

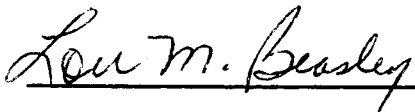
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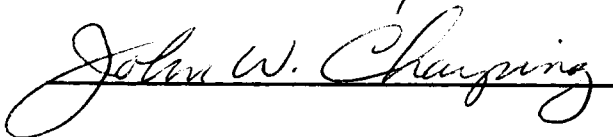
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Robert C. Bonovich, Major Professor

We have read this thesis
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ATTITUDES OF SOCIAL WORK PRACTITIONERS
TOWARD HUMAN DEVELOPMENT THEORY:
IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE WITH YOUNG ADULTS

A Thesis
Presented for the
Master of Science Degree
in Social Work
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Becky Downs Curry
Mary Catherine Love

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ABSTRACT

This exploratory study surveyed the attitudes of MSSW practitioners toward human development theory in relation to young adults between the ages of twenty-one and thirty-five. Also, a range of resolutions for the young adult psychosocial crisis of intimacy versus isolation were explored and investigated. Finally, the project examined the general and case-specific influences on practice with young adult clients as reported by the practitioners who responded to the questionnaire.

A survey questionnaire (Appendix A) was used to gather data for this endeavor. The sample consisted of 100 randomly selected members of the Middle Tennessee Branch of the National Association of Social Workers. Questionnaires returned represented 64 percent of the total sampling frame. The researchers requested information around the following areas: Section A - Role of Theory in Guiding Practice, Section B - Factors Guiding Practice In Addition To Theory, and Section C - Subject Demographic Data.

The findings in this study yielded an abundance of embryonic material to consider in further research efforts. The information indicated that Erikson's epigenetic concepts are a dominant force in the education of graduate social work practitioners. In addition, it was discovered that most social workers surveyed hold a positive attitude toward human development theory and its role in their practice.

Many factors beyond theory are thought to influence practice in ways which are still to be determined. These factors include practice experience and the social worker's own life experiences. The only statistically significant relationship was between the numbers of years in practice and the general influence of practice experience. As social workers gain more hands-on experience, they are less likely to see this practice experience as the most significant general influence on their work with young adults.

As stated earlier, this research was of an exploratory nature; thus, the conclusions derived expose several areas which need further, more in-depth research. These include:

1. the relationship between theory and practice,
2. the nature of general and case-specific influences on practice,
3. the ways in which social workers' attitudes are influenced, and
4. the influence of specific demographic data on practitioners' professional development.

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CHAPTER I

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Purpose of the Study

This research project focuses upon the social work practitioner's approach to working with young adults. It explores this area of practice by identifying and investigating:

1. the theories of human development taught in graduate social work education programs,
2. the attitudes (both initially and at present) toward those theories,
3. perceptions of the usefulness of human development theory in practice with young adult clients, and
4. additional factors that may influence establishing effective practice skills for working with the young adult.

In addition, this research investigates how social work practitioners view a range of possible resolutions to the psychosocial crisis of intimacy versus isolation in the young adult life stage as posited by Erikson.

Need For the Study

"When childhood and youth come to an end, life, so the saying goes, begins: by which we mean work or study for a

specified career, sociability with the other sex, and in time, marriage and a family of one's own" (Erikson, 1959, pp. 100-101). The preceding quote identifies an expectation which highlights the dilemma upon which this study is based. Human development theory is the cornerstone of the social work profession. It is this body of theory in which social work practitioners are steeped and prepared for entry into the field. Erikson's suggestion highlights the bind that not only restricts young adult lifestyle choices but also limits the range of resolutions to the achievement of intimacy as presented to burgeoning practitioners in graduate schools of social work. Thus, psychosocial human development theory is culturally biased and narrow in that the development of intimacy is suggested to be best achieved by the union of male and female in marriage.

Growth . . . becomes inextricably entwined with the challenges that are presumed to reside uniquely in certain role relationships. Marriage, for example, is presumed to provide the arena for development of intimacy; and childrearing, for the development of nurturance. The difficulty in this approach lies in moving toward a normative view that assumes that those who do not experience the challenges available in the usual social roles cannot expect to develop into full maturity (Weick, 1983, p. 132).

This narrow resolution for the young adult psychosocial crisis is incompatible with established social work values and principles. These generally accepted values and principles are enumerated by Hepworth and Larsen (1982) in the following fashion:

1. Affirming the worth and dignity of clients,

2. Affirming uniqueness and individuality, and
3. Affirming problem-solving capacities and self-determination (p. 44).

Implied in each of the preceding is the assumption that each person has the right and capability of choice without the restriction of an imposed narrowness of available alternatives. Goldstein (1984) expresses the need to examine this theory in light of the above predicament:

In some instances the theory may need to be revised in the light of new data regarding how (different) individuals cope. For example, it is clear that the normative expectations of the society with respect to sex roles, sexual behavior and preference, family structure and functioning, and matters of lifestyle affect the individual during the developmental process. . . . Individuals who differ from the norms, moreover, must develop new strategies and environmental support systems to cope with the resultant stresses of being different (p. 19).

Despite the identified biases inherent in human development theory, one major premise of this study maintains that theory is essential to the training and practice of social workers. Brennan and Weick (1981) sum up this position:

In the process of linking together pieces of the human puzzle . . . theory becomes an active ingredient in the helping process because the social worker may use it to reframe the client's experience and thus, create the image of new possibilities and new choices. Clearly the social worker's theoretical perspective is a significant determinant of the content of the reframing process (p. 17).

This research project contends that, beyond the ways in which human development theory is presented to and received by graduate social work students, the practitioner's work

with the young adult is also shaped by a variety of factors which combine to form their personal and professional attitudes toward this group. That contention finds support in the following:

The attitude has cognitive and affective properties by virtue of the fact that the several beliefs comprising it have cognitive and affective properties that interact and reinforce one another. Newcombe, Turner, and Converse (1965) have put it well when they write: "The attitude concept seems to reflect quite faithfully the primary form in which past experience is summed, stored, and organized in the individual as he approaches any new situation" (Rokeach, 1968, p. 116).

Several previous research projects (I. K. Broverman, D. M. Broverman, Clarkson, Rosenkrantz, and Vogel, 1970; Howard and Orlinsky, 1970; Davenport and Reims, 1978) have explored the relationship between attitudes and practice. One in particular is worth noting as the findings indicate that "clinicians' attitudes are influenced by factors other than the theoretical materials to which they are exposed" (Davenport and Reims, 1978, p. 308). The results of that endeavor point out that

professional education is concerned with the total person--with values and attitudes as well as intellectual mastery. Consequently, it is important that those institutions be aware of current social movements and their potential influence on the attitudes of their students (Davenport and Reims, 1978, p. 308).

The interrelatedness of attitude and practice also has implications for individual practitioners. Social workers must be ever cognizant that "their attitudes are influenced by factors external to their training and they cannot assume

that professional training in and of itself will address or correct potential biases" (Davenport and Reins, 1978, p. 308). The foregoing position calls for a willingness to take risks and participate in on-going self-evaluation, both professionally and personally.

Finally, the overarching motivation for this research is that a more inclusive, less restricting view of lifestyle choices for young adults will be integrated with the foundational themes represented in human development theory. In essence, this is a desire for theory and practice to support and complement one another in ways that not only guide and benefit the profession of social work, but also assure that young adult clients are approached with the practice and educational skills which best serve their diverse and changing needs. This research sets the stage to examine what Frank (1979) calls "our tendency as professionals to connect our identities with either theory-building or practice, thereby maintaining a split that impairs our professional development. Theory-builders are the map-makers while practitioners are the travelers along the road" (pp. 393-394). Linking theory and practice is viewed as one way to deal with the cultural biases and narrowness present in the tenets of human developmental theory.

We live and work in a rapidly changing world. There are changes in family structure, in sex roles, in sexual behavior, in sexual preferences, in child-rearing practices . . . We are actively

engaged in treating troubled individuals, families, and communities who are involved in life structures that are markedly different from the recent past. . . . We are actively engaged in treating and consulting about changing life conditions (Frank, 1979, p. 394).

The conviction of the researchers is that the need to be responsive to the above-outlined changes beckons the profession of social work to examine its presentation of human development theory and that the underlying values and principles of social work endow the profession with the courage to confront this self-reflective task.

Limitations

In pursuing any research topic, limitations to investigation are inevitable. The limitations which represent the major stumbling blocks in this project are outlined in order that the data analysis can be viewed in as realistic a fashion as possible. First and foremost, this research is exploratory in nature; it is seen as the first step toward gathering a base of data from which to examine a complex issue. The research instrument is a survey questionnaire calling for personal as well as professional openness; thus, there is some question regarding the level of candor represented in the responses. Additionally, the research design does not allow for the presentation of information pertaining to the respondents' education and training prior to their enrollment in graduate school. Questions around what experiences (both formal and informal)

practitioners have brought into the professional education program remain unanswered. The ways in which demographic attributes such as family of origin and current lifestyle impact upon the social work practitioner and service delivery to young adult clients are not fully explored by this project. Finally, this research stops short of providing insight into how perceptions of theory, influences on practice, and the profile of the individual practitioner actually translate into therapeutic behavior while interacting with the young adult client.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

In considering the focus and purpose of this study, it is necessary to investigate and report on several topics which compose the body of relevant literature. Since the unit of analysis is social work practitioners, it is imperative to examine what social work education proposes as appropriate and essential to the professional needs of developing practitioners. Because this project is concerned with the client population of young adults and there is considerable evidence to support the study of human development in the adult years, information will be presented to establish the validity of probing into the area of young adulthood.

A substantial amount of the research of this endeavor is concerned with the identification and understanding of human development theory in relation to social work practice with young adults. Erikson's epigenetic view represents a foundational component of graduate social work education. In order to solidify many aspects of this research, the body of literature around human development theory will be summarized. In response to this study's supposition that human development theory is culturally biased and narrow in its presentation of "acceptable" alternatives for young

adults, current trends in lifestyles and the myriad of choices undertaken by young adults will be described and examined.

The review of the literature connected to this research is seen as critical to the development of this project, as well as to the analysis and reporting of data elicited by this study.

Preparation of Social Work Practitioners

"A profession is often measured by its educational processes" (Dinerman and Geismar, 1984, p. xii). Through social work education programs, the profession sets forth its theoretical perspectives and ideals and thus, prepares students who become practitioners and in turn, perpetuate the profession. The social work educator

has a grave responsibility and a profound influence on the relationship between theory and practice. The educator meets the practitioner at the point of formal entry into the profession. . . . He can make clear that theory is the foundation of practice and that practice forms and refines theory (Frank, 1979, p. 395).

In accordance with accreditation standards of the Council on Social Work Education, MSW programs include coverage of Human Behavior and the Social Environment as part of their core curriculum. Dinerman and Geismar (1984) found that "graduate programs usually emphasize personality and psychological theories, rather than social theories" (p. 18). At least since 1959 with the publication of Social Work Curriculum Study, CSWE has recognized

the need for the profession to develop social work theory both by selecting social science theories and testing them for their usefulness in social work and by refining concepts that have been empirically tested in social work practice. Only by some such process as these can order come from the present confusion in the human behavior and social environment area (Dinerman and Geismar, 1984, pp. 18-19).

Social work has been called "a profession dependent on borrowed knowledge" (Goldstein, 1980, p. 174). Human Behavior and the Social Environment courses are often based on a variety of theories, including those of human development, resulting in a "piecemeal" approach.

It is a mistake to see this compartmentalization and fragmentation of knowledge as resulting only from particular biases and capacities of social work faculty and practitioners. The linkages among diverse conceptual vantage points that may be used to guide practitioners have not yet been mapped out. Establishing these linkages is the profession's challenge (Goldstein, 1980, p. 175).

It is incumbent upon social workers--educators and practitioners alike--"to reexamine the knowledge they are using to guide others, as well as the values on which this knowledge is based" (Goldstein, 1980, p. 174) and compare it with the values and principles of social work.

Most foundation theory is largely based on observations of white, middle-class heterosexual individuals and intact families. It makes assumptions about what constitutes optimal personality and social functioning or optimal environmental conditions. These assumptions are not always appropriate to the understanding of people from different backgrounds and in various life circumstances (Goldstein, 1984, p. 19).

Need to Study Adulthood

The population under study in this research project is that of the young adult between the ages of twenty-one and thirty-five. There has been a recent interest in studying adulthood which one author states is "akin to filling in the remaining white parts on the map The adult years have been almost the only phase left to investigate" (Smelser and Erikson, 1980, p. 1). This concentration on adulthood is an attempt to answer the inquiries: "If we concentrate on childhood as developmental, eventually the question must arise, developmental toward what? If we regard old age as somehow or other a decline, it excites the question, decline from what?" (Smelser and Erikson, 1980, p. 2). When this probing is coupled with the fact that in recent years, adulthood has become problematic, one is struck by the need to study the adult to give definition to and thus increase control over this phase of life (Smelser and Erikson, 1980, p. 2). Many modern social changes have rendered adulthood more tedious; among these changes are: 1) the lowering of the marriage rate, 2) delayed marriage, 3) reduced period of childbearing and rearing, 4) prolonged period of the "empty nest", 5) widowhood and divorce, and 6) new concern with the survival, wholeness and autonomy of the self (Smelser and Erikson, 1980, p. 140).

In regard to studying the adult years, the issues of patterns of adaptation and change are essential. One is virtually forced to ponder the following questions:

1. What are the general characteristics . . . of adulthood?
2. Is adulthood best regarded as a non-cumulative parade of life situations made up of events, crises, responses, adaptations, successes, and failures or is there some kind of cumulative or developmental pattern?
3. How strong are the patterns?
4. Is it possible to identify certain developmental regularities that persist despite divergent life experiences and idiosyncratic personal histories?
5. If states are identified and postulated, by what dimensions are they characterized?
6. What are the sources or determinants of change in adulthood?
7. Can experiences in adulthood be evaluated? (Smelser and Erikson, 1980, p. 6)

Additional reasons for studying certain aspects of adulthood lie in the ways that a culture organizes and frames adult life. Erikson writes that the irony of American identity formation "seems to support an individual's ego identity as long as he can preserve a certain element of deliberate tentativeness of autonomous choice" (Smelser and Erikson, 1980, p. 126). The study of adulthood leads to better understanding of why adult commitments in American culture represent defeat rather than the fulfillment of the quest for identity. This tension between choice and commitment embodies the problem of moral self-definition and

the achievement of identity (Smelser and Erikson, 1980, pp. 126-127).

In contrast to traditional views that development begins with birth and is completed by young adulthood at which time the individual is unmalleable and difficult to treat due to unresolved childhood conflicts, the life span approach posits that behavior and personality remain flexible throughout life and major changes can occur at any time (Streever and Wodarski, 1984, p. 267).

The basic assumptions of life cycle theory, as presented by Brennan and Weick (1981), clearly spell out the need to examine the human experience in its entirety:

1. Humans continue to develop throughout life.
2. Life unfolds in stages during the course of adulthood.
3. The stages are divided by transition periods that are sometimes punctuated by crises.
4. Transitions provide opportunities for growth.
5. Adulthood is to be examined in terms of the underlying health and strength people have to cope with change (p. 16).

In light of this dynamic portrayal of adulthood, one can readily identify the critical need to study adults as they pass through their ever-changing and evolving reality.

Finally, the call to study the adult years comes from the changing roles of the adult, the increased number of lifestyle choices available, and the shifting ideas regarding what is appropriate and acceptable in our culture. Investigating the adult experience then "enables practitioners to anticipate future consequences for clients if necessary competencies are not mastered at each stage and

to plan appropriate interventions" (Streever and Wodarski, 1984, p. 278). However, as a profession, social work must take this inquiry one step further and examine the tasks that have traditionally been "requisite to success in American society" (Streever and Wodarski, 1984, p. 278). The hard questions must be asked: 1) Are these prescribed tasks still relevant and appropriate? 2) Are these tasks value-laden in favor of the majority? 3) Are these tasks or are they choices which the adult must confront after the adolescent stage?

As in other professional debates, the field is divided around these questions. A large portion of the literature would agree with Streever and Wodarski's (1984) conclusion:

Intimacy implies that one has the ability for mutual empathy and regulation of needs, as well as the ability to experience an open, tender relationship with another without fear of losing the self in the process Mutuality is the central process. The ability to achieve mutuality increases the strength and resources available to the marriage and to the individual (p. 275).

In contrast, another faction declares that

the modern ideals for the self, in particular the emphasis on self actualization and the demand for continuing growth and change in adulthood, clash head on with the traditional ideal of love as commitment The search for self knowledge and identity is still central, but that search can no longer be defined by a single decisive choice In keeping alive the image of love as a crucible for identity, but making the quest for identity and the quest for love continuing preoccupations, the emerging love mythology validates adulthood as a period of continuing crises, challenge, and change. It rejects the notion that life's dilemmas are resolved at one crucial moment of choice and commitment, after which one must live

happily ever after (Smelser and Erikson, 1980, pp. 128-130).

The argument of Lifton (1971) and Keniston (1968) "that modern society changes the nature of identity, making it more flexible, less fixed, and less permanent than traditional models of personal development allowed" (Smelser and Erikson, 1980, p. 131) demands that adulthood be dissected in order that the challenges be as clear and as inclusive as possible.

Human Development Theory

Erikson, a pioneer in viewing human development across the life span, cultivated the seeds planted by Freud and early ego psychologists to formulate psychosocial development theory. While Freud wrote about personality moving toward maturation through "innately controlled sequences of developmental changes" (Hall, 1979, p. 72), he showed a "lack of appreciation of life-long developmental processes" (Goldstein, 1984, p. 9). Freud specified psychosexual stages of development from infancy through adolescence "that were central in the origination of anxiety, conflicts, defenses, adult character traits, and neurotic symptoms" (Goldstein, 1984, p. 5). In 1923, Freud wrote The Ego and the Id in which he posited his structural theory. Although it did not explain interpersonal, environmental, and cultural influences on development, "structural theory permitted greater understanding of the

individual's negotiations with the external world"
(Goldstein, 1984, p. 6).

Expanding on her father's foundation, Anna Freud "linked the origin of defenses to specific developmental phases . . . and identified the importance of the adaptiveness of so-called defensive behavior" (Goldstein, 1984, pp. 6-7). Meanwhile in 1939, Hartmann "added a new dimension to psychoanalytic theory by focusing on the individual's innate ego apparatuses and their conflict-free development and on his more active, adaptive relationship to external reality" (Goldstein, 1984, p. 8). Attempting to synthesize ego psychology with Freud's conceptualizations, Rappaport

identified the importance of considering personality generally and each individual specifically from six points of view: the topographic (conscious, preconscious, unconscious), the structural (id, ego, superego), the genetic-developmental (historical), the dynamic (the drives), the economic (distribution of energy), and the adaptive (relationship to reality) (Goldstein, 1984, p. 9).

In reaction to the lack of attention to human growth during adulthood and the interrelatedness of society and the individual, Erikson set forth psychosocial theory which has been called "an organic extension" of Freud's psychoanalysis (Erikson, 1979, p. 11). Erikson characterized human development as an epigenetic process, an "unfolding" in stages from infancy through old age.

Each item of the healthy personality is systematically related to all others and . . . they all depend on the proper development in the proper sequence of each item

. . . Each item exists in some form before its decisive and critical time normally arrives (Erikson, 1959, p. 54).

Each stage of development is marked by a developmental crisis, i.e., "a crucial period of increased vulnerability and heightened potential, and therefore, the ontogenetic source of generational strength and maladjustment" (Erikson, 1980, p. 20). Erikson (1959) identified eight stages of psychosocial development specifying the crises as follows:

- I Trust vs. Mistrust - Infancy
- II Autonomy vs. Shame, Doubt - Early Childhood
- III Initiative vs. Guilt - Play Age
- IV Industry vs. Inferiority - School Age
- V Identity vs. Identity Diffusion - Adolescence
- VI Intimacy vs. Isolation - Young Adulthood
- VII Generativity vs. Stagnation - Adulthood
- VIII Integrity vs. Despair - Mature Age (p. 129).

Erikson presents human growth

from the point of view of the conflicts, inner and outer, which the healthy person weathers, emerging with an increased sense of inner unity, with an increase of good judgment and an increase in the capacity to do well, according to the standards of those who are significant to him. The use of the words "to do well," of course, points up the whole question of cultural relativity (Erikson, 1959, p. 52).

Young adulthood, according to Erikson, is when "life . . . begins: by which we mean work or study for a specified career, sociability with the other sex, and, in time, marriage and a family of one's own" (Erikson, 1959, pp. 100-101). The individual who successfully resolves the crisis of young adulthood establishes intimacy, i.e., "the capacity to commit oneself to concrete affiliations which may call for significant sacrifices and compromises"

(Erikson, 1982, p. 70). This stage of development follows the establishment of a sense of identity in adolescence for "the youth who is unsure of his identity shies away from interpersonal intimacy," fearful of losing his/herself in the process (Erikson, 1959, p. 101). Intimate relationships take the form of

friendship, combat, leadership, love and inspiration. . . . Where a youth does not accomplish such intimate relations with others--and . . . with his own inner resources--. . . he may either isolate himself and find, at best, highly stereotyped and formal interpersonal relations (formal in the sense of lacking in spontaneity, warmth, and real exchange of fellowship), or he must seek them in repeated attempts and repeated failures (Erikson, 1959, p. 101).

In agreement with Freud, Erikson proposed that a "healthy" person should be able to love and work, i.e., maintain "a general productiveness which would not preoccupy the individual to the extent that his right or capacity to be a sexual and loving being would be lost" (Erikson, 1959, p. 102). The psychosocial strength resulting from the establishment of intimacy is love which is "the guardian of that elusive and yet all-pervasive power of cultural and personal style which binds into a 'way of life' the affiliations of competition and cooperation, procreation and production" (Erikson, 1980, p. 27).

In addition to the primary work of Erikson, graduate social work education programs incorporate interpreters of the Eriksonian approach. Those authors who elucidate upon

Erikson's theory present a diverse range of responses to his conceptualization of the unfolding of adulthood.

Lidz (1983) is a forerunner of those who support and elaborate upon the work of Erikson; Lidz's views regarding the young adult stage are summarized in the following statements:

1. . . . Young adults must focus energies and interests even more definitively as they commit themselves to a specific way of life; to marriage, with its libidinal investment in a single significant person; and to producing and nurturing a new generation. Now, more than ever, alternative ways of life must be renounced to permit the singleness of purpose required for success and to consolidate one's identity; and intimacy becomes reserved for a single person to make possible meaningful sharing with a spouse (pp. 377-378).

2. . . . (Women) can also go beyond objectivity and insist that sexual equality means the absence of any differences between the sexes, and in the process deny the advantages of being a woman--rejecting any desire to have a child. They may also turn away from any need for a man, and find that they can gain sexual fulfillment through lesbian relationships. Perhaps, more unfortunately, they may become aggressively overcompetitive, identifying with the enemy, so to speak and forgetting that they had objected to such aggressive competitive behavior in men (p. 385).

3. If (women) are to have a career, they must find the proper man who will help them manage both career and marriage (p. 385).

4. The choice of an occupation and the choice of a mate are the decisions that start young adults on their way to commitment and the direction it provides (p. 390).

5. Vocational choice and marital choice are two of the most significant decisions of a lifetime They are two cardinal resultants of the lengthy process of achieving adulthood that we have been tracing; and now these decisions will become major determinants of the course of the individual's further personality development, of the satisfactions that will be gained from life, and of the trials and problems that will

ensue and strain the integration of the personality and perhaps even warp it. The individual's own capacities and integration markedly influence the choices of occupation and spouse, and then influence how the person can cope with and gain fulfillment from both--and subsequently from being a parent (p. 378).

In recent years, Newman & Newman (1984) have offered their view of young adulthood that includes the following assumptions:

1. During young adulthood a lifestyle is established that serves as a framework for the organization of experience during the rest of adulthood. This lifestyle includes a tempo of activity, a balance of work and leisure, establishment of a circle of friends of varying degrees of intimacy, and selection of life's activities that reflect the individual's value orientation (p. 366).
2. The most important factors that contribute to the creation of a lifestyle in young adulthood are whether one marries, one's marriage partner, one's children, and one's work (p. 366).
3. The crisis of intimacy versus isolation suggests a new level of ego development in which the individual's personal needs can only be met through satisfaction of the needs of another (p. 389).
4. In young adulthood, the marriage partners are responsible for filling each other's needs So each partner in the marriage learns to trust the other's ability to anticipate and satisfy his or her needs (p. 389).
5. Intimacy, like attachment, is a characteristic of the dyadic relationship, not of the individual members of the dyad (p. 389).

There are, however, critics of Erikson who offer insight into potential problem areas of psychosocial human development theory. One criticism of Erikson is captured in the following:

Erikson's view is thus somewhat deterministic, in line with psychoanalytic thought. Therapeutic intervention

would be geared to understanding the areas of negatively resolved developmental stages and providing substitute, restitutive experiences for these developmental deficits (Loewenstein, 1978, p. 67).

Another criticism directed toward this human development theory states that "although Erikson's psychosocial theory of ego development identifies the age-specific phases of adult development, it lacks, except in broad terms, qualitative differentiations of the resolutions of the related crises" (Erickson and Martin, 1984, p. 167).

Weick (1983) offers several responses to psychosocial development theory as outlined below:

1. When we link adult change with chronological age, we forget that age tends to interact with social roles. As a result our view of behavior may say more about social organization than about principles of development (p. 132).
2. Human growth during adulthood is cyclical and more related to the reworking of growth tasks than the assumption of new roles (p. 131).
3. Viewing adult development as centered around a growth-task cluster rather than social roles, chronological age or crises . . . allows us to recognize that the larger social-physical environment directly prevents individuals from engaging in personal growth processes (p. 134).
4. Separating roles from development allows us to take into account gender-related differences in development and to note their social origins . . . Division along gender lines points up the artificial staying of development imposed by narrowly-defined social roles (pp. 134-135).

The scope of human development theory is by definition broad and expansive. The body of literature related to human development reviewed for this thesis is reflective of the

never-ending scope that this theory attempts to synthesize for practical use by both the social work educator and practitioner.

Current Lifestyle Trends

A review of the current trends among young adults facing the crisis of intimacy versus isolation reveals that persons between the ages of twenty-one and thirty-five are choosing a wide variety of lifestyles. Furthermore, it appears that social norms may be in a state of flux; attitudes regarding varied lifestyle choices are also shifting, as indicated by the following statistics. In 1957, 80 percent of a national cross-section of Americans agreed that unmarried women are "sick, neurotic, or immoral;" in 1978, 25 percent of Americans agreed with that proposition. Eighty-five percent of those surveyed in 1967 agreed that "premarital sex is morally wrong," as compared with 37 percent in 1979. Over half (52 percent) of the people questioned in 1978 stated that "it is not morally wrong to cohabit" and in 1979, 75 percent of respondents said "it is morally acceptable to be single and have children" (Yankelovich, 1981, pp. 93-96).

As previously cited, many theorists recommend marriage as the ideal means of establishing an intimate relationship. However, numerous studies suggest that non-intimate factors, e.g., "social pressures or the lack of attractive alternatives . . . may have a major influence on the

movement to marriage" (Cate and Koval, 1983, pp. 511-512).

Research regarding "couples" in the United States points out that

Families are in a significant state of flux, and the uncertainty reverberates throughout society. One consequence is that people are apprehensive about the future--the future of personal relationships in general, and the future of the specific relationships that nourish them. They do not know how to design what they want or protect what they have. They are unsure about the future of marriage. That unsureness is reflected in experiments with new ways of structuring intimate relationships (Blumstein and Schwartz, 1983, pp. 35-36).

One of the most significant changes in the social structure of the United States has been the change in household composition. Since the 1950's, "we have moved from a society dominated by . . . the husband-provider nuclear family, to a more variegated society with many types of households, no one of which predominates" (Yankelovich, 1981, p. xiv). Between 1950 and the late 1970's, one person households grew from 10.9 percent to 23 percent of all households in the United States.

The rate of increase for these households during the 1980's is expected to be above twice that for all households By far the fastest rate of recent growth has occurred among persons under 35 years of age who have never married or have become divorced (Glick, 1984, p. 22).

The rate of marriage among young adults is on the decline. In 1970, 45 percent of the men and 64 percent of the women who were twenty to twenty-four years old were married while in 1980, among persons of the same age group, 31 percent of the men and 50 percent of the women were

married (Glick, 1984, p. 9). It is projected that between 10 percent to 12 percent of individuals who were twenty-five to twenty-nine years old in 1980 will never marry. If this forecast proves true, "it would mean, among other things, that this country would be changing from one of the developed countries with the smallest proportions never marrying to a country with one of the largest proportions never marrying" (Glick, 1984, p. 13).

As fewer young adults choose a married way of life, more unmarried couples of the opposite sex are cohabiting in the United States.

The number of unmarried couples has been increasing at the extremely rapid rate of about 15 percent per year during the last decade, rising from 523,000 in 1970 to 1,863,000 in 1982. . . . A reasonable prognosis is that the number of cohabiting unmarried couples may come close to doubling during the 1980's (Glick, 1984, p. 14).

Among the critics of cohabitation are those who

hold out the prospect of larger numbers of children born without 'legitimacy.' Right now, however, cohabitation continues to be a childless lifestyle. While many cohabitators may have full or partial custody of children from a previous marriage . . . all evidence points to the fact that when cohabitators consider adding children to their relationship, they are very reluctant to do so without first becoming legally married. Seventy-two percent of the cohabiting couples in 1981 did not have children living with them (Blumstein and Schwartz, 1983, p. 36).

Although cohabiting unmarried couples, do not appear to be having children to a significant degree, the number of children born to unmarried mothers has been increasing: from 5 percent of all children born in 1960 to 11 percent of

those born in 1970 to 18 percent of those born in 1980 (Glick, 1984, p. 14). Among the general population, however, "the fertility rate of women has followed a steady downward trend--from 118.3 births per 1,000 women in 1955 to 66.7 in 1975" (Yankelovich, 1981, p. 99).

Historically, the homosexual population has been ignored in the United States. "Almost all competent, non-moralistic research on homosexuality has been conducted during the last ten years, and gay men have tended to receive more attention than lesbians" (Blumstein and Schwartz, 1983, p. 39). Statistical data is virtually non-existent.

There are many books by individuals who have come to terms with being gay in a society that, at best, practices toleration of diversity and at worst, makes life miserable for people who are not heterosexual. But there has been very little research on the relationships between homosexual people. . . . Gay couples have been even more invisible in American life than have gay individuals (Blumstein and Schwartz, 1983, p. 44).

The 1970's have been characterized as "narcissistic" times in which Americans sought "self-fulfillment," through

pluralism and freedom of choice: to marry or live together; to have children early or postpone them, perhaps forever; to come out of the closet or stay in; to keep the old job or return to school; to make commitments or hang loose; to change careers, spouses, houses, states of residence, states of mind (Yankelovich, 1981, p. 5).

Despite the diversity of "acceptable" life alternatives, Yankelovich, Skelly, and White surveys show that "70 percent of Americans . . . recognize that while

they have many acquaintances, they have few close friends--and that they experience this as a serious void in their lives" (Yankelovich, 1981, p. 251). Additionally survey statistics reveal that

in 1970, 96% of all Americans declared themselves dedicated to the ideal of two people sharing a life and home together. A decade later, this number was precisely the same--a virtually universal 96%. Yet in the same decade, from 1970 to 1980, the number of single households expanded so dramatically that some observers began to wonder whether the conventional couple was doomed to extinction (Yankelovich, 1981, p. 252).

Although the shape of the family and intimate relationships may be in a state of flux,

The prospective future population seems very likely to continue to include a vast majority who live in one form of family group or another. An estimated 80% of the American population in 1990 will be living in homes maintained by a married couple (65%) or by a lone parent (15%). The remainder may be divided between persons living alone (8%) and all others (12%). Thus, the composition of households will probably continue to change but to consist predominantly of closely related family members (Glick, 1984, p. 25).

Yankelovich (1981) forecasts that the changes which characterize lifestyles in the United States are leading to a shift from an ethic of self-fulfillment to the development of an ethic of commitment. "This embryonic ethic is now gathering force around two kinds of commitments: closer and deeper personal relationships and the switch from certain instrumental values to sacred/expressive ones" (p. 250). In order for this ethic of commitment to emerge and become normative, a two-step strategy is prescribed. First,

the new strategy builds on these premises: that the self is not synonymous with the sum of one's desires; that self-fulfillment requires commitments that endure over long periods of time and that the expressive and sacred can only be realized through a web of shared meanings that transcend the self conceived as an isolated physical object (Yankelovich, 1981, p. 257).

Secondly, Yankelovich (1981) states that

people must form commitments that advance the well-being of society as well as themselves. For this to occur, people must receive clear and distinct signals from the larger society. . . . These signals should convey . . . that we have entered a new age, offering new opportunities, tradeoffs, choices, and constraints. These signals must permit people to understand how they can link their personal aspirations to the new realities (p. 259).

Thus, changes in individuals and society will be supportive of each other.

CHAPTER III

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

To gather data for this study, a survey questionnaire was designed. In a straightforward manner, the questionnaire asked respondents to identify the theory of human development taught in their graduate programs. Social workers were asked to express their attitudes toward that developmental theory and toward establishing intimacy through various lifestyle choices, by means of a Likert Scale. Lists of general and case-specific factors were compiled so that respondents could rank the items in each list in order of influence on their practice with young adults. Additionally, social workers were asked to identify whether the general or case-specific factors are more influential on their practice. Finally, the questionnaire included requests for demographic data in order that groupings of social workers according to their personal and professional attributes/experiences could be examined in relation to other content of the questionnaire.

After the questionnaire was constructed, a random sample was drawn from the roster of 409 members of the Middle Tennessee Branch of the National Association of Social Workers. A primary interest of this research was the relationship between human developmental theory taught in graduate programs and the practice of social workers.

Therefore, prior to drawing the random sample, non-MSW members, including current graduate students, were excluded from the roster of NASW members. Additionally, members who are primarily social work educators were deleted from the sampling frame. The rationale for this exclusion was that social work educators could be "partisan," having a "vested interest" in some aspects of this study and thus, might detract from the representativeness of the findings. Once the sampling frame of 340 MSW practitioners who were members of NASW in Middle Tennessee was assembled, the sample of 100 was drawn by consulting a table of random numbers.

When the sample was established, each person was contacted by telephone to inform him/her about the nature of the research and that a questionnaire would be mailed to him/her within five days; the participation of each social worker was requested.

The anonymity of the respondents was guaranteed in the following way. The questionnaire was mailed with no identifying marks which would match the names of responding practitioners to their returned questionnaires. Each questionnaire was accompanied by an introductory letter explaining the research project, a self-addressed stamped envelope, and a self-addressed stamped postcard. The participants were instructed to return the questionnaire and the postcard separately. The postcard confirmed that the respondent returned his/her questionnaire, allowing returns

to be monitored while protecting the anonymity of each participant. When the completed questionnaire was received, it was given a sequential number and each response was referred to by using its assigned sample subject number. Because there was no system to connect participating respondents to her/his returned questionnaire, the research was certified as exempt from review for research involving human subjects by the appropriate department of the University of Tennessee (Appendix B).

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

Of the one hundred questionnaires mailed, a total of sixty-four were returned. However, nine were discounted because the respondents chose not to answer the questions for a variety of reasons including lack of experience with young adult clients and retirement from their practice for a considerable length of time.

Section C.1 through C.6 of the research tool asked the participants to respond to sets of demographic inquiries in relation to themselves, their professional status, their families of origin, and their current lifestyle. These demographic characteristics are summarized in Table 4.1 and using this data, a profile of the typical social work practitioner surveyed for this study is as follows: female (85.5%), white (90.8%), 29.2 mean age (at completion of their graduate social work education program), 40.9 current mean age, married (43.6%), parent (63.8%), in clinical practice (61.2%), with under 10 years of professional social work practice experience, both in general (44%) and with young adults in particular (68%), living with their family (57.5%), heterosexual (90.5%), religious (81.5%) and middle class (92.1%).

Information regarding the respondents' family of origin (see Table 4.1) shows that the average practitioner selected

Table 4.1
Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Characteristic	Percentage ^b
<u>Sex (N=55)^a</u>	
Male	14.5
Female	85.5
<u>Race (N=54)</u>	
Black	9.2
White	90.8
<u>Marital Status (N=55)</u>	
Never Married	23.6
Married	43.6
Divorced, Remarried	10.9
Divorced, Not Remarried	20.0
Widowed, Remarried	0.0
Widowed, Not Remarried	1.8
<u>Sexual Preference (N=53)</u>	
Homosexual	1.8
Heterosexual	90.5
Celibacy	5.6
Bisexual	1.8
<u>Current Living Arrangements (N=40)</u>	
Living Alone	27.5
Living With Family	57.5
Living With Friends	15.0
<u>Parental Status (N=47)</u>	
Parent	63.8
Non-Parent	36.2
<u>Current Socio-Economic Status (N=51)</u>	
Lower Class	0.0
Middle Class	92.1
Upper Class	7.8
<u>Current Religiosity (N=38)</u>	
Religious	81.5
Not Religious	18.4
<u>Family of Origin-Parental Type (N=52)</u>	
Two-Parent, Intact	82.6
One-Parent, Divorced	7.6
One-Parent, Deceased	5.7
Step-Family	3.8

Table 4.1 (Continued)

Characteristic	Percentage ^b
<u>Family of Origin-Religiosity (N=40)</u>	
Religious	87.5
Not Religious	12.5
<u>Family of Origin-Socioeconomic Status (N=46)</u>	
Lower Class	6.5
Middle Class	93.4
Upper Class	2.1
<u>Practice Role (N=49)</u>	
Clinician	61.2
Administrator	6.1
Both	28.5
Other	4.0
<u>Number of Years in Practice (N=54)</u>	
Under 10	44.0
10 - 19	29.6
20 or More	25.9
<u>Number of Years in Practice With Young Adults (N=46)</u>	
Under 10	68.0
10 - 19	9.0
20 or More	22.7
	Mean
Age at Completion of MSSW (N=54)	29.2
Current Age (N=55)	40.9

^a N's for this data are variable because only the respondents who answered this question were considered.

^b Percentages displayed in the tables in Chapter IV may not total 100 due to rounding.

for this study was reared in a religious (87.5%), middle-class (93.4%), two-parent, intact family (82.6%).

One major focus of this exploratory research project is the identification and investigation of the range of human development theories that practitioners are taught in their Master's social work programs. Section A.1 of the research instrument requested that the respondents identify the theory that best corresponded with what they were presented in their graduate training. The range of these human development theories is displayed in Table 4.2 and represents what theories the 52 participants recalled being

Table 4.2
Theory Taught in Graduate Social Work Programs (N=52)

Theory Taught	Number
Erikson	18 (34%)
Associates	6 (11%)
Erikson and Associates	22 (42%)
Erikson, Associates and Others	4 (7%)
Associates and Others	1 (1%)
Others	1 (1%)

exposed to during their professional preparation. The category of "associates" is defined as those theorists or "interpreters" who are grounded in psychosocial human development theory and are linked to Erikson's epigenetic concepts. The group recognized as "others" represents those

who significantly diverge from the Eriksonian approach to human development and introduce other foundations for the behavior of human beings in their social world. As the data shown in Table 4.2 demonstrate, Erikson stands as a dominant force in the training of graduate social workers; only 1 percent of the respondents indicate that they had had no exposure to Eriksonian ideas during their graduate training.

In Section A.2, the sample population was asked to list all theorists or authors associated with human development who were introduced in their graduate classes. This list is not considered inclusive; however, the following names appeared with relative frequency and are worth noting: Lidz, Freud, and Kohlberg. Others mentioned were: Chestang, Perlman, Hollis, Jung, English, Finch, Neugarten, Peck, Mead, Piaget, Rank, Rogers, Addams, Lovenger, Kegan, Sullivan, Maslow, Horney, Hoffer, Hoffman, Hartman, Klein, Spitz, Rappaport, Bowlby, Mahler, and Watson. While recognizing that many of the preceding are not human development authors/theorists or members of the social work profession, the length and diversity of this list is impressive and suggests that social work graduate programs are certainly influenced by a myriad of disciplines and professional ideologies. Perhaps this rather eclectic presentation is partially responsible for the scarcity of original social work theory pertaining to human growth and development. This listing seems to validate the argument

that social work is indeed a profession built upon "borrowed knowledge" (Goldstein, 1980, p. 174).

Much of the data collected for this thesis centers around the social work practitioner's attitude toward the human development theory as presented in his/her graduate education program. The focus upon this aspect of the research project was covered in Section A.3 of the questionnaire. The respondents were asked to state their agreement or disagreement with a number of statements using a 5-point Likert scale for the range of their responses. The answers were considered positive toward human development theory if the participant strongly agreed or agreed with the phrase and all other responses were viewed as not positive toward the theory. The areas explored by this item included the sample's attitude toward: 1) the acceptability of the theory initially and now, 2) the consistency of the theory with other course work, 3) the importance of the theory to social work education, 4) the usefulness of the theory in practice, 5) the influence of the theory on their effectiveness, 6) the adaptability of the theory in addressing young adult lifestyle choices, 7) the relativity of the theory to social work principles, 8) the ability of the theory to consider the spiritual needs of young adult clients, and 9) the level of agreement between the theory and their own religious standards. A composite score for section A.3 yielded an overall positive or not positive

attitude toward human development theory which is discussed in several content areas within this data analysis. A positive or not positive attitude toward theory is believed to be of interest when compared to many of the identified variables thought to have some impact on social work with the young adult. In general, 80.4 percent of this research sample exhibited a positive attitude toward the theory while 19.6 percent scored in the not positive range. Clearly, the social work practitioners surveyed for this research project hold theory as a valuable asset on their list of professional tools.

As one indicator of social work practitioners' attitudes toward human development theory, they were asked to evaluate the theory's acceptability both during their graduate school experience and currently in their practice with young adults. The findings reported in Table 4.3

Table 4.3
Practitioners' Rating of
Acceptability of Theory (N=44)

Attitude Toward Theory	Number	Percent
Acceptable Initially And Now	32	72.7%
Acceptable Initially But Not Now	7	15.9%
Not Acceptable Initially Or Now	5	11.3%
Acceptable Now But Not Initially	0	0.0

demonstrate that a large majority of the respondents (88.6%) consider the theory to have been acceptable initially, but 15.9 percent of those practitioners do not rate the theory as acceptable in their practice now. An additional 11.3 percent of the sample do not regard the theory as acceptable when it was taught or presently. Thus, while 72.7 percent of the respondents perceive human development theory as acceptable in their practice now, over one-quarter (27.2%) do not regard the theory as acceptable in their practice with young adults.

Another measure of practitioners' attitudes toward theory is their perception of the usefulness of human development theory. Participants in this project were asked to rate theory as a useful framework for exploring problems and as useful in formulating treatment plans with young adults. The data set forth in Table 4.4 show that most

Table 4.4
Practitioners' Rating of
the Usefulness of Theory (N=50)

Attitude Toward Theory	Number	Percent
Useful For Exploring Only	9	18%
Useful For Exploring and Planning Treatment	35	70%
Not Useful For Exploring Or Planning Treatment	6	12%

respondents (88%) report that the theory is useful in exploring problems with young adult clients. In addition, 70 percent of those sampled judge theory to be useful in planning treatment with young adults. Only 12 percent do not evaluate theory as useful in either exploring problems or formulating treatment plans. Thus, it appears that human developmental theory is valued not only for the purpose for which it is intended, i.e., as an assessment tool, but is also used in planning treatment.

An integral part of this exploratory endeavor focuses on practitioners' attitudes toward a variety of lifestyle choices as ways of establishing intimacy in young adulthood. Through section A.4 of the questionnaire, respondents were asked to express their views concerning intimacy and to identify necessary and/or positive means by which young adults can resolve the developmental crisis of intimacy versus isolation. Among the alternatives which the sample was asked to evaluate on a Likert scale were heterosexual marriage, friendship, ongoing heterosexual and homosexual relationships, parenthood, premarital sexual experimentation, and non-exclusive sexual relationships.

The responses of surveyed practitioners regarding intimacy are considered in relation to their attitudes toward human development theory in Table 4.5. Although no statistically significant associations between attitudes toward means of establishing intimacy and attitudes toward

Table 4.5
Practitioners' Attitudes Regarding Intimacy By Attitudes Toward Theory

Question	N	Positive Attitude to Theory		Not Positive Attitude to Theory	
		Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree
1. Friendship is a positive means of establishing intimacy.	48	38 (79.2%)	1 (2.1%)	8 (16.6%)	1 (2.1%)
2. Intimacy is important for human development.	48	38 (79.2%)	1 (2.1%)	9 (18.7%)	0
3. Marriage is the most positive means of establishing intimacy.	47	13 (27.7%)	25 (53.2%)	7 (14.8%)	2 (4.3%)
4. Sex within an ongoing heterosexual relationship, other than marriage can be a positive means of establishing intimacy.	47	30 (63.9%)	8 (17%)	5 (10.6%)	4 (8.5%)
5. Being a parent is a developmental task of young adulthood.	47	0	38 (80.9%)	1 (2.1%)	8 (17%)
6. Sexuality is a necessary component of intimacy.	47	7 (14.8%)	31 (65.9%)	3 (6.4%)	6 (12.8%)
7. An ongoing homosexual relationship can be a positive means of establishing intimacy.	46	27 (58.7%)	10 (21.7%)	5 (10.9%)	4 (8.7%)
8. Sexual experimentation prior to marriage can enhance the establishment of intimacy.	47	24 (51.1%)	14 (29.7%)	3 (6.4%)	6 (12.8%)
9. Unmarried persons cannot fully accomplish the developmental task of adulthood.	48	2 (4.2%)	37 (77.1%)	1 (2.1%)	8 (16.6%)
10. Non-exclusive sexual relationships can be a positive means of establishing intimacy.	47	8 (17%)	30 (63.9%)	2 (4.3%)	7 (14.8%)
11. There are many lifestyle choices which facilitate the establishment of intimacy.	48	37 (77.1%)	2 (4.2%)	8 (16.6%)	1 (2.1%)

theory are evident, the findings are worthy of mention. Regardless of their attitudes toward theory, nearly all respondents (97.9%) agree that intimacy is important for human development and 93.7 percent maintain that there are many lifestyle choices which facilitate the establishment of this ideal. Most of the responding practitioners (78.7%) discount sexuality as necessary for intimate relationships. Additionally, 93.7 percent of those surveyed do not disregard the possibility that unmarried persons can fully accomplish the tasks of young adulthood and parenthood is not viewed as a critical task of this developmental stage by 97.9% of the participants. It is interesting to note that, for the most part, the sample of social workers consider friendship (95.8%) and ongoing heterosexual (84.5%) and homosexual (69.6%) relationships other than marriage, as positive resolutions of the crisis of young adulthood. Not to be overlooked is the finding that 88.7 percent of the respondents do not view non-exclusive sexual relationships as a positive means of establishing intimacy.

Overall, among the social workers in this study, 42.5 percent hold that marriage is the most positive means of establishing intimacy while 57.5 percent do not. When this variable is examined in relation to the respondents' attitudes toward theory, there appears to be divergence in the findings. Of those who regard theory positively, only 34.2 percent of the participants agree that marriage is the

most positive enactment of intimacy. Inversely, among those who do not regard theory positively, 77.8 percent support marriage as the most positive means of establishing intimacy. Besides the preceding discrepancy between respondents, they also seem to vary in their attitudes toward pre-marital sexual experimentation as a way to enhance intimacy. Of those who have positive attitudes toward theory, 63.2 percent agree that sexual experimentation prior to marriage can enhance the establishment of intimacy. In contrast, only 33.3 percent of the participants who do not perceive theory positively consider sexual experimentation before marriage as a means of enhancing intimacy.

As indicated by the foregoing analysis, intimacy is valued by the participants as important to human development. Generally, the social workers in the study agree that there are a variety of lifestyle choices by which a young adult can achieve this standard: heterosexual marriage, ongoing heterosexual and homosexual relationships, and friendship. Parenthood and marriage are not seen by the sample to be necessary developmental tasks of young adulthood. However, it appears that responding practitioners, irrespective of their attitudes toward human development theory, support an ongoing, exclusive relationship as critical to resolving the developmental crisis of intimacy versus isolation.

A primary assumption of this endeavor rests upon the belief that social work practice with young adults is influenced by other factors beyond the theory taught in MSSW programs. Section B of the research instrument addresses these factors which are divided into two categories: general influences (section B.1) and case-specific influences (section B.2). A general influence on practice is defined by this research design as a broad sphere of influence generally accepted as relative to the profession of social work. Respondents were asked to rank six general influences in order of importance on their practice with the young adult population. The range of influences included theory taught in graduate school, practice experience with young adults, theory studied after graduate school, life experiences, philosophy of life, and religious values. The data in Table 4.6 exhibit the three most important general

Table 4.6
Three Most Important General Influences

Influence	Rank Order
Practice Experience With Young Adults	1
Theory Taught in Graduate School	2
Life Experiences	3

influences in order of their ranking by the research sample. The results show that practice experience and life

experiences are considered to be highly influential in the social worker's interface with young adult clients. This ranking lends support to the suggestion that in addition to a core understanding of human development, many other factors play integral roles in shaping the professional social worker.

The following data reflect an examination of the relationship between the most important general influence and several variables identified by this research. The findings displayed in Table 4.7 do not indicate any

Table 4.7
Most Important General Influences
By Attitude Toward Theory (N=29)

Attitude Toward Theory	Theory	Practice
Positive	5 (17.2%)	19 (65.5%)
Not Positive	1 (3.4%)	4 (13.8%)

statistically significant relationships; however, the results are noteworthy in that one primary focus of this research is on the role of theory in practice. This comparison reveals that the majority of respondents view practice experience as the most important general influence on their practice with young adults regardless of their attitude toward human development theory.

The data compiled in Table 4.8 reflect a statistically significant relationship between the most important general influence on practice with young adults and the number of years in practice ($\chi^2=6.28$, $df=1$, $p>.04$). When general influences on practice are examined in relation to the number of years in practice, there are other factors that begin to influence the practitioner's work beyond their own practice experience. For the group with less than ten years

Table 4.8

Most Important General Influences
By Years of Practice (N=43)

Years of Practice	Practice	Other
0 - 9	17 (39.5%)	12 (27.9%)
10 - 19	0 (0%)	4 (9.3%)
20 or More	3 (6.8%)	7 (16.3%)

Chi square = 6.28, $df=1$, $p>.04$

experience, the difference between the influence of practice and other factors is small (58% and 41%, respectively). However, as the social worker gains experience, the influence of the other combined factors becomes much greater than that of their own practice experience. Thus, out of those practitioners with ten or more years experience, 21.4 percent rank practice as the most important general influence while 78.5 percent rank the combined category of

others as the most important. The positive relationship between general influences and practice with young adults shows that while theory is included in the other category, there are also four other factors represented in that classification which offers support for the suggestion that theory plus many other variables combine to mold the professional practitioner's approach to working with a young adult client.

In addition to the ranking of general influences on practice, participants in the study ranked the three most important case-specific influences on their practice with young adults as shown in Table 4.9. A case-specific

Table 4.9
Three Most Important Case Specific Influences

Influence	Rank Order
Value Differences	1
Lifestyle Differences	2
Family Life Differences	3

influence is seen as a factor which varies among individual social work practitioners and influences the development of the treatment relationship between the worker and each specific client. Section B.2 of the questionnaire dealt with these items which included differences between the social worker and the young adult client in the areas of: age,

gender, socioeconomic status, race, lifestyle, values, religion, family life experiences, and sexual orientation.

The relevance of this data is explored in relation to two other variables generated by this research study. As indicated in Table 4.10, those practitioners who view theory positively regard family-life experiences and value differences between the worker and the client as having an equal influence on their work with young adults. Those respondents who perceive theory as not positive see value differences between the worker and the client as having the greatest influence on their practice. The data produced by this item are not of statistical significance and it bears noting that the number of respondents who chose not to answer this question was high (39 with N=55).

Table 4.10
Most Important Case-Specific Influences
By Attitude Toward Theory (N=14)

Attitude Toward Theory	Values	Family Life Experiences
Positive	6 (42.9%)	6 (42.9%)
Not Positive	2 (14.3%)	0 (0%)

The data in Table 4.11 address the most important case-specific influence on the social worker's practice in relation to the number of years in practice. This

information yields no statistically significant relationships. Although, it does suggest that practitioners with less than ten years of practice experience may be more aware of the ways in which differences between worker and client affect their work with young adults than are their

Table 4.11
Most Important Case Specific Influences
By Years of Practice (N=32)

Years of Practice	Values	Family-Life	Other
0 - 9	8 (25%)	4 (12.5%)	8 (25%)
10 - 19	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	4 (12.5%)
20 or more	0 (0%)	2 (6.3%)	6 (18.8%)

counterparts with additional years of reported practice experience.

In Section C.6 of the questionnaire, the respondents were asked to report information regarding their families of origin: parental type, parents' level of education, children's status, type of community in which they lived, level of religiosity, and socioeconomic status. Section C.7 asked practitioners to specify the following data regarding their current lifestyle: marital status, parental status, household composition, sexual orientation, level of religiosity, socioeconomic status and the type of community in which they live. A number of these variables have been

examined in relation to practitioners' attitudes toward the theory of human development which they were taught in graduate school.

The data in Table 4.12 show the social work practitioner's attitude toward human development theory in relation to his/her parental type in the family of origin.

Table 4.12
Family of Origin-Parental Type
By Attitude Toward Theory (N=42)

Attitude Toward Theory	Two-Parent Intact	One-Parent Divorced
Positive	30 (71.4%)	3 (7.1%)
Not Positive	8 (19%)	1 (2.4%)

The figures do not indicate a statistically significant relationship and in fact, may reveal that the respondents' parental type in their family of origin has no bearing on their attitude toward human development theory, either positive or not positive.

As indicated in Table 4.13, there is no statistically significant relationship between practitioners' parental status and their attitude toward theory. Of the respondents who are parents, 75.8 percent evaluate theory positively; among the non-parent group, 86.7 percent express positive attitudes toward theory. Thus, the proportions of parents

and non-parents who have positive and not positive attitudes toward developmental theory are approximately equal, indicating that their current parental status is not a

Table 4.13
Practitioners' Parental Status By
Attitude Toward Theory (N=44)

Parental Status	Positive Attitude Toward Theory	Not-Positive Attitude Toward Theory
Parent	22 (50%)	7 (15.9%)
Non-Parent	13 (29.5%)	2 (4.5%)

critical factor in differentiating social workers' attitudes toward theory.

The data set forth in Table 4.14 do not verify any significant statistical association between social workers'

Table 4.14
Practitioners' Marital Status By
Attitude Toward Theory (N=48)

Marital Status	Positive Attitude Toward Theory	Not Positive Attitude Toward Theory
Never Married	10 (20.8%)	2 (4.2%)
Married	21 (43.8%)	5 (10.4%)
Divorced/Widowed	8 (16.7%)	2 (4.2%)

current marital status and their attitude toward human development theory. In fact, the distribution of positive and not positive attitudes toward theory appears to be a relatively constant ratio, regardless of marital status.

As summarized in Table 4.15, the final demographic variables considered in relation to the social workers' attitudes toward theory are the levels of religiosity of

Table 4.15
Practitioners' Religiosity
By Attitude Toward Theory

Religiosity	Positive Attitude Toward Theory	Non-Positive Attitude Toward Theory
Family of Origin (N=37)		
Religious	23 (62.2%)	9 (24.3%)
Non-Religious	5 (13.5%)	0
Current Lifestyle (N=33)		
Religious	19 (57.6%)	8 (24.2%)
Non-Religious	6 (18.2%)	0

themselves currently and of their families of origin. Worthy of remark is the fact that comparatively fewer practitioners replied to these items than to other requests for demographic information. Of those who responded, no practitioners who have "not positive" attitudes toward developmental theory regard themselves or their family of origin as non-religious. However, no statistically

significant relationship exists between practitioners' self-assessment of religiosity and their attitudes toward human development theory.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS

This research project is presented as a beginning step toward examining human development theory as a component of social work education and as it is interrelated with social work practice. A considerable amount of information about theory and practice with young adults has been compiled, but the need for further study remains. The relationships between variables analyzed herein are, at times, tenuous. However, it can be concluded that relationships are indeed suspected and with more investigation, these relationships can be validated or refuted.

Clearly this project bears witness to the characterization of social work as "a profession dependent on borrowed knowledge" (Goldstein, 1980, p. 174) with nearly all practitioners reporting that Erikson's psychosocial developmental theory was included in their graduate education curricula. Additionally, it can be concluded that practitioners, for the most part, appreciate Eriksonian theory, both as a component of graduate education and as a useful tool in practice. There is some indication, however, that the theory may become less acceptable to social workers after they complete their graduate program. The reasons for the decline in acceptability are not explored in this project and may warrant further study.

Practitioners have reported that Eriksonian developmental theory is useful in problem exploration and treatment plan formulation with young adult clients. Since human development theory is generally presented as a foundational component of the assessment process, it can be inferred that social workers use this theory as a measure of clients' functioning and developmental history. However, the ways in which practitioners incorporate theory into the formulation of treatment plans is not specified by this research.

Another piercing question surfacing during this project centers around whether there are certain universal developmental tasks for all human beings, regardless of their cultural environment. If such tasks exist, what are they and who has the right to decide when they have been accomplished? Is there a difference between conforming to cultural norms and performing tasks necessary for human development? Are social workers agents of social control, as posited by Atherton (1969), or are they advocates for client self-determination as set forth in the NASW Code of Ethics (Hepworth and Larsen, 1982, p. 529)? The profession has an obligation to clarify its position on these issues.

In agreement with Erikson, participants in this project perceive the achievement of intimacy as the ideal for young adults. Irrespective of their attitude toward theory, the surveyed practitioners prescribe the following lifestyle

choices as positive means of establishing intimacy in young adulthood: 1) heterosexual marriage, 2) friendship, 3) an ongoing heterosexual relationship, and 4) an ongoing homosexual relationship. Interestingly, neither marriage nor parenthood are considered necessary developmental tasks of young adulthood according to the respondents. Those who rate theory in a not positive manner specify that marriage is the most positive means of establishing intimacy and that pre-marital sexual experimentation is not a means of enhancing intimacy. Social workers whose attitudes toward theory are positive hold opposing views regarding these measures of intimacy. One of the motivations for this research project was the perception that human development theory is too narrow to include a diverse range of lifestyle choices as positive resolutions of the young adult crisis of intimacy versus isolation. However, it appears that social workers who view theory positively may allow for a broader range of lifestyle choices than those who do not have positive attitudes toward theory. While these findings are not statistically significant, they are somewhat confusing in light of Erikson's (1959) proposition that young adulthood is the time when "life . . . begins: by which we mean work or study for a specified career, sociability with the other sex, and, in time, marriage and a family of one's own" (pp. 100-101). This confusion provides impetus to suggest additional study in the area of social work

practitioners' perceptions of the content of human development theory. Also warranting investigation are the perceptions and presentations of theory by social work educators. Additionally, study regarding influences on practitioners' perceptions and attitudes is indicated.

The findings of this study support the assumption that practitioners' work with young adults is shaped by a variety of factors. Without regard to their attitudes toward theory, participants rank practice experience as the most important agent of influence on their practice with young adults; theory and life experiences are identified as the second and third most important influences, respectively. However, it appears that as social workers gain more practice experience, they consider it to be less influential. It is possible that beginning practitioners are more likely to approach encounters with clients as "learning experiences" and thus, are more prone to analyze and evaluate each experience in an effort to establish practice guidelines whereas, "seasoned" practitioners may have a set way of viewing clients and their situations and thus, of making treatment decisions. Another factor which may account for the aforementioned finding could be that as they gain practice experience, social workers are more susceptible to "burn-out" and thus, look outside of themselves for replenishment through other avenues of professional and

personal development. These questions merit additional exploration.

One area that cries out for further study is the relationship between theory and practice. What is the nature of the relationship between these two variables? Is the relationship circular whereby each interacts with, adds to, and shapes the other? Or is the relationship linear with theory influencing practice but not allowing itself to be touched by practice? The way individual social workers integrate theory and practice may have its roots in graduate education curricular presentations of the two areas. Thus, the answers to these questions have implications for all members of the profession, regardless of their function, i.e., theorist, practitioner, or educator. Questions about the linkages between theory and practice have been alluded to in this study and require on-going, intensive investigation.

In ranking the most important case-specific influences on practice, practitioners rated the following in order of their importance: 1) value differences between worker and client, 2) lifestyle differences between worker and client, and 3) family-life experience differences between worker and client. Perhaps, the most notable fact about this area of the project is that only a small proportion of the participants rated any case-specific factors as influential on their practice with young adults. The greatest number of

those who identified specific influences on practice have less than ten years practice experience. It could be postulated that this phenomena is due to the more recent trend in social work education to examine the treatment relationship and its impact on practice effectiveness. Another possibility is that the longer one is a social worker, the less sensitive he/she becomes to the differences between himself/herself and clients. Several participants wrote comments like the following: "I have tried to avoid such influences with all clients." Given that human beings are socialized according to the ways of the culture in which they live, questions arise regarding how practitioners can "avoid such influences." Additionally, there is a question about whether case-specific influences may be more important depending on the setting in which a social worker practices. It is incumbent upon the profession to look more closely at these issues.

No statistically significant relationships exist between practitioners' attitudes toward theory and a number of demographic variables, viz., family of origin parental type, parental status, marital status, and religiosity. When these findings are compared with the respondents' rating of life experiences as the third most important general influence on practice, questions arise about what life experiences are related to social workers' attitudes toward theory. Further information about this area is also

pertinent when considering case-specific influences on practice. The sample for this study consisted basically of white middle class, married female parents. Would the responses among practitioners with other demographic attributes support these findings? It is apparent from this research that many variables influence a social work practitioner's attitude toward a practice issue. Further research is needed to identify these variables so that attention can be paid to the sum of these interrelated parts in the theory, education, and practice of the social work profession.

As is typical of exploratory research, this project has raised more questions than it has answered. It is only through additional research that the work begun in this thesis will come to fruition. Investigations such as this are essential for building a body of social work knowledge so that human development theory can adequately prepare practitioners to address the ever-widening lifestyle choices thrust upon young adults. In this way, social work can continue to evolve as a valued and respected profession dependent not only on "borrowed knowledge," but also contributing its own theoretical perspective to the collectivity of helping professions.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

Master's Thesis Questionnaire

Social Work Practice With Young Adults

General Instructions: We are interested in what guides social workers in their practice with young adults. Section A of this questionnaire focuses on the role of theory; Section B looks at the role of other factors; and Section C asks for some demographic data.

Most of our questions may be answered by checking (✓) the response which best reflects your attitude and experiences. Please feel free to write comments anywhere on the questionnaire. Since we are asking about your attitudes and experiences, there are no right or wrong answers.

SECTION A - ROLE OF THEORY

Social work education presents theories, values, and skills to guide practice. One area of theory deals with human development. Erik Erikson's human development theory is quite popular in schools of social work. He describes life as an "epigenetic" unfolding in stages from birth onward. Each stage is marked by a crisis with a continuum of possible outcomes. As you probably know, Erikson's stages are:

Basic Trust vs. Basic Mistrust
Autonomy vs. Shame and Doubt
Initiative vs. Guilt
Industry vs. Inferiority
Identity vs. Identity Diffusion
Intimacy and Distantiation vs. Self-Absorption
Generativity vs. Stagnation
Integrity vs. Despair and Disgust

Of interest to our study is Erikson's treatment of young adulthood which he characterizes as a crisis of Intimacy and Distantiation vs. Self-Absorption. His views are summarized in the following four statements from Identity and the Life Cycle (Erikson, 1959, pp. 100-103).

- A. "When childhood and youth come to an end, life, so the saying goes, begins: by which we mean work or study for a specified career, sociability with the other sex, and, in time, marriage and a family of one's own."
- B. "There is a kind of adolescent attachment between boy and girl which is often mistaken either for mere sexual attraction or for love. Except where the mores demand heterosexual behavior, such attachment is often devoted to an attempt at arriving at a definition of one's identity by talking things over endlessly, discussing plans, wishes, and expectations."
- C. "The youth who is not sure of his identity shies away from interpersonal intimacy; but the surer he becomes of himself, the more he seeks it in the form of friendship, combat, leadership, love, and inspiration. . . . Where a youth does not accomplish such intimate relations with others--and I would add, with his own inner resources--in late adolescence or early adulthood, he may either isolate himself and find, at best, highly stereotyped and formal interpersonal relations (formal in the sense of lacking in spontaneity, warmth, and real exchange of fellowship), or he must seek them in repeated attempts and repeated failures."
- D. "The counterpart of intimacy is distantiation: the readiness to repudiate, to isolate and, if necessary, to destroy those forces and people whose essence seems dangerous to one's own."
1. Please check (✓) the statement which best describes the theory of human development that you were taught in your graduate program.
- () Erikson's theory was the primary theory of human development taught in my graduate program.
 - () Erikson's theory was taught along with other human development theories in my graduate program.
 - () I do not recall the specific human development theories taught in my graduate program.
 - () Erikson's theory was not taught in my graduate program.

2. If you were taught human development theories other than Erikson's, please list them. (Any references to authors, books, or theories that you remember would be helpful to us.) _____

3. Complete the following statement by checking (✓) the response which best reflects your level of agreement.

- 1 (SA) Strongly Agree
 2 (A) Agree
 3 (U) Undecided
 4 (D) Disagree
 5 (SD) Strongly Disagree

THE HUMAN DEVELOPMENT THEORY WHICH I WAS TAUGHT IN
 GRADUATE SCHOOL:

- | | SA | A | U | D | SD |
|---|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| a. <u>was</u> acceptable to me while I
was in school | 1
() | 2
() | 3
() | 4
() | 5
() |
| b. <u>is</u> acceptable to me in my
practice with young adults | 1
() | 2
() | 3
() | 4
() | 5
() |
| c. was consistent with other course
work in my graduate program | 1
() | 2
() | 3
() | 4
() | 5
() |
| d. wasted a lot of my valuable study
time | 1
() | 2
() | 3
() | 4
() | 5
() |
| e. should continue to be taught in
graduate school | 1
() | 2
() | 3
() | 4
() | 5
() |
| f. is a useful framework for exploring
problems with young adults | 1
() | 2
() | 3
() | 4
() | 5
() |
| g. is a useful theory in formulating
treatment plans in my practice
with young adults | 1
() | 2
() | 3
() | 4
() | 5
() |
| h. is a major influence on my
effectiveness with young adult
clients | 1
() | 2
() | 3
() | 4
() | 5
() |
| i. presents an excellent recipe for
young adult fulfillment | 1
() | 2
() | 3
() | 4
() | 5
() |
| j. limits young adult lifestyle
choices to an unwholesome degree | 1
() | 2
() | 3
() | 4
() | 5
() |

THE HUMAN DEVELOPMENT THEORY WHICH I WAS TAUGHT IN
GRADUATE SCHOOL:

	SA	A	U	D	SD
k. narrows the range of lifestyle choices for young adults, but is still worthwhile	1 ()	2 ()	3 ()	4 ()	5 ()
l. makes me question some social work principles	1 ()	2 ()	3 ()	4 ()	5 ()
m. addresses sufficiently the spiritual needs of young adults . .	1 ()	2 ()	3 ()	4 ()	5 ()
n. supports my religious standards for acceptable lifestyle choices for young adults	1 ()	2 ()	3 ()	4 ()	5 ()

4. Please check (✓) your level of agreement with each of
the following statements.

	SA	A	U	D	SD
a. Intimacy is important for human growth and development	1 ()	2 ()	3 ()	4 ()	5 ()
b. Heterosexual marriage is the most positive means of establishing intimacy	1 ()	2 ()	3 ()	4 ()	5 ()
c. Sex within an ongoing heterosexual relationship, other than marriage, can be a positive means of establishing intimacy	1 ()	2 ()	3 ()	4 ()	5 ()
d. Becoming a parent is a necessary developmental task of young adulthood	1 ()	2 ()	3 ()	4 ()	5 ()
e. Sexuality is a necessary component of intimate relationships	1 ()	2 ()	3 ()	4 ()	5 ()
f. An ongoing homosexual relationship can be a positive means of establishing intimacy	1 ()	2 ()	3 ()	4 ()	5 ()
g. Sexual experimentation prior to marriage can enhance the establishment of intimacy	1 ()	2 ()	3 ()	4 ()	5 ()

- | | SA | A | U | D | SD |
|---|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| h. Unmarried persons cannot fully accomplish the developmental tasks of adulthood | 1
() | 2
() | 3
() | 4
() | 5
() |
| i. Friendships (non-sexual relationships) between members of the same sex can be a positive means of establishing intimacy in young adulthood | 1
() | 2
() | 3
() | 4
() | 5
() |
| j. Friendships (non-sexual relationships) between members of the opposite sex can be a positive means of establishing intimacy in young adulthood | 1
() | 2
() | 3
() | 4
() | 5
() |
| k. Non-exclusive sexual relationships can be a positive means of establishing intimacy | 1
() | 2
() | 3
() | 4
() | 5
() |
| l. There are many lifestyle choices available to young adults which facilitate the establishment of intimacy | 1
() | 2
() | 3
() | 4
() | 5
() |
-

SECTION B - FACTORS IN ADDITION TO THEORY

1. Please rank the following general items in order of their influence on your practice with young adults, with #1 being Most Influential, etc. If an item is of no influence on your practice, please ignore it.

- | | RANK |
|--|-------|
| a. Theory taught in my graduate education program | _____ |
| b. Practice experience with young adults | _____ |
| c. Theory regarding young adult development learned after completion of my graduate program (Please specify) _____ | _____ |
| d. My own life experiences | _____ |
| e. My personal philosophy of life | _____ |
| f. My religious values | _____ |
| g. Other (Please specify) _____ | _____ |

2. Please rank the following "case-specific" items in order of their influence on your practice with young adults, with #1 being Most Influential, etc. If an item is of no influence on your practice, please ignore it.

RANK

- a. Age differences between worker and client _____
- b. Gender differences between worker and client . . . _____
- c. Socioeconomic differences between worker and client _____
- d. Race differences between worker and client _____
- e. Lifestyle differences between worker and client . . . _____
- f. Value differences between worker and client _____
- g. Religious differences between worker and client . . . _____
- h. Family-life experience differences between worker and client _____
- i. Sexual orientation differences between worker and client _____
- j. Other (Please specify) _____ _____

3. Of the items which you have identified above as influences on your practice, viz., general and case-specific, which do you consider most important?

- () General
 () Case-specific
 () Both are equally important
 () Undecided
-

SECTION C - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

1. Age:
- a. Your current age _____
- b. Your age upon completion of your graduate program _____

2. Race:
☐ Black ☐ White
☐ Asian American ☐ American Indian
☐ Hispanic ☐ Other (Please specify) _____
3. Sex:
☐ Female ☐ Male
4. Professional Practice History:
- a. Number of years in professional practice:
☐ 0-4 ☐ 10-14 ☐ 20-24
☐ 5-9 ☐ 15-19 ☐ 25 or more
- b. Number of years of practice with young adults (ages 21-35):
☐ None ☐ 10-14 ☐ 25 or more
☐ 0-4 ☐ 15-19
☐ 5-9 ☐ 20-24
-
- If None, please skip "c" and "d"
of this question. Go directly to
Question 5.
-
- c. My professional practice experience with young adults has been as a:
☐ Clinical/treatment practitioner
☐ Social work administrator
☐ Other (Please specify) _____
- d. My practice experience with young adults has been in the following setting(s). (You may check more than one.)
☐ Private agency ☐ Mental health center
☐ Public agency ☐ Private practice
☐ Hospital
☐ Other (Please specify) _____
5. Family of origin: Please check (✓) the descriptors which apply to your family of origin. (You may check more than one.)
- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ Two-parent, intact | ☐ Urban |
| ☐ One-parent, divorced | ☐ Rural |
| ☐ One parent deceased | ☐ Suburban |
| ☐ Stepfamily | ☐ Religious |
| ☐ Parents-high school graduates | ☐ Non-religious |
| ☐ Parents-college graduates | ☐ Lower class |
| ☐ Siblings | ☐ Middle class |
| ☐ Adopted | ☐ Upper class |
| ☐ Other (Please specify) _____ | |
| ☐ Other (Please specify) _____ | |

6. Lifestyle: Please check (✓) the descriptors which apply to your current lifestyle. (You may check more than one.)

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Never married | ☐ Urban |
| ☐ Married | ☐ Rural |
| ☐ Divorced, not remarried | ☐ Suburban |
| ☐ Divorced, remarried | ☐ Heterosexual |
| ☐ Widow/widower, not remarried | ☐ Homosexual |
| ☐ Widow/widower, remarried | ☐ Bisexual |
| ☐ Parent | ☐ Celibate |
| ☐ Non-parent | ☐ Religious |
| ☐ Living alone | ☐ Non-religious |
| ☐ Living with family | ☐ Lower class |
| ☐ Living with friend(s) | ☐ Middle class |
| | ☐ Upper class |
| ☐ Other (Please specify) _____ | |
| ☐ Other (Please specify) _____ | |

THANK YOU FOR THE TIME AND THOUGHT YOU PUT
INTO ANSWERING THE QUESTIONS. PLEASE MAIL
THE QUESTIONNAIRE TO US IN THE ENVELOPE
PROVIDED.

APPENDIX B

THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE KNOXVILLE
KNOXVILLE, TENNESSEE 37996-0140
OFFICE OF RESEARCH COMPLIANCES

404 ANDY HOLT TOWER

TELEPHONE (615) 974-7697

February 6, 1986

✓
Dr. Robert C. Bonovich, Ms. Becky D. Curry, Ms. Mary Catherine Love
P. O. Box 90440
Nashville, TN 37209

Dear Dr. Bonovich, Ms. Curry and Ms. Love:

The project which you submitted entitled, "Master's Thesis: Social Work Practice with Young Adults," CRP #1997-A, has been reviewed and certified exempt from review by the Committee on Research Participation.

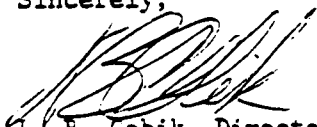
This approval is for a period ending February 6, 1987. Please make timely submission of renewal or prompt notification of project termination (see item #2 below).

The responsibility of the project director includes the following:

1. Obtain prior approval from the Director of Research Compliances before instituting any changes in the project (Form D).
2. A statement must be submitted (Form D) at 12-month intervals attesting to the current status of the project (protocol is still in effect, changes have been made, project is terminated, etc.).

The Committee wishes you success in your research endeavors.

Sincerely,



L. B. Gebik, Director
Office of Research Compliances

cc: Dr. Thomas C. Collins, Vice Provost for Research
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VITAE

Becky Downs Curry was born February 28, 1953, in Dallas, Texas. She attended elementary schools in Cedar Hill and Duncanville, TX. Ms. Curry attended Duncanville High School in Duncanville, Texas, and was graduated in 1971. In 1975 Ms. Curry earned a B.A. degree from Baylor University in Waco, Texas.

After graduating from Baylor University, Ms. Curry pursued a career in the area of vision working with visually handicapped children with the Texas Commission for the Blind. In 1982, Ms. Curry helped to establish the Low Vision Clinic at Dallas Services for Visually Impaired Children serving as the clinic's counselor/coordinator until 1984.

In 1984, Ms. Curry entered the MSSW program at the University of Tennessee, Nashville Branch. She was awarded the Master of Science of Social Work degree with a treatment concentration in June 1986.

Mary Catherine Love was born in Baltimore, Maryland on April 16, 1948. She attended elementary schools in Baltimore and in St. Joseph, Missouri. Following high school graduation in 1966 from Ursuline Academy in Cumberland, Maryland, she entered the College of Notre Dame in Baltimore. In 1970, she received a Bachelor of Arts degree in Sociology.

From 1970 to 1977, Ms. Love taught Sociology, History, and Psychology in a Baltimore City public high school.

Between 1977 and 1983, she worked as a Field Representative for the Baltimore Teachers Union. Before entering the University of Tennessee College of Social Work, Nashville Branch in September 1984, she was a Consultant for Xerox Corporation, Learning Systems. Ms. Love received the Master of Science in Social Work degree with a treatment concentration in June 1986.