clients with those of social workers and volunteers which I identified above. A pattern emerges which has a certain consistency. The satisfactory volunteer, viewing her own contribution as valuable and social workers as providing services, held an image of the client as "accommodating". The unsatisfactory volunteer, viewing her own position as equal to that of the social worker who was
seen as an investigator, held an image of the client as "reluctant"; the non-operator, identifying with the client and viewing the social worker as an agent of control, held an image of the client as "defensive". What is embodied in all of these three images of the client is a concept of her/his being acted upon by an external agent, with or without her/his consent. Of course it would be inadmissible to draw firm conclusions on this point since they would be based on comments of only one volunteer in each of the three groups of ex-volunteers. What is of greater interest to us is the fact that an ideology of the client as the appropriate assessor of her/his own need appeared so minimally among the ex-volunteers. For them it was not needed as a bargaining point in the negotiation of professionalism with social workers, or as with the current "office" volunteers, to find a meaningful place within the office culture, and to "explain" institutional processes. It was not necessary for them, as it was with current "external" volunteers towards an image of themselves as champions of the client's interests against the "do-goodery mafia" of professionals. Perhaps an image of the client as the appropriate assessor of need was simply a redundant concept for these ex-volunteers. For them there was no longer a subjective identification with the institutional role of "volunteer" in relation to clients, and as a result certain role specific knowledge became irrelevant. While a client perspective might be discarded, however, a volunteer and a social worker perspective might not, since their retention was crucial to their apprehension of themselves as having a socially recognisable identity beyond the world of the area team.

CONCLUSION

In this discussion we have seen that the repertoire of ideologies of client need which were admissible to the worlds of Lakeside and Hilltown projected a narrow range of images
of clients which in turn limited intervention in clients' lives but allowed the work flowing through the area offices to be seen to be carried out efficiently and unproblematically. The images of clients which appeared in the teams legitimated the division of labour and justified the withholding of certain services to some clients and its availability to others. They also served to sustain the social workers' view of themselves as offering a qualitatively different and unique service to their clients, than could be offered by lay or unqualified workers: For the current volunteers, images of clients confirmed their own minimal and peripheral contribution to the Hilltown team's work but allowed them to regard it as of some value.

Finally, ex-volunteers used images of clients to rationalise and explain their experience in relation to the area office.

The important observation in the context of this study is the dominance in the two area offices of those ideologies which retained control of the definition of themselves, and others, including clients, firmly in the hands of the professionals. A notion of the client as assessor of need for instance, appeared only as a construct towards maintaining the professional identity but was excluded as a means to changing the social reality within the teams. Although doubtless the social workers genuinely wished to serve the interests of their clients, the structures which were created within the organisations had the effect of negating those principles which the professionals held as fundamental to social work. The process of stereotyping clients, for example, acts against "self-actualisation" or human "becoming". The dominance of the "expert" ideology excludes the notion of self-determination for clients. Indeed the act of labelling certain people "clients" is in itself an instrument of social control in that it ascribes to them a social identity which renders them powerless to determine their own needs when confronted with professional definitions. The danger is that the
image of the "caring", "loving" helper which social workers hold of themselves, may be pressed into the service of paternalistic professional power. R.D. Laing has written,

"... And because they are human and concerned, and even love us, and are very frightened, they will try to cure us. They may succeed. But there is still hope that they will fail ..." (Laing 1968, page 168).

This expression of the experience of oppression again raises the question as to whether clients' interests are served by the uses made by social workers of ideologies of client need. Unfortunately it was outside the scope of this study to seek clients' perceptions of being "on the receiving end", though other studies such as that of Mayer & Timms (1970) raised doubts as to the extent to which a client perspective is effective in determining client need. The empirical evidence of this present study suggests that the language of and the ideologies of social need which we have observed, rather than being conducive towards clients' social and psychological fulfilment, serve other ends concerned more with legitimating institutional processes and providing meaningful integration for those passing through the institutional order. I end this chapter by summarising the observations made as to ways in which images of clients were used by the actors in the study. First, the ways in which images of clients were constructed varied with practical and organizationally situated purposes for which they were used at particular times. The several ingredients which were contained in the images reflected the teams' "distributive processes", which Strauss defined as systems for discriminating among clients (Strauss 1964, page 353), and which allowed for negotiations to fit clients into appropriate "slots" (see Goffman 1961, page 16).

This leads to the second observation that the range of ideologies which was admissable was limited and narrow. The teams were selective in that only certain types of ideologies could be tolerated within the boundaries of the
organization of the work and the ways it was perceived by the staff. There was no place for images of clients for example, independent of the practice of social workers. This is not to imply a static view of ideologies but those which were allowed to evolve were in accordance with the pragmatic purposes of the teams. For instance a systemic ideology as to the causes of need was entirely compatible with Hilltown's view of the professional task as a therapeutic one. This was also linked to a view of the appropriate assessor of need as being the social worker and it gave the professionals an advantage over other workers by providing a demonstration of their distinctive and important contribution, and placed them in a strong position to delineate new roles for themselves.

Thirdly, the operationalisation of ideologies was not without moral overtones. Prescriptions as to decisions concerning treatment of clients, judgements as to the character of types of cases and constructions of images of clients themselves were not necessarily a function of affectively neutral professional canons, although such canons were called on to justify practice. Rather the activities of the social workers studied served to construct and enforce particular definitions of normality, worth and social value. The voice of the client, or for that matter, the volunteer, had no place except to support and confirm professional constructions of the "aetiology" of social need. The dominant spirit of professionalism determined the questions asked and implemented the programmes of action as to what was "in the best interests" of the clients. But the notion of "the best interests" of the client helped social workers to regard their activities as value free and acted as a shield against difficult questions about what Pearson called "the troubled moral-political domain upon which they act" (Pearson 1975, page 206). It is the relationship between professionalism and moral and political discourse which is the subject of the final chapter in this thesis.
PART III. CONCLUSION
CHAPTER 8

THE POLITICS OF SOCIAL WORK

The evidence of this study, supported by others such as the work of Stevenson et al. (1978) and Holme and Maizels (1978) indicates that the impact of volunteers on professional social work has been hardly significant. In terms of the definition of social need and of the nature of their own contribution, volunteers have had little to say, and the world of professional social work remains an epistemological closed shop. In Part II I have tried to demonstrate ways in which social workers laid claim to esoteric knowledge and exclusive skills to retain control over areas of work as it concerned those designated as "clients", and to sustain an image of themselves as professional people. This final chapter attempts to link the empirical study with a broader study of the politics of social work and to explore some of the significance of a literal "micro" piece of research with the larger concern of social work as a profession in society. If our understanding of professionalism in social work is not to be seriously limited its consideration and analysis cannot be carried out in isolation from its political origins and social consequences.

Although it is not universally agreed that personal problems are political problems, one does not have to assume the label "radical" to acknowledge that the social worker is an inherent part of the machinery of state. Davies (1981) for example, although he took the view that social work "is a legitimate strategy to cope with the need to maintain society in a stable state" (page 195), also found himself able to accept that "social work is a by-product of an unequal and imperfect society ... (it) can be said to tend towards the perpetuation of an unfair social order because it exists to ameliorate its worst effects" (page 208).
and urged that social workers should not ignore the "social and political influence of their occupational base" (page 194). But it is those adherents of radical social work who have drawn most attention to the argument that social work is not a morally neutral, non-political activity, and that the social services do not operate in a vacuum, but are established within a political context. Pearson for example, saw moral-political issues as "the very guts of social work practices" (1975a page 15). Corrigan and Leonard claimed that "in assessing their clients and in delivering services, social workers are undertaking a profoundly ideological task on behalf of the established structures" (1978, page viii). Galper was quite specific in saying that

"the social services function to encourage people to redefine their needs and their views of what a solution to their problems entails, so that inexpensive and politically accommodating services can replace expensive and politically disruptive services" (1975, page 67).

Adler and Asquith, in identifying the crucial role of the professionals as the "carriers of a welfare ideology", called for the further articulation of the "relationships of power and domination between individuals at a face-to-face level and the relationships of power between institutions at a structural level" (1981, page 29). Although as Pearson has written, "social work goes about its business as if this arena of moral-political discourse did not exist" (1975a page 24), the fact is that its tendency towards individualised, symptom-centred personal or family pathology ideologies is an approach to social need with exalts expert solutions at the expense of other solutions such as those on the political level. Where problems and their resolution are seen as technical, such a way of viewing the world is accompanied by a growth in the sphere of the experts and by a perspective which claims for them exclusive definition of need and exclusive skills in the
meeting of that need. In this study we have examined something of the power accorded to professional social workers within this growing sphere of the expert, and the autonomy afforded them on the grounds of their assumed knowledge and skills. I have questioned whether in the principle of self-determination for clients makes any sense in social work practice, and I have concluded that volunteers have failed to make any meaningful impact on the ways social work is accomplished. Despite the aims of policy documents such as Seebohm to achieve greater community participation in social work, those ideologies predominate in practice which elevate professional influence. The latest major policy document dealing with social work and its future is the Barclay Report (1982) and I have examined already (in chapter 1) some of the problematic aspects of its treatment of knowledge and skills in social work. Barclay called for the development of "community social work", for "partnership" between professionals and members of the public (13.2). In the following analysis of Barclay I shall argue that the report contributes nothing towards a genuine shift in social work, in the sharing of power with non-professionals, that it is a profoundly conservative document which continues to define and conceptualize problems in individual terms only, a bias which not only limits what social workers can offer to their clients but which perpetuates inequality and serves professional rather than the public interest.

BARCLAY AND PROFESSIONAL POWER

A superficial reading of Barclay, with its call for a community approach to social work and its principles of partnership between normal caring and formal social services organisations (13.62), and accountability of social workers to "not only individual clients ... but also to informal carers, with whom they are in partnership" (13.63), might
lead one to conclude that social work is preparing for a move towards sharing power to name needs and to name solutions, with non-professionals. But as Barclay was at pains also to point out, its recommendations include constant reassurances to social workers that their work is "of vital importance in our society", "it is here to stay" and "social workers are needed as never before" (page xi). I shall argue that the report retains elucidation as to why social workers are needed as never before, firmly under the control of social workers themselves. Barclay was accompanied by two "minority" reports, those of Hadley et al, and Pinker. Barclay recommended a shift in attitudes, Hadley a shift in organisational structure and Pinker a shift in the scope of social work. None of them acknowledged that social work is a political activity, all of them made assumptions about "social need" and propounded an "expert" ideology, and particularly in Barclay the notion of "partnership" with the community is seriously flawed. Each of these topics is considered in turn.

Barclay and the Politics of Social Work

All of these authors, implicitly, and in the case of Barclay, explicitly, make a separation between private problems and political issues. Consequently a reified view of the world is presented, and politics is seen as a "choice" in which social workers may or may not involve themselves.

The view of the social worker is of a neutral, objective practitioner untainted by political concerns and with the welfare of the client as the preliminary goal. What amounts to a disclaimer for the way in which social policy is operationalised appeared in Barclay by describing a world "out there", produced by "history and tradition in the nature of one society and its legislation ..." (3.6)
it envisaged "social policy" as consistent and unambiguous (3.12) and ignored the fact that a range of individual ideologies can be and are brought to bear in defining and meeting social need. Yet Barclay itself is an unambiguously political document in that first of all, it embraced an individualistic view of human need, and regarded social workers as "bound to put into practice in their work a respect for persons and to see other people in all the complexity of their life, relationships and environment" (3.9). This of course precludes any other way of seeing the world, such as one that for example adopts a structural view of human need. The implications of this become clear on examination of Barclay's discussion of social problems. The report continued, "... some of the problems illustrated here are predominantly social in character, others, such as sickness or poverty, are likely to be accompanied by social problems" (2.25). Here Barclay appeared to view "sickness" and "poverty" as phenomena separate from the realm of social problems, or related to them only incidentally, thereby removing them effectively from the social worker's direct concern. As Williams commented "it is the care of paupers not the creation of pauperism which holds the attention and feeling" (Williams 1973, page 94). And in the case of "sickness", there is no room in Barclay's analysis for viewing it as a legitimate focus for social work. In the same way for example as certain illnesses are classified "tropical diseases", with no relationship to poverty and oppression, so here there is no space for a view of sickness which relates it to, say unemployment or industrialisation.

Having constructed a world which holds an individualistic view of human need, Barclay continued with a notion of "assessment" as an absolute value and assumed a "correct" way of evaluation of need: "It is certain that social workers can make accurate assessments" (11.85). The report recorded with approval this quote from a team of
hospital social workers, "We have the opportunity of an oversight of the patient and his family, and by our training we are able to identify areas of stress, emotional, physical and economic stress, and to exercise appropriate intervention" (1.58). Barclay admitted a "gatekeeper" and "rationer" role for social workers, but in discussing "those in greatest need" commented "assessing need is a problematic activity at the best of times, but is one in which social workers are experienced ..." (3.63). All this implies a way of assessing need which is clear and unproblematic and which social work may attain to, though sometimes fall short of the standard.

"The objective in view is the acquisition of a synthesis of knowledge which approaches more closely the totality of the client in his situation than any narrower approach can do" (3.7).

This fails to acknowledge that the kinds of "knowledge" employed result in a particular kind of synthesis so that the "totality" reached is only one of a range of possible "totalities". The committee were at pains to point out that social work has "a monopoly neither of concern nor of solutions" (3.9), but omitted to recognise that it imposes "a way of seeing" which excludes other versions of reality.

Rather than viewing social work as a political activity, however it is practiced, Barclay saw the "political" element as "an integral part of the whole" and urged social workers to challenge policy decisions or the way resources are allocated (7.27), at best a superficial tackling of the issues. There is no challenge to the fundamental ways in which "problems" come to be defined as such or the part played by social workers in the construction of social need or consideration of alternative diagnoses. The report ignores for example the argument of Cloward and Piven, that

"we have to break with the professional doctrine that ascribes virtually all of the problems that clients
experience to defects in personality development and family relationships. It must be understood that this doctrine is as much a political ideology as an explanation of human behaviour. It is an ideology that directs clients to blame themselves for their travails rather than the economic and social institutions that produce many of them... This psychological reductionism - this pathologizing of poverty and inequality - is in other words an ideology of oppression, for it systematically conceals from people the ways in which their lives are distorted by the realities of class structure" (1975, pages xxiii - xxiv).

Although one might not necessarily accept Cloward and Piven's attributing social injustices to class structures, their point about "blaming the victim" and the imposition of a world view which excludes others, is valid and an issue in any consideration of Barclay's approach to social work practice.

Barclay and "Social Need"

Throughout the report Barclay assumed need as an unambiguous and universally understood concept. Like Seebohm, it made no attempt to define "need" and it made no reference to the work of Smith for example in its approach to the notion. The report introduced the subject of its deliberations with a reference to "almost limitless needs on the one hand and an inadequate pool of resources to satisfy those needs on the other" (l) and proceeded to a discussion of the role, tasks and skills of social workers. The basic omission to give serious consideration to the concept of social need might lead one to question the validity of all of the topics addressed subsequently, since an examination of ways of meeting need presupposes a grasp of what "need" is. As it is the report left wide open the definition of social need, and throughout, assumed professional definitions. It did give cursory acknowledgement of clients' right of self-determination, but subject to social workers' judgement and discretion (10.8). Any discussion
of client definition of need was qualified by language which makes it clear that the power of naming belongs to the social worker. The professional was pressed to ascertain clients' views "wherever they are able to give them" (10.10), but some clients may be "incapable" of making a choice (10.9) and "will for one reason or another not be able themselves to appreciate the implications of a decision one way or the other" (10.8). The reason for labouring this issue is not to deny the realities of dealing with human tragedy and distress, but to demonstrate the emphasis placed by Barclay on the professional as the most likely person to make an accurate assessment of need, with an option as to whether to accept the client's definition. In a reference to one of the examples of social work activity outlined in the report, Barclay commented that the social worker "had apparently accepted Mrs Scott's definition of their problem as being one of housing ..." (1.44). The context implied that if the social worker had decided on a different focus for intervention then that view would have predominated. Throughout, Barclay was punctuated with assumptions about "basic needs" (3.6), "client's needs" (3.20) "those in need" (5.2). It was critical of research which fails to specify what they mean by terms such as "casework", or "group work", or "have evaluated social work against aims which are over-ambitious or poorly defined" (11.46), but was quite blind to its own failure to the difficulties raised by inconclusive research, "we were able to reach some conclusions ..." (11.46). The question about definition of need was raised only once, against the background of a discussion on day and residential services. The report asked what such services are needed for, and offered the reply, "the obvious answer to this question is far from straightforward. We may be tempted to reply, "who decides who needs them and why?"..." (4.31) and there the issue is left. Barclay declined to offer an answer, opting instead to lead the reader to agree that the raising of such questions is unhelpful and irrelevant. Hadley was right when he pointed out that the main report
"tends to reflect social work priorities rather than those of clients" (page 226), and called for greater client choice, but even for him such choice appeared to be confined to how need ought to be met and not to its definition. Pinker made it quite clear that for him the power of naming belongs to the professional specialist.

"the skills of social workers include the ability to assess needs and situations with insight, efficiency and impartiality, including the ability to formulate feasible methods of response to clients' problems, preferably with the clients' co-operation, but without if necessary ..." (page 238).

Barclay's concept of community social work includes a concern "both with responding to the existing social care needs of individuals and families and with reducing the number of such problems which arise in the future" (13.23). The committee was concerned that social workers should be involved only with "that small part of the total caseload of an area team which requires their particular skills in assessing, counselling and planning" (3.68). It considered that some clients could have their needs met quickly, others referred on to "more appropriate agencies" and some turned away because their needs are not judged to merit high enough priority for them to be given a scarce resource (1.25). In all of this Barclay apparently regarded "need" as an unproblematic concept. Some of its assumptions reflect what the empirical aspect of this study revealed in relation to for example the needs of the elderly, in its belief that social workers should "concentrate most heavily on ... those at risk of coming into care", and spend relatively little time on "... the routine monitoring of the elderly" (2.26). The report specified that social workers should not be involved in assessing routine requests for assistance or "much routine provision of practical aid and advice, surveillance and monitoring" (3.68), but ignored the stereotyping of need which accompanies routine procedures. The consequences of an approach to need as
I have described in Barclay is that power is bestowed on
the professionals which allows them to operationalise
ideologies which confer social identities on different
groups of people. A value system which centres on pro-
fessional definitions of need necessarily excludes other,
equally valid ways of "naming".

Barclay and the "Expert Ideology"

A curious contradiction exists in Barclay and in the two
minority reports. In establishing that social workers
are needed to carry out "counselling" and "social care
planning", Barclay denied that it wished to make any
exclusive claim for social workers, and allowed that many
other people, including volunteers, engage in such
activities (3.5). Hadley pointed to the "overriding
importance of locally-based informal relationships ..."
(page 220). Pinker stated that "many social work skills
are the normal skills of social living ..." (page 237).
At the same time, as is implied in the above discussion on
defining "need", all of them propounded an "expert"
ideology, giving predominance to professional judgement
and discretion.

In its deliberations on maintaining standards in social
work and protecting clients' rights, Barclay admitted that
the

"boundaries (of social work) are far from clear, opinions
about it are deeply divided on many issues and it is the
subject of much public misunderstanding ... its knowledge
base and skills are still being debated within the pro-
fession and some would say, will be destined to remain
in a state of flux ..." (12.8).

It further allowed that there is little research basis for
arguing that any particular activity is best carried out by
a trained social worker rather than by someone else (11.57).
At the same time however, Barclay observed that social work
has become established as "a discipline in its own right,
transferable, as we are now seeing, to private, independent practice" with a "generally recognised, though far from definite, range of appropriate methods, knowledge and skills" (21). In spite of the uncertainties which Barclay acknowledged exist around social work and social workers, it demonstrated exactly the kind of polarisation of attributes of professionals and non-professionals which has recurred persistently throughout this study, projecting the former as "knowers" and the latter as "non-knowers", the former as active and the latter as passive. In describing social workers, Barclay repeatedly presented them as "planning", "organising", "maintaining", "evaluating", "counselling", "establishing", "facilitating", "enabling", "supporting", "co-ordinating", "motivating others", "mediating", "negotiating and bargaining" (xv, 1.34, 1.45, 3.3, 3.25, 5.12, 5.20, 6.14, 7.11, 18.49). Clients on the other hand were typified by expressions such as "human inadequacy" (10.5), as being "not able to appreciate the implications of a decision" (10.9), as "powerless and vulnerable" (10.7), among whom said Barclay, are some who "with the best will in the world it is not easy to like or treat with respect" (10.4). Indeed some of the social work values outlined, such as those of "compassion, of understanding, of sympathy" (10.1) of themselves are distancing and imply extremes of strength and wholeness in the professional and weakness and disintegration in the client. Again the role of clients in relation to social workers is set forward as to "change or tolerate" (xiv, 314, 3.36) to "change or adapt to ..." (1.20), and the report considered it essential that both these tasks of the social worker are recognised. What it did not make explicit is what is implied, that whether the action to be taken is to be "change" or "toleration" depends on the expert's assessment of the situation.

Hadley and Pinker both propounded an expert ideology, Hadley calling for a "greater measure of discretion" for social
workers (page 229) and Pinker insisting that the fact that the knowledge base of social work is not readily understood by the public at large, is an argument in favour of according professional status to the occupation (page 257). Since in this case (and perhaps in the case of most professions?) the "knowledge base" is not readily understood within the occupation, such mystification with its accompanying distancing and projection of ignorance and dependence must again raise questions of control, and definitions of reality which are in danger of convincing clients they have no power.

A similar rhetoric is applied to the "social care networks", the stimulation of which Barclay saw as an essential aspect of the social work task. The long list of "action" adverbs which I gave above were applied to social workers' activities with communities. With regard to volunteers specifically, Barclay encouraged professionals to "create and maintain shared working relationships with them" (3.32) but curiously the typification of the volunteer constructs an image of her/him as both "unreliable" and "unskilled". Consider for example the choice of language to exhort co-operation with volunteers, "we recognise too, that some volunteers may fail to meet the standards of reliability ..." (3.32). In discussing the role of volunteers, the committee chose to quote research which found that volunteers had been faced with "only psychiatric or other complex cases" to be helped. It continued, "the volunteers, lacking the training and skills of the social workers which they saw as needed, felt unable to tackle these" (5.18). One might ask, en passant, whether here we might have an incidence of that "deskilling" which I discussed in chapter 6. Questions which must be faced are, why did Barclay choose to project an image of the volunteer as "unreliable" and "unskilled", when other images could have been constructed? The committee did issue a denial that they were stereotyping volunteers as "untrained, inexperienced and unreliable", but this is less
than convincing in the light of those other comments to which I have drawn attention. I have already said that throughout the report Barclay was at pains to reassure social workers that they are "needed as never before" and that the professional service they offer is essential. But as Bankowski and Mungham have reminded us, one of the conditions for rendering a professional service is a maintenance of the incompetence of the "other", whether that "other" is carer of client (Bankowski & Mungham 1976, page 41). We have empirical evidence of the effectiveness of professionals' images of volunteers' incompetence and the ways in which a dichotomy is maintained which holds social workers in a position of power.

Barclay and the Notion of "Partnership"

In view of my critique of the Barclay Report detailed above, it should be clear that any idea of a "partnership" between professionals and others is a highly suspect concept. Yet Barclay was able to envisage such a goal between social workers and their clients, between the statutory and voluntary social services and perhaps between professionals and other "lay",carers such as volunteers. It advocated the aim of social workers as always to be the creation of a relationship with their clients "so that the tasks are accomplished in partnership ..." (1.23); it argued for a "genuine partnership" between the statutory and voluntary sectors; and it believed that the personal social services "must develop a close working partnership with citizens ..." (13.1). But how can a partnership with clients be possible in a relationship in which the power of naming and the role of the expert is held by the social worker? And what can be the nature of a partnership with the voluntary sector when "the local authority will tend to concentrate on assessment of need and resources ... and the voluntary sector will tend to provide services ... once assessment is complete ..."? (5.53). And what kind of partnership is
envisaged where social workers have the power to "confer some share in decision-making on local communities ..." and to "in some circumstances, allowing informal carers and communities direct influence on how resources are used?" (13.62) (my emphasis).

Barclay claimed that an attitude of partnership embodies an ideology of "equal, but different". One of the respondents who gave evidence to the committee said "... the 'equal but different' collaborative mode of working enables lay people to develop their skills and undertake new and demanding roles ..." (page 233). I submit that such a concept results in polarising and stereotyping attributes, it engenders what Daly called a "crippling complementarity" (Daly 1973, page 26) and it bestows false identities upon professionals and "others" which become reified and accepted uncritically. As things stand, an 'equal and different' ideology is an illusion. Some of Barclay's other discussions make this clear. First, any initiative towards co-operation was always assumed to be taken by the professionals (5.20, 5.46, 7.11, 9.23, 13.15, 13.62). Then, as we have considered, the power of naming, the defining and assessment of need was assumed to be a professional characteristic (5.53, 9.23) and thirdly, it is clear that the balance of power is held by the professionals. Barclay tried to reconcile the fact that "because of its statutory obligations of social services department has the responsibility for deciding who should perform certain roles or tasks" (5.48) with a belief that "the distribution of roles and tasks must be drawn up by all the people involved ..." (5.50). The committee suggested that social workers should be accountable "not only to individual clients or client groups, but also to informal carers with whom they are in partnership" (13.63). Pinker rightly pointed out that these are conflicting and incompatible goals (page 243). Indeed the question posed by Pinker is entirely pertinent. He commented, "the report is strongly in favour of giving experienced
social workers more autonomy and more scope for the
exercise of their own judgement and discretion. It is
also in favour of enhancing the rights of clients and
carers. How are these two objectives to be made
compatible?" (page 245).

This discussion of Barclay is not intended to condemn social
work, in Shaw's phrase, as a "conspiracy against the laity".
There is little doubt that social workers are people who
amongst others in the community, care deeply about social
need and distress and desire to help others towards a more
satisfactory life. But it is clear both from our study
evidence, empirically, and from Barclay, in principle, their
assumed expertise grants them power in policy making, to
define needs, in resource allocation and ultimately, over
people (see also Wilding 1982, chapter 2). The result
is a domination over others whose definitions become
inadmissible as plans for action, and therefore the com-
pounding of the powerlessness of those who find themselves
already vulnerable. Those inequalities which exist in
society are reflected in the operationalisation of social
policy by the social work profession. The Barclay re-
commendations perpetuate those inequalities.

PROFESSIONS AND POWER

I began this thesis with an enquiry into the problem of
professionalism for social work, and tried to demonstrate
from the literature some of the complexities which arise
as a result of viewing professional knowledge and skills
as objectively determinable attributes. The presentation
of the empirical material in Part II attempted to illus-
strate that professionalism is a negotiated process and that
knowledge and skills are the subjective constructs of social
workers, employed to accomplish professionalism. One of
the concerns with which one must be left is this, since
the considerable power which social workers hold over their clients is granted to them on the grounds of their expertise, and since such expertise is still largely unsubstantiated, to what extent has such professional power become illegitimate? In addition, as Wilding has pointed out,

"No doubt it is power exercised for people's assumed good, but it is power exercised by some people over other people and it is power against which, if used in an oppressive, arbitrary or inequitable way there is no redress" (1982, page 50).

One might go further and argue that such power is inherently oppressive, arbitrary and inequitable. The attitude of professional ascendancy which became apparent in the discussion earlier of the Barclay report, undeniably creates conditions which are of positive material benefit to social workers themselves and were it not for the "service ideal", might be mistaken for self-interest. But Marshall's claim that "professionalism ... is not concerned with self-interest but with the welfare of the client" (Marshall 1939, pages 158-9), and that of Talcott Parsons who suggested that professionals are distinguished by their collective-orientation rather than self-orientation (Talcott Parsons 1954, pages 34-49) have been challenged by other writers who have pointed to the way in which any discussion of the work of professionals becomes divorced from considerations of power. Szasz (1961) and Laing (1968) for instance saw psychiatry as presenting as "objective" scientific medicine, what is in fact moral enterprise. Freidson stressed the danger of the professional becoming "a member of a new privileged class disguised as expert" (1970, page 382). Bankowski and Mungham saw the image of the lawyer as "one who helps", as masking the "undercurrents of professionalisation and the distance and control that go with it" (1976, page 4). Becker commented that the decisions professionals make constitute a "choice for the kind of world one is going to wake up in, the kinds of human beings that one will have to come across in the street" (1968,
In social work some radical writers have laid bare and emphasised the relationship of social work to the political struggle and have urged social workers to create an egalitarian relationship with the service user. Galper wrote:

"social service workers have an obligation to demystify the helping process and the interventions which they make on people's behalf. The 'worker as expert' role must be downplayed in favor of the notion of the worker as colleague, political ally, and facilitator" (1980, page 146).

Corrigan and Leonard (1978) have attempted to apply a Marxist analysis of the welfare state to alternative forms of practice in social work. Bailey and Brake (1975) presented a radical critique of social work and called for the development of "a human strategy for socialists concerned with social work practice and education" (page 12). But the impact of alternative approaches to social work has been limited and as we saw in Barclay, on the whole there has been an effective conceptual split between the personal and the political, resulting in a selective perception and articulation of social problems and conflicts. Corby in an article outlining four different approaches to the purposes of social work was pessimistic as to the future acceptance of a radical perspective,

"... because (it offers) a challenge to a basically consensual view of society. In thinking about the future of social work practice and training it is probable that (it) will continue to have a marginal influence in these spheres" (Corby 1982).

Corby's research findings pointed to the continued dominance of social work as (a) a professional helping or treating activity, accompanied by the development of techniques for solving problems and changing behaviour and attitudes; and (b) the maintenance of stability, with an important function of sustaining a dialogue between clients and "society itself". Davies was clear that
social work is not about revolution. "It is about re-
conciliation and compromise - reconciling the personal and
the political, the individual and the state, different
individuals with each other" (1981, page 210). Davies
went further and suggested that when a social worker tries
to go beyond the maintenance/reconciliatory role to anything
other than the most modest degree, "client, agency and
political forces combine to counteract such 'inappropriate'
excursions and to bring the worker back into the professional
mainstream or to eject him altogether" (page 211). What-
ever the future of social work, the establishment of parti-
cular ideological approaches as legitimate ways of viewing
the world and their dominance over other ideologies in
welfare agencies reserve considerable power and authority
within the profession. The effects of such power are far-
reaching and I shall now turn to an examination of some of
these in relation to professions generally but with regard
to social work in particular in an attempt to bring together
the dominant themes which have recurred throughout this
study. The effects of professional power may be viewed
on at least four dimensions, those concerning (i) the
determination of need; (ii) an expert ideology;
(iii) social distance and (iv) reification.

(i) the determination of need: Several writers have
suggested that society is the creative force in the
construction of problems and that professionals, by
embracing unreflected-upon assumptions function to
legitimate institutions of power and interest. Szasz
(1973), saw medicine as involved in the "manufacture" of
madness, Gibson (1970, page 57) suggested that one role
of the police is the "generation" of crime, Marcuse (1968,
pages 19,24) saw a "one dimensional society" as creating
false needs, and for Lukes (1974) needs arise in society
by "definitional fiat", by power groups determining the
individual's "very wants" (page 23). The evidence from
this study and from others such as Smith (1980) and Rees
indicates that in social work the professional social workers see themselves as the primary assessors and determiners of need. Barclay endorsed this state of affairs both in its assumptions as to the nature of need throughout the report and in its discussion of social work values, methods, skills and knowledge in chapter 10. Seebohm had performed a similar function fifteen years earlier. The "power of naming" is effectively removed from the individual and becomes an instrument of social control. The professional naming of problems sees them as technical rather than as structural and as individual rather than as societal. Again, the professional vision is a narrow one, as Wilding (1982) pointed out in this quote:

"professionals show a tendency to define problems in ways which seem to bring them with surprising frequency within the legitimate bounds of their professional concerns ... Ills become illnesses, grief becomes depression. ...Too often professional recipes for policy making amount to nothing more than a plea for more doctors, more social workers, more teachers - more people like us, the people defining the problem in 'professional' terms" (pages, 31-32).

Typifications of for example the family, the elderly and volunteers which we saw at Lakeside and Hilltown reflect a conservative social work which sees clients and others as in need of, in Pearson's words "control, disposal or recycling" (1975a page 15) and susceptible to professional prescriptions. Two consequences flow from this. The first is expressed for us by Lieberman (1970, page 7),

"inherent in the meaning of professionalism and the motives of its adherents is the negation of democracy itself, stemming from the incipient belief that the citizen, like the consumer, is incompetent to make important decisions affecting his life".

The second, closely allied, is put by Zola (1972-3),

"By locating the source and the treatment of problems in an individual other levels of intervention are effectively closed".
Social work with its belief in self-determination and human freedom, at the same time exists to deny such values. Freire in another but not irrelevant context, claimed that to exist humanly is to "name" the world, and an essential part of that naming is dialogue. But, he asked, "if I start from the premise that naming the world is the task of an élite ... how can I hold a dialogue?" (1972, page 63).

We found an absence of any genuine dialogue between volunteers and social workers at Hilltown and at Lakeside. At Hilltown the rhetoric of professionalism was so persuasive that both social workers and volunteers assumed it was the task of the professional élite to name the world, and "naming the world" included defining social need and the means to resolve it, including power to determine the identity of the volunteers, their functions and characteristics and the limits of the knowledge and skills they had to offer.

(ii) an expert ideology: The growth of a profession depends on claiming neutrality on the basis of a particular body of objective knowledge. It gains autonomy by, in Freidson's words asserting the "possession of a skill so esoteric or complex that non-members of the profession cannot perform the work safely or satisfactorily and cannot even evaluate the work properly" (1970, page 45). But the image of the professional as the neutral, technical specialist has been challenged. Wilding for instance pointed out that all positions are political stances and that neutrality is a delusion (1982, page 101). The focus of social work on individual need closes off other approaches, it takes the politics out of social and individual problems, and in doing so aligns itself with interests concerned with the continuance of the status quo. And this recognition of professional activity as political calls for a questioning of the power and privilege which accompany it.

What of the knowledge base and the esoteric skills, for
The power to decide on and to take action which will have far-reaching effects on the lives of people, can only be justified by expertise. Social workers themselves continue to have doubts as to both the knowledge base and the skills they possess, and the findings of this study are supported in this by those of Goldberg and Warburton (1979), Stevenson and Parsloe (1978), Holme and Maizels (1978), among others I referred to in chapter one. Yet it is around the notion of such expertise that autonomy is granted to social workers to control areas of work and to exclude other workers and volunteers; it is on the basis of such knowledge and skills that social work education is organised and that social services are arranged (as we have seen, more so than on the basis of client need). Professional socialisation, in the process of building a professional identity means the social worker becomes profession - rather than client-oriented identifying more with professional concerns, values and interests rather than client needs, and generates what Freidson called "a self-deceiving view of the objectivity and reliability of its knowledge and of the virtues of its members" (1970, pages 369-70).

The concept of professional expertise may be of advantage in the making of professionals, but it compounds the position of inequality of lay persons. Consider the point of the "moral veracity" of the professional which I discussed in chapter 7. The power granted by governments to social workers can only be granted on the basis of public trust, and trust is crucial to the client-professional relationship. The social worker is seen, as Cannan (1972) has it, as "not just a person having special skills, but as a special sort of person ..." (The reader will recall that in the empirical study social workers were never typified as "judgemental" or "unreliable" or lacking any sense of confidentiality, as were volunteers). Pearson described the notion of moral transcendence attributed to professionals, "while morality stands 'out there' it seems divorced from
human agency - at once thinglike, spiritual and unquestionable ... the act of servicing a non-human, non-humanisable moral entity has the appearance of a technical and morally neutral activity, rather than a morally and politically committed persuasion" (1975, page 69) (emphasis original).

The ethics of professionalism encourage social workers to adopt the self-image of independent practitioners and enhance feelings of moral neutrality, self-respect and autonomy. They are discouraged from seeing the programmes they operate as anything other than a humanising force, a caring component to safeguard and further the welfare of citizens.

Inherent in the notion of an expert ideology is the implication that problems should be left to the professionals, and it embodies a "helping" stance where the professional is presented as a friend who can be relied upon to help one through one's troubles. But as Bankowski and Mungham observed, the stress on the service ideal concedes nothing to non-professionals. Their experience of how problems are solved is negated. In discussing the legal profession Bankowski and Mungham commented,

"Law established professionalised ways of solving social problems. It uses as its model the 'expert' and its yardstick 'efficiency'..." (1976, page 27).

The effect, these authors claimed, is that those who would come bearing gifts often succeed only in dominating by kindness. Thus the rendering of a professional service depends on maintaining the incompetence of "the other". Freidson, in his criticism of the medical profession on the same issue, believed that the imposition of one's own notion of good on others always produced "the harm of reducing their humanity" (1970, page 377). Freire spoke of the "false generosity of paternalism" (1972, page 30) where the oppressed become the objects of its humanitarianism, and oppression is maintained and embodied in it. For Freire such an approach is an "instrument of dehumanisation".
His "banking concept" of education is reminiscent of our discussion in chapter 6 (Knowledge and Skills) where social workers and volunteers were typified by the professionals as "knowers" and "non-knowers" respectively.

"In the banking concept of education, knowledge is a gift bestowed by those who consider themselves knowledgeable upon those whom they consider to know nothing. Projecting an absolute ignorance onto others, a characteristic of the ideology of oppression, negates education and knowledge as processes of inquiry. The teacher presents himself to his students as their necessary opposite; by considering their ignorance absolute, he justifies his own existence" (page 46).

In other words, professional rhetoric relating to "helping" and "service", although it may genuinely influence the practice of individual professionals, at the same time functions as a legitimation of professional privilege. It allows professionals to offer help on their terms, to exclude other helpers, to reconstruct problems to conform to the skills they feel they have mastered, yet still believe they are acting in the best interest of the client. And as a result of viewing problems as individualised and unique to people labelled clients the focus is away from what may be the far more critical questions that the client and professional or the volunteer and the professional have in common.

Service to others is rooted in the idea that the professional has an expertise not available to the client or to others in the community. Galper identified as a consequence of this "... unequal distribution of expertise", that "... professional expertise applied in service to others tends to produce inequality in the totality of the helping relationship" (1975, page 96). Beck has argued that without inequality "there would be no social worker-client relationship" (1969, page 18). Indeed the employment of words such as "client", "professional", "volunteer", imply inequalities in social status, knowledge, skills, even moral character.
Some writers have called upon social workers to attempt to redress this inequality. Galper maintained that they have an obligation to "demystify" the helping process (1980, page 146). Cloward and Piven called on them to break with "psychological reductionism" (1975, page xxiv) and Leonard argued that the "key task of radical practice is an educational one. This role aims at contributing to the development in people ... of a critical consciousness of their oppression and of their potential, with others of combating this oppression" (1975a page 57).

But how realistic are these writers in implying that radical social workers are different from liberal or conservative social workers in their willingness to relinquish the privileges which accrue from being a professional person? The radicals are undoubtedly right to draw attention to the relationships which exist between professions and the power structures of the social order, but as professional social workers themselves they also are an inherent part of the state apparatus. But whatever their position, if the Barclay Report is any indication of the future of social work, their calls to action are but voices in the wilderness. While those with power and privilege continue to be reluctant to divest themselves of it, and while clients, volunteers and others continue to be reluctant to assume an active part in the politics of everyday life, the sacred canopy continues to legitimate the existing social, economic and political status quo.

(iii) social distance: One result of the combined powers to define need and to impose an expert ideology is a relationship of dependence on the one hand, and paradoxically, one of social distance on the other. Preservation of the power, prestige and privileges of the professions seems to depend on the maintenance of a gulf between professionals and others. Johnson (1972, page 41) made the point that dependence upon the skills of others reduces the common area
of shared experience and knowledge, and the distance thus engendered creates a structure of uncertainty, bringing with it a tension which must be resolved. Professionals and volunteers meet in situations where the terms of the encounter are dictated by the professionals, where the professionals are "knowledgable" and where the volunteers are in the place of non-knowers, inexperienced, dependent and inferior. Scott (1970) in taking the example of the expert dealing with the physically handicapped, illustrated the disabling and distancing consequences,

"The expert has been specially trained to give professional help to impaired people. He cannot use his expertise if those who are sent to him for assistance do not regard themselves as being impaired. Given this fact it is not surprising that the doctrine has emerged among experts that truly effective rehabilitation and adjustment can occur only after the client has squarely faced and accepted the 'fact' that he is indeed 'impaired' ...

(page 280).

We might legitimately substitute "volunteer" for "impaired people" here, since we had examples in the study of volunteers who adopted the view of themselves as determined by professionals, and that view was of volunteers as acquiescent aides, to be "used" by social workers. By a refusal to acknowledge what they share with volunteers, social work breeds passivity and acceptance. Johnson (quoted earlier) spoke of a reduction in "the common area of shared experience and knowledge" and the resultant creation of distance. For Johnson "the inescapable consequence of specialisation in the production of goods and services is unspecialisation in consumption" (1972, page 41). The suggestion that service users and lay persons are not fully capable of making critical decisions or entering into dialogue with professionals prevents empowerment and any ability to act for themselves. In this study we saw how such distance was maintained by legitimating strategies of social workers and by the absence among volunteers of any collective identity which made control by them over definition of themselves or of need or of services highly unlikely.
Social distance is further maintained by a polarisation of the attributes of the professional and the lay person. Kelly's personal construct theory (see Bannister & Fransella 1971) identified this feature in individual psychology and we considered it in chapter 7 as an implication of the notion of "moral veracity". Other writers have analysed its use to support societal institutions. Earlier in this chapter I cited Mary Daly, a feminist writer who described the masculine/feminine polarity as a "crippling complementarity" (Daly 1973, page 26). The effect of such stereotyping is to "lock" individuals into roles and to attribute to them characteristics perceived to be commensurate with those roles. It is to perpetuate a subject/object split which holds a view of the world, in Buber's terms, of "I - It", rather than "I - Thou" (Buber 1966). With regard to professionals and non-professionals, this means the former may regard themselves as rational, experienced and efficient, viewing non-professionals as intuitive, inexperienced and inferior (and the empirical work of this study bears this out). As a result non-professionals may be excluded legitimately from "professional territory". Freidson remarked that the professional point of view "stresses the ignorance and irrationality of laymen without concern for their counterpart in the ignorance and irrationality of professionals" (1972, page 377). Bankowski and Mungham's comments offer an explanation of this emphasis,

"the knowledgeable client is a threat to the professional, for the basis of the latter's expertise (special knowledge) has been undermined as the mysteries are dissolved through greater popular participation" (1976, page 41).

It is not surprising that Illich proposed to "call the mid-twentieth century the Age of Disabling Professions" (1978, page 39). That technical knowledge which professionals claim, is of itself differentiating, distancing and disabling. Expressed in its extreme form the élites who create
the technical knowledge (and are generated by it) "cannot be with the oppressed, for being against them is the essence of oppression" (Freire 1972, page 115).

There is a further paradox in the notion of social distance. Although professionalism depends on a polarisation of the attributes of members of a profession and those of laypeople, those qualities and virtues which they seek in non-professionals are those which are at the same time claimed as professional "property". Their discovery in the layperson is hailed as "exceptional". We observed in the analysis chapters that some volunteers were said to have the potential to "make good social workers". Bankowski and Mungham also perceived this and described the Weltanchauung of part of the legal profession thus, "those lay-advocates judged to be good are those who aspire to be like lawyers" (1976, page 66). But these authors did not follow through the analysis to the duality which is embodied in this concept. However approving professionals may be of the performance of non-professionals, the latter's attributes are regarded as reflecting dimly those of the professional. The non-professional may never cease to be the mirror and become the magnified image, unless of course she/he is conferred at some stage with the mantle of the profession. Seen in the light of the arguments I have put forward, professions, and for us, social work, with the laudable intention of helping those in need, instead of contributing to a more just and equitable society, have the effect of perpetuating oppression and are themselves part of the problem.

(iv) reification: Berger and Luckmann (1966) defined reification as,

"the apprehension of the products of human activity as if they were something other than human products - such as facts of nature, results of cosmic laws, or manifestations of divine will ... human meanings are no longer understood as world-producing but as being in their turn, products of the
'nature of things' ..." (pages 106-107).

Reification implies that humans are capable of forgetting their own authorship of the human world and so objectivated, it loses its comprehensibility as a human enterprise, becoming fixated as a non-human, non-humanizable, inert facticity. Pearson pointed out that social institutions embody a notion of a "purified social order" (1975, page 48) and present an ideology of social order as a natural phenomenon rather than as a social accomplishment. Freire spoke of the "absolutising of ignorance" (1972, page 104) within which a world presented as a fixed entity in which people as spectators must adapt, increases their passivity and alienation. Young referred to a "monolith of moral absolutism" (1971, chapter 3) and Douglas (1970) said of absolute morality,

"(the official organisations of control) have objectified the absolute morality for the whole society; they have become a largely independent force external to the great majority of individuals in society and exercising power over them in matters of morality, normalcy and social order" (page 21).

The professions, among other institutions in society, present a pre-defined, official version of social reality, a way of seeing which reifies the individual and society. Strauss et al (1964) have demonstrated this in psychiatry, Berger (1969) in the church, Freire (1972) in education, Freidson (1970) in medicine, Bankowski and Mungham (1976) in law and Pearson (1975), Leonard (1975) and Galper (1975) amongst others in social work. Social work, while it defines problems within the bounds of its technical skills on the basis of a moral neutrality is part of the process of legitimation of the status quo.

But social workers are largely unaware of their place in the power structures of society and their function of expressing a given value pattern and morality. Indeed those social workers we saw at Hilltown and Lakeside spent
a great deal of energy sustaining their professional self-image and their view of life as a "problem solving process", and maintaining the exclusiveness of their operations. Even those social workers who held structuralist concepts of social problems performed on the basis of conventional wisdom in their everyday practice. There can be little investment for them in contributing to a dismantling of their professional world which would lead for instance to sharing power with volunteers, clients and others. As Pearson perceived,

"De-reification robs (the professional) of (technical competence and moral veracity) as props to professional legitimacy, for a reified morality is the glue which binds together professional ideology" (1975, page 69).

If social work as a profession were to acknowledge that moral rules are socially constructed, that "need" and "deviance" and "conformity" are part of a man-made world and that social workers themselves are vehicles for institutional programmes which represent a dominant morality whose foundations are political, would this re-location of the professional debate of itself result in authentic transformation of dehumanising structures? That such changes represent a removal of the sacred canopy is an indication that de-reification from the inside alone, is unlikely.

VOLUNTEERS: A COLONISED MENTALITY

"... what I loved most in mother was her self-effacement, her 'dimness'... I can't say she died. She only effaced herself a trifle more than usual, and when I looked round she was no longer there"

Albert Camus, "The Plague"

Throughout this thesis I have used the notion of volunteers in social work as a way to gain some idea of what professionalism means for social workers, and with a view to developing
a theory of volunteers. I return to the subject here finally, in an attempt to review where the empirical study and the analysis of the Barclay Report leaves them and their place in the future of the social services. In chapter 1 I pointed to the political significance of any examination of the role of volunteers, since cutbacks in the social services and a growing number of unemployed have coincided with exhortations and practical encouragement from government to increase voluntary activity. The way in which voluntarism develops may have a far-reaching effect on our ideas about work and therefore on the ways our society is organised. The extent to which volunteers themselves are active in defining that future is the question to which this section is addressed.

The volunteers which I studied played no part in defining themselves or their role. Their attitude to professionals was on the whole acquiescent and their "power of naming" was surrendered to the social workers. Their status was derivative and depended on their relationship with the area team. The typified image of them which predominated was one of "judgemental non-knowers", an image which served to legitimate their exclusion from many areas of work. The petrification which accompanied this held them in a state of powerlessness and they themselves seemed to accept that this was "in the natural order of things". Although I studied only one group of volunteers, the attitude of the Barclay committee suggests that such an image of volunteers exists generally in social work, and Barclay appears to approve such a state. Its discussion of a "genuine partnership" between professionals and others for instance retains the power of naming and the role of expert firmly in the hands of the social workers. Its "equal but different" ideology in fact maintains a segregation, disguises volunteers' low caste status and reinforces a socialisation which expresses qualitative differences between professionals and non-professionals. In such a relationship there is no room
for a view of all presently envisaged goals, lifestyles, symbols and societal structures as transitory, or of reality as a process undergoing constant transformation, or of a world capable of being acted upon and changed and that such action is within each person's sphere. Volunteers represent a colonised mentality.

The term "the colonised mentality", coined by Albert Memmi (1967), was intended to refer to the mixed feelings of contempt and attraction held by the oppressed towards the oppressor. It would be misleading to say that volunteers feel contempt towards professionals but there is certainly evidence of criticism mingled with admiration, even identification with them. There was clearly evidence of their having projected an expert ideology on to the social workers and having made limited use of their own capacity for critical judgment. Indeed there was an attitude of self-depreciation among them, a lack of realisation that they too "know things", a sense of intrinsic inferiority, a "domestication" which Freire suggested derived from an "internalisation" of the opinion others had of the oppressed (1972, page 38). The social reality which was constructed at Lakeside and Hilltown resulted for volunteers (and for clients) in a state of affairs that the social workers themselves would find shocking, that is a reduction in their humanity. Barclay compounds this effect. It is not good enough to say that volunteers are "judgemental non-knowers" (even if they are), and use this as a justification for resisting change. As Martin Luther King observed in the racism struggle,

"there are soft-minded persons who argue that racial segregation should be perpetuated because negroes lag behind in academic, health and moral standards. They are not tough-minded enough to realise that lagging standards are the result of segregation and discrimination. They do not recognise that it is rationally unsound and sociologically untenable to use the tragic effects of segregation as an argument for its continuation" (King 1963, page 12).
Society's institutions provide us with examples (and I have referred to several throughout the thesis) of how on grounds of inherent characteristics stands the legitimation of the dominance of some groups over others whether the latter are Blacks, women, "deviants", patients, clients, volunteers or whatever. But continuation of such dominance depends on the acceptance of the definitions by those defined by them. In our context, one of the difficulties in redressing this inequality is in overcoming the lack of awareness of it among social workers and more importantly, among volunteers themselves. Marcuse has written,

"All liberation depends on the consciousness of servitude, and the emergence of this consciousness is always hampered by the predominance of needs and satisfactions which, to a great extent, have become the individual's own" (1968, page 7).

If as I have argued, it is in the nature of professions to discourage and act against the equal sharing of power with others in the community, whatever ideals individual professionals may hold, then the onus must be on the community, or in this case, volunteers, to discover for themselves that they have the power to "name the world", and to discover ways of acting upon that knowledge. But the essence of the colonised mentality is not only the "consciousness of servitude" but also "repressive satisfaction" (Daly 1973, page 144), which relies on others to be "experts" or which derives status from identification with professionals or which allows one to be of service to others without ultimate responsibility. A tackling of repressive satisfaction is a first step in a dereification of the world and signifies a preparedness to challenge belief systems which have become hardened and objectified, and a willingness to strike out at internalised images, and as a result, at externalised structures. As Daly put it, "the vision of human becoming as a process of integration and transformation ... potentially includes both the individualistic ontological dimension of

The current volunteers in this study, because they were so closely aligned with professional social work could be described as both oppressed and oppressor. They were oppressed in that they were powerless to define themselves and their contribution, and their continuing as volunteers depended upon their acceptance of the professionals' world view. They were oppressor in that they had become part of a social work professional ideology and as representatives of the social work department were in a position to become carriers of dominant values and beliefs. Perhaps this identification with the social work agency puts such volunteers at a greater disadvantage than others who might not have those links, and renders genuine dialogue with professionals even more of a difficulty.

In any case the kind of dialogue suggested by Barclay is spurious because it retains the power of naming in the control of the experts. The question to be addressed is whether it is desirable for volunteers to be active in constructing a theory of their own "becoming", and if so how can they initiate means to organise themselves in ways appropriate to that end? And indeed can they make any effective assault on the social work world if they attempt to change the rules of the game?

The aims of this study have been to examine the process by which social policy documents concerning the roles of professional social workers and volunteers, are implemented through the operation of individual ideologies, to understand something of the meaning of professionalism for social workers and layworkers and how it is accomplished, and to contribute to a theory of volunteers in social work. I have adopted a methodological approach which has tried to demonstrate that different ideologies embodied in policy documents are employed to different ends in different
contexts by social workers in the accomplishment of social work and that their implementation depends on assumptions concerning qualitative differences between social workers and others. I have suggested that a way of describing social work as based on an identification of professional knowledge and skills as objectively definable, fixed attributes of social workers functions as a resource used to facilitate the division of labour within organisations and to maintain a professional self-image, and in this chapter I have pointed to some political implications of the role of professionals. As for volunteers, they may continue to allow themselves to be defined by the professionals and they may be used increasingly to carry out jobs similar to those of paid staff. Their presence may increasingly deflect the impact of growing unemployment and of government's economic policies. They may find that their present satisfactions are such that there is no motivation for change, and so continue to hold a static view of themselves and what they do. Numerically they are likely to grow, but like Camus's character, a trifle more self-effacing may mean, in a very vital sense, that they will come to be "no longer there".
APPENDIX

THE INTERVIEW GUIDES

(1) GUIDE FOR INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEWS WITH SOCIAL WORKERS AT LAKESIDE AND HILLTOWN

A. GENERAL

1. How long have you been qualified as a social worker?
2. How long have you been in the team?
3. In what capacity?
4. Can you describe your caseload to me?
5. What do you enjoy about the work?
6. What do you dislike about the work?
7. How are cases allocated in this team?
8. How much choice do you have about the kinds of cases you will accept?
9. What do you think about this?
10. I have the impression that social workers in this team tend to work more with families and children than with the elderly and the physically handicapped for example, Is this the case?
11. Why do you say that?

B. ON BEING A PROFESSIONAL PERSON

1. Can you tell me about your training as a social worker. What did it consist of?
2. How do you view your training now?
3. Have you developed skills as a professional person?
4. What are they?
5. How do you use them on the job?
6. Have you gained knowledge as a professional person?
7. What kinds of knowledge?
8. How do you use them on the job?
9. Which do you feel is more important, training or experience?
10. Why do you say that?
11. Are there differences between social workers and other paid workers, for example social work assistants?
12. What do you mean by that?
13. Do you feel there are jobs only trained social workers should do?
14. Why do you say that?
15. Which jobs do you have in mind?
16. Do you feel there are client groups only social workers should be involved with?
17. Why do you say that?
18. Which client groups do you have in mind?

C. VOLUNTEERS
1. What do you think in principle about the idea of volunteers in social work?
2. What kinds of jobs do volunteers do in this team?
3. Which client groups are they involved with?
4. Do you have volunteers involved in any of your cases?
5. If yes, can you describe the cases and the volunteer's role?
6. If no, why is this?
7. Do you have cases which you think might be suitable for volunteer help but where you have not involved any yet?
8. If yes, can you describe them?
9. What would you want a volunteer to do?
10. Why have you not involved a volunteer?
11. What kinds of people do you think want to become volunteers?
12. Why do you think they want to do it?
13. What do you think about that?
14. Have you attended any training courses for volunteers?
15. How long did it last?
16. How was it organised?
17. What was the content?
18. Was it what you had expected?
19. Why do you say that?
20. Do you think it was useful for the volunteers?
21. What do you mean by that?
22. Do you think volunteers could do the job without attending a training course?
23. Why do you say that?
24. Do you think training for volunteers is more or less important than experience?
25. Why do you say that?
26. Some volunteers have said they were not followed up after their training course. Can you comment on that?
27. What skills do you think volunteers should have?
28. Why do you say that?
29. What kinds of knowledge do you think volunteers should have?
30. Why do you say that?
31. Are there differences between volunteers and paid workers such as social work assistants?
32. What are the differences?
33. Are there differences between volunteers and social workers?
34. What do you mean by that?
35. Some social workers are concerned about the reliability and the ability of volunteers to observe confidentiality. What is your view?
36. What do you think about supervision of the work of volunteers?
37. Do you have contact with the volunteers organiser?
38. If yes, how much and what happens?
39. Do you think more or less contact is desirable?
40. Why do you say that?
41. How does he go about influencing the team about volunteers?
42. How effective do you think that is?
43. What do you think of the government's idea to encourage the unemployed to become volunteers?
44. If social workers went on strike, do you think volunteers could keep the services going?
45. Why do you say that?
46. Do you think they should step in?
47. Why do you say that?
48. Are there jobs which you think are particularly suitable for volunteers?
49. Which jobs?
50. Why do you choose those?
51. Are there jobs which you think under no circumstances should be given to volunteers?
52. Which jobs?
53. Why do you choose those?
54. Are there client groups which you think are particularly suitable for volunteers?
55. Which client groups?
56. Why do you choose those?
57. Are there client groups which you think under no circumstances volunteers should be involved with?
58. Which client groups?
59. Why do you choose those?
60. Do you think volunteers could do positive damage to clients?
61. What do you mean by that?
62. Why do you think some volunteers discontinue?

(2) GUIDE FOR INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEWS WITH CURRENT AND EX-VOLUNTEERS

A. GENERAL

Current Volunteers Only

1. How long have you been doing voluntary work with the social work department (SWD)?
2. How did you hear about it?
3. When you approached the SWD what did you have in mind?
4. What happened?
5. What kinds of voluntary work do volunteers do in this team?
6. What kind of voluntary work do you do? Please describe it.
7. Is there a social worker involved too?
8. If so, what contact do you have?
9. What do you think about that?
10. If not, do you think there is a need for a social worker?
11. Why do you say that?
12. What action have you taken about it?
13. What do you enjoy about your voluntary work?
14. What do you dislike about it?
15. How long do you plan to stay as a volunteer?
16. Do you meet with other volunteers?
17. If yes, how often?
18. What happens at the meetings?
19. What do you think about the meetings?
20. What are the other volunteers like as people?
21. If you don't meet with other volunteers, what do you think about that?
22. Do some volunteers discontinue?
23. Why do you think this happens?
24. Do you have any contact with the volunteers organiser?
25. If yes, how much and what happens?
26. Do you think more or less contact is desirable?
27. Why do you say that?
28. How does he go about influencing the team about volunteers?
29. How effective do you think that is?

Ex-volunteers Only
1. When did you first approach the SWD as a volunteer?
2. How did you hear about it?
3. What did you have in mind?
4. What happened?
5. Were you offered any voluntary work?
6. If yes, what happened?
7. If no, why do you think that was?
8. At what stage did you discontinue?
9. Why was this?
10. Did you get in touch with anyone to discuss it?
11. If yes, who and what happened?
12. If no, why was that?
13. Have you taken up any other voluntary work?
14. If yes, what kind?
15. How long have you been doing it?
16. How long do you plan to continue?
17. Do you think other volunteers discontinue their voluntary work?
18. Why do you think that is?
19. If you did some voluntary work with the SWD, can you tell me about it?
20. What was your role in it?
21. Was there a social worker involved in it?
22. What did you think about that?
23. If not, did you think there was a need for a social worker?
24. Why do you say that?
25. What action did you take?
26. What did you enjoy about your voluntary work?
27. What did you dislike about it?
28. Did you meet with other volunteers?
29. If yes, how often?
30. What happened at the meetings?
31. What did you think about the meetings?
32. What were the other volunteers like as people?
33. Did you have any contact with the volunteers organiser?
34. If yes, how much and what happened?
35. Was it helpful or not?
36. Why did you want to do voluntary work?

B. ON BEING A VOLUNTEER (both Current and Ex-volunteers)
1. Did you attend the training course for volunteers?
2. How long did it last?
3. How was it organised?
4. What was the content of the course?
5. Was it what you had expected?
6. Why do you say that?
7. Did you find it useful?
8. What do you mean by that?
9. Do you think you could carry out voluntary work without attending the course?
10. Why do you say that?
11. Do you think training for volunteers is more or less important than experience?
12. Why do you say that?
13. What happened after the training course?
14. What did you think about that?
15. What jobs were you offered?
16. Did you accept?
17. Why?
18. Some volunteers have said they were not followed up after the training course. Can you comment on that?
19. What skills do you think volunteers should have?
20. Why do you say that?
21. What kinds of knowledge do you think volunteers should have?
22. Why do you say that?
23. Are there differences between volunteers and paid workers such as social work assistants?
24. What are these differences?
25. What do you think of the government's ideas to encourage the unemployed to become volunteers?
26. If social workers went on strike do you think volunteers could keep the services going?
27. Why do you say that?
28. Do you think they should step in?
29. Why do you say that?
30. Are there jobs you think are particularly suitable for volunteers?
31. Which jobs?
32. Why do you choose these?
33. Are there jobs you feel under no circumstances should be given to volunteers?
34. Which jobs?
35. Why do you choose these?
36. Are there client groups which you feel under no circumstances should volunteers be involved with?
37. Which client groups?
38. Why do you choose these?
39. Do you think volunteers could do positive damage to clients?
40. What do you mean by that?
41. What would you do if you were told something confidential by a client?
42. Why do you say that?
43. Is your work supervised by a social worker?
44. What do you think about that?

C. SOCIAL WORKERS (both Current and Ex-volunteers)
1. What kinds of jobs do social workers do?
2. Have you had contact with them?
3. If so, in what ways?
4. What do you think about this?
5. What kind of training do you think social workers have for the job?
6. What kinds of things do they need to know?
7. Why do you say that?
8. What skills do they need?
9. Why do you say that?
10. Are there differences between social workers and volunteers?
11. What do you mean by that?
12. Have you thought about social work as a career?
13. Why do you say that?
14. If you went for social work training do you think it would make a difference to you?
15. What do you mean by that?
16. I have the impression that social workers tend to work
more often with families and children than with the elderly and physically handicapped, for example. Do you think this is the case?

17. Why do you say that?

18. Do you feel there are jobs only trained social workers should do?

19. Why do you say that?

20. Which jobs do you have in mind?

21. Do you feel there are client groups only trained social workers should be involved with?

22. Why do you say this?

23. Which client groups do you have in mind?
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