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I am submitting herewith a dissertation written by Paul David Baggett entitled "Social Work Students' Attitudes Toward the Poor." I have examined the final copy of this dissertation for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, with a major in Social Work.

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SOCIAL WORK STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARD THE POOR

A Dissertation

Presented for the

Doctor of Philosophy

The University of Tennessee

by

Paul David Baggett

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DEDICATION

This document and the energies devoted to it are dedicated to: my parents, Jim and Mary for providing me with a loving and stable environment, my wife Shelli who had the confidence in me to leave her family, home, and job to support my dream of a doctoral education, and to my son James, that I may use my knowledge to benefit his life and world.

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ABSTRACT

This study assessed Social Work students' attitudes toward the poor. The subjects were 243 B.S.W., M.S.W., and Ph.D. students from six major universities in the Mid-Atlantic and Southeastern United States. This is the first such study to include doctoral students. The disguised structured instrument for the Assessment of Attitudes Toward the Poor (AATP) assessed students' attitude position toward the poor (favorable-neutral-unfavorable) and attitude intensity (degree of emotional involvement with the poor). A 33-item questionnaire gathered educational, personal, and profession-related information.

Multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) procedures compared students on the 33 characteristics regarding differences in attitude position and intensity. Cross-tabulated tables with a chi-square measure of association identified characteristics associated with high/low position scores, intensity scores, and levels of social action behavior. MANOVA discovered significant main effects on variables: level of education, explanations given for the existence of poverty, peer expectations, race, and N.A.S.W. membership status. Also, nine significant interaction effects were found. Chi-square analysis identified five significant associations. Descriptive information regarding the sample is provided.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Poverty in the United States has existed since the colonial period. It continues to be one of America's biggest social problems. According to the United States Bureau of the Census (1993), there were 36.9 million persons below the official government poverty level in 1992. The number of impoverished grew by 1.2 million persons from 1991. The number of destitute families increased by 240,000. Poverty rates for children continued to increase at a higher rate than any other age group in 1992 and children represented nearly 40 percent of the poor. In 1992, 1 in 4 children under 6 years old lived in poverty. The number of poor in the United States in 1992 was the highest since 1962, when 38.6 million were poor.

Over the past 3 years, Americans have ranked "poverty/homelessness" third (behind only "the economy in general" and "unemployment") as the most important problem facing this country (Gallup, 1993). The institution of social welfare has been America's response to addressing the needs of the poor. Welfare supplements family, friends, and church in bringing societal resources to meet human needs

(Macht & Ashford, 1991). Social welfare policy in the United States shifts with changes in political leadership and is reorganized when a different party takes office. Welfare spending generally increases during Democratic tenure and decreases when Republicans hold office.

Whatever the political climate, the profession of Social Work has historically accepted responsibility for attempting to improve the plight of the poor. Sociology has studied the conditions responsible for poverty. Psychology has investigated the mental state of the poor. Social Work's unique contribution to society has been front-line contact with the indigent. Some pioneers of the profession moved into impoverished neighborhoods, while others visited the destitute to assess and address their needs. These women provided community organization, education, and health services, and also advocated strongly for social change to aid those adversely affected by immigration, industrialization, and political oppression. Social work emerged as a profession that was rooted in an identification with the needy.

Social workers in the early twentieth century identified environmental influences that contributed to decrepit conditions of the indigent. This identification challenged the prevailing notion that personal and cultural deficiencies were the cause of poverty. These volunteers recognized the need for intervention and established

professional organizations and training schools. Social work performed a distinct social reform function. Social workers testified to government officials about the wretched living conditions of the poor, and protests and marches raised public awareness. The social reform efforts began to receive worldwide recognition.

Perhaps most exemplary of this recognition was the awarding of the 1931 Nobel Peace Prize to Jane Addams. She was the first American woman to receive this distinction. She founded Hull House, a settlement house in Chicago, and was politically active in rallying forces to aid the less fortunate. Ms. Addams nominated Theodore Roosevelt as the Populist party presidential candidate in 1912.

Today, Social Work's identification with the underprivileged is at a crossroads. The profession's involvement with the problem of poverty appears to be steadily losing ground. Trained social workers are increasingly going into areas that do not entail dealing with the poor. Wyers (1981) noted that professional social workers with a degree represented a minority of the work force serving the poor population. Similar findings have been found regarding work with public child-welfare recipients (Venocur-Kaplan & Hartman, 1986) and the homeless (Dattalo & Benda, 1991).

Specialized areas of practice--many of which serve the nonpoor--have provided new opportunities for social workers.

For social workers working with the nonpoor, participating in social action and reform efforts designed to benefit the poor is not a priority. Increasingly, social worker's resources and energies are directed toward activities more relevant to their areas of specialization. The focus of professional interventions is oriented toward alleviating the problems of middle-class individuals, not the ills of society.

Social work must concern itself with the implications of the trend away from work with the poor. Traditional social work goals such as social justice, community empowerment, and social reform are being neglected by many contemporary social workers. They have found it more rewarding to aspire to smaller and more obtainable goals. Personnel who lack the professional orientation are in the place of those trained in social work ethics and values who pursue careers in areas outside working with the needy.

Schools of social work have an important function in facilitating a commitment to the problem of poverty among future social workers. These schools have been the profession's training grounds. They are charged with providing students with proper ethical orientation. This charge includes transmitting the appropriate social work attitudes and values to all students. The profession's future participation in eradicating poverty and helping those caught in its clutches depends on the extent to which

this is accomplished.

This research effort investigated social work students' attitudes toward the poor. Social work should concern itself with the attitudes held by its students toward the destitute for several reasons: (1) social workers' attitudes toward the poor are related to their behavior toward the underclass, (2) social work students are the future professional social workers and educators, and (3) shifting career interests have resulted in decreasing curricular attention to the problem of poverty. Because of these changing interests, social work's mission of intervention on behalf of the poor may be threatened.

Attitude-Behavior Consistency

Attitudes are a culmination of a complex inter-relationship of cognitive variables that are learned and adapted through experiences. Attitudes may be cognitive (for or against a psychological object), behavioral (state of readiness to act toward the object), emotional (feel strong or weak toward the object), and evaluative (like or dislike of a psychological object). They are ingrained within one's identity and reflect personal values and beliefs. Attitudes may also reflect the beliefs and values held by an individual's reference group.

Probably the most significant reason for studying attitudes is their potential for helping us understand and

predict behavior. Since the development of the Reasoned Action Theory (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975), attitudes have consistently been linked to behavior. The theory introduced "behavioral intentions" as the link between attitudes and behavior. Recent modifications of the theory have introduced other variables that have strengthened the theory's usefulness in predicting behavior: "past behavior" (Fredericks & Dossett, 1983, Eiser, Morgan, Gammage, & Gray, 1989), "behavioral expectations" (Warshaw & Davis, 1985), "volitional control" (Ajzen & Madden, 1986), "clarity of intention" (Bagozzi & Yi, 1989), "behavioral commitment" (Skinner & Cattarello, 1989), and "environmental support" (Grube & Morgan, 1990).

Attitudes toward the destitute held by a group have consistently been reflected in that group's approach to dealing with the underclass. The perception of "deserving" versus "undeserving" has often been at the center of public opinion. When the poor have been viewed as ungodly or lazy, relief has been denied or given grudgingly, and when they have been perceived as victims of means beyond their control, private and public relief have usually been available.

Future Professional Social Workers and Social Work Educators

The field of social work has enjoyed increasing popularity as a career choice. The Bureau of Labor

Statistics (1991) estimated that in 1990 there were 427,696 people employed as social workers in the United States. Another 150,000 persons are expected to join the ranks over the next decade (Ginsberg, 1992). U.S. News and World Report (Nov. 1, 1993) included several areas of social work practice in its list of "Hot Tracks in 20 Professions" (p. 112). Employee Assistance Program (E.P.A.) positions were cited as the fastest growing track, and more than 90 percent of the Fortune 500 companies now have E.P.A.s. These programs are mostly staffed by social workers. Other promising tracks in social work mentioned were: private practice psychotherapy, family counseling, and gerontology.

Enrollment in schools of social work reached record highs in 1992. There were 35,007 full-time baccalaureate students, an increase of 7% from 1991. Baccalaureate enrollment has increased every year since 1984 with the exception of 1989. In 1992, there were 9,510 baccalaureate degrees awarded, an increase of 8% from the previous year (Lennon, 1993, p. 27).

The number of students seeking an M.S.W. degree has steadily climbed since 1986, reaching an all-time high in 1992. Applications to M.S.W. degree programs increased 18.8% over 1991, and programs saw record numbers of full-time and part-time students in 1992. Full-time enrollment was 20,671, up 6.2%; part-time enrollmemt was 10,795, up 5.5%. A record 11,582 M.S.W. degrees were awarded in 1992

(Lennon, 1993, pp 29-30).

Full-time enrollment in doctoral social work programs was one thousand in 1992, down 11% from a record high in 1991. The number of students enrolled part-time in 1992 was second only to the number enrolled in 1984. The number of doctoral degrees awarded has remained steady over the past 3 years, with 243 being awarded in 1992 (Lennon, 1993, p. 31).

Social work education plays a critical role in shaping tomorrow's social work professionals. Since the inception of schools of social work in the early 1900s, it has been a primary role of schools of social work to ensure that professional attitudes and values are communicated to all students. Social work's future involvement with the plight of the poor depends on the extent to which this function has been accomplished. This sentiment has apparently caught the attention of the Council on Social Work Education (C.S.W.E.). The theme for the 1994 Annual Program Meeting is Poverty: Social Work Education Responds.

That the profession of social work should desire that its members hold appropriate attitudes and act accordingly makes good sense. The Council on Social Work Education Curriculum Policy Statement (1991) requires schools of social work to provide students with a professional foundation, specifically including basic social work values. Macht and Ashford (1991) listed values identified by The National Association of Social Workers (NASW) as guides to

social work practice:

(1). Commitment to the primary importance of the individual in society.

(2). Respect for the confidentiality of relationships with clients.

(3). Commitment to social change to meet socially recognized needs.

(4). Willingness to keep personal feelings and needs separate from professional relationships.

(5). Willingness to transmit knowledge and skills to others.

(6). Respect and appreciation for individual and group differences.

(7). Commitment to developing clients' ability to help themselves.

(8). Willingness to persist in efforts on behalf of clients despite frustration.

(9). Commitment to social justice and the economic, physical, and mental well-being of all in society.

(10). Commitment to a high standard of personal and professional conduct (pp. 60-61).

The goal of a training program is to educate recruits regarding such attributes. If a student does not possess these qualities upon entry, the program naturally wants to

facilitate change in the desired direction. It seems wise to probe attitudes toward the disadvantaged while future social workers are still being trained. At this point, educators still have the opportunity to shape attitudes and facilitate an appreciation of the problem of poverty. To determine the extent students' attitudes match those preferred by the profession requires that the attitudes be known. Only through the assessment of these faculties can evaluation be conducted. What also needs to be measured is whether the attitudes changed during training, and if so, to what degree and in what direction.

Social work education must be concerned with the professional interests of the teachers responsible for transmitting professional attitudes and values to students. Attitudes toward the problem of poverty held by educators impact upon the amount of time, material, and level of enthusiasm with which the issue is dealt. Ideally, an educator committed to improving the conditions endured by the disadvantaged should teach curricula areas such as cultural diversity, social policy, and community organization. The appropriate professional attitudes could be modeled for the students.

An educator lacking commitment to social justice, social reform, and community empowerment could have a negative effect on students. His or her disinterest in building social change skills in students could blunt

students' energies in this area. Teachers should take seriously the incorporation of the appropriate attitudes and values into each student's own professional identity. Social work can ill afford failure on the part of schools of social work to transmit the proper orientation. The professional attitudes, values, and level of commitment to the problem of poverty developed in schools of social work will make a significant impact on the profession's involvement in the struggle.

A unique contribution of this research dealing with social work education is its inclusion of doctoral students, many of whom will be tomorrow's educators. A survey of doctoral graduates from 1970 to 1979 showed that 68 percent were employed in the academic world (Shore, 1991). Several studies have investigated the attitudes of undergraduate and masters students toward the needy (Peterson & Fox, 1968, McDonald, 1972, Grimm & Orten, 1973, Orten, 1979, Baggett & Orten, 1991). Other studies have explored the conditions which social work students believe have caused poverty (Macorov, 1981, Furnham, 1982, Schwartz & Robinson, 1991). Cryns (1977) and Roff, Adams, and Klemack, (1984) compared baccalaureate and masters students. No study to date has examined the attitudes toward the poor held by doctoral students.

Actually educating students on how to teach social work is the focus of only 1 of the 48 doctoral programs in the

United States (Wolock, 1990). Most doctoral students study clinical social work, research, or some combination of the two. Content regarding poverty is minimal, and instruction on how to teach the topic effectively is virtually nonexistent. It is assumed that each student has assimilated the appropriate attitudes, values, and level of commitment into his or her own professional identity by the time the student reaches doctoral education. This study will investigate the validity of this assumption.

Shifting Career Interests Among Students

The trend in the profession away from areas which deal with the underclass has been reflected in the curricula of schools of social work. There has been a shift in students' career interests; increasing numbers desire specialized skills. Foremost in those requesting specialized training are those who seek clinical training which they may transform into a private psychotherapy practice. To a lesser extent, medical social work and research concentrations have grown in their popularity among students. Students are less interested in more traditional social work areas such as administration and planning, community organization, and social policy practice.

The shift in interest has occurred across all three levels of social work education, but particularly in masters programs. A primary reason is that the M.S.W. degree is

mandatory en route to becoming a Licensed Clinical Social Worker (L.C.S.W.). In most states, L.C.S.W.s may practice independently and collect insurance reimbursement. Rubin, Johnson, and Deweaver (1986) found that 86% of the students reported upon entry into graduate school that they wanted to go into private practice. Butler (1990) reported that two-thirds of the graduate students in her study planned to go into private practice.

The Council on Social Work Education (Lennon, 1993) listed a break-down of masters students' choices for primary field of practice and field placement. In 1992, students sought training to become psychotherapists over all other areas of concentration. Of those students who had chosen a primary field of practice, 26% were in the mental health concentration, compared to 2.4% who chose community planning and .59% who chose public assistance\welfare. Of those students who were in field placement, 24.7% were in mental health, 2.7% were in community planning, and 1.4% were in public assistance/welfare.

Shifts in students' interests have dictated changes in curriculum. Programs have had to accommodate the numbers who seek clinical and other specialized training, and traditional content areas have had to make room. Decreasing numbers of poverty-related courses are being offered. The tradition of administration and planning, community organization, and social policy succumbs to the reality that

enrollment in these courses is steadily declining.

Implications of Shifting Interests

Social work has historically directed its resources toward the alleviation of poverty. Its unique goals of social justice and self-determination distinguish it from other human service professions (Wakefield, 1988). The lines between what social workers do and what other professionals do are becoming blurred. As the number of students planning to pursue a career in psychotherapy and other areas of specialization increases, the numbers planning to work in areas which may affect the needs of the impoverished decreases. The following section will describe some trends in social work employment, some problems caused by these trends, and the role of social work education toward them.

The number of social workers practicing private psychotherapy has grown. Beginning in the 1950s, the number practicing privately grew to an estimated 13% in 1970 (Golton, 1971). In 1990, 40% of professional social workers were engaged in private practice (Sung Choi, 1990). Many other professional social workers perform psychotherapy in public agencies. In several states, private social work practice is limited due to licensing restrictions and the denial of third party insurance reimbursement. Lobbying efforts aimed at legislators and insurance companies in

those states continue to achieve change. Should these efforts prove successful, many more social workers can be expected to join the ranks of clinical social workers. Specht and Courtney (1994) warn, "if these trends continue over the next two or three decades, we can expect that social work will be engulfed entirely in the psychotherapy enterprise" (p. 24).

The membership of social work's largest organization, the National Association of Social Workers (N.A.S.W.), is reflective of the trend toward psychotherapy. Eighty-five percent of its 140,000 members hold an M.S.W. degree. About 80,000 N.A.S.W. members engage in psychotherapy on a full or part-time basis. Social workers provide half of all the mental health counseling in the United States. The percentage of N.A.S.W. members practicing in mental health is double the percentage practicing in any other area. While 67.5% of the membership performs direct practice, 0.5% are involved with policy development/analysis (N.A.S.W., 1992).

Through employment as a psychotherapist, social workers can avoid the unpleasantries associated with the needy, such as poor hygiene, unsafe neighbors, illness, and communication problems due to illiteracy. Hardcastle and Katz (1979) indicated that only 2% of M.S.W.s were working in the area of poverty. This is partly because, in most states, Medicaid will not reimburse independently practicing

social workers or home health care providers for social work services. Forty-seven percent of the poor have Medicaid and 28.5% have no insurance at all (U.S. Bureau of the Census. 1993).

Rubin and Johnson (1984) asserted that, "many students seek the M.S.W. degree as a route to becoming psychotherapists in private practice and have little commitment to social work's mission, dual focus, or distinctive clientele" (p. 5). Falck (1984) cautioned that, "in offering courses in social work therapy, schools have opened the door to private practice, ... taking the cream off the top as far as fee-paying clients are concerned, leaving the masses of the poor, the chronically ill, the multiproblem families to find help and support through underfunded community agencies. And this means there is no one to attend to their welfare" (p. 4).

The C.S.W.E. does not report the breakdown of the primary field of interests of undergraduate social work students in the United States. As stated earlier in this paper, mental health is the favorite choice for masters students, and the majority of doctoral students are preparing for a career in social work education. As a result of these choices, the destitute population will most likely not be served by those most qualified to work with them.

The introduction of computers and statistical software packages into the field of social work education has also attracted new students. Technological advances assist the social worker in data analysis and clinical diagnostic functions. The increasing accountability demands being placed on agencies by their funding sources necessitate computer applications. As never before, there are critical roles in the profession for statisticians. These students too can avoid dealing with the indigent. For social workers involved in research, their only need for direct contact with the poor is through information gathering.

Murphy and Pardeck (1992) warn of the dehumanizing nature of "computerization" in social work. Lloyd (1984) suggested "the intensifying of the craving for scientific respectability and technological facility, will send social work careening away from the core of its concerns so that 15 years hence we may not even recognize it" (in Saleeby, 1991, p. 60). Perlman (1989) expressed the worry that technology will take the "caring" out of social work. Saleeby (1991) postulated the following visible symptoms of what he refers to as social work's addiction and need for a "technological fix":

(1) The fading concern for the poor.

(2) A continuing thirst for professional respectability as evidenced by the quest for more Ph.D.s, more "science", more technique,

more accountability, and more alliances with the established professions.

(3) Amnesia for the progressive roots of the profession and the implicit radical agenda suggested by social work values (i.e., social justice) (p. 60).

As social work professionals and students turn their attention to specialized areas of practice, there is an imbalance being created. Critical areas such as social policy practice and social services administration are being neglected. Yet, the need for trained administrators and policy practitioners in the field is as significant as ever. Increasingly these positions are being staffed by nonsocial workers. There are several implications for the profession.

Hardiker and Barker (1981) suggested that "social workers' ultimate objective should be to find a place on the stage where he can be most effective for his world of clients" (p. 54). Social policy practice is the means to achieve this objective. Social policy is a "process by which society sets a course of action to accomplish social goals" (Macht & Quam, 1986, p. 224). Social policy is important to social workers because of its ability to effect a broad range of people.

Figueria-McDouogh (1993) argued that the profession has neglected policy practice. Although the number of N.A.S.W. members engaged in policy practice is quite small, the

organization does have a political arm. The Political Action for Candidate Election (PACE) supported social workers as candidates for public office and claimed to be instrumental in the election of 43 new members of Congress in 1992 (N.A.S.W., 1993).

Many social policy issues such as health care and welfare reform directly affect the poor. Decisions regarding which programs receive funding, the allocation of resources, and eligibility for services requirements shape the way society deals with poverty. Typically, these decisions are made by legislators or boards of directors. These bodies largely consist of professionals trained in fields such as law, business, and finance. These professionals may be well-intending, but are not schooled in specific social work values. Also, they may not be aware of the needs of those who are affected by their decisions. Social work's contribution to social policy decisions is to bring its unique orientation and insights into the process. Figueria-McDouogh (1993) postulated that it is social work's role to represent the poor by, "supporting policies that promote the social rights of poor people and opposing policies that further restrict those rights" (p. 181).

Macht & Quam (1986) commented that social work has "identified social policy as an area of expertise, and it is reasonable that legislators and the public to look to social workers for leadership in formulating policy" (p. 224).

They also proposed that the profession of social work is more affected by social policy than any other. Indeed, the ranks of the impoverished and those of social work professionals may be the two groups most affected by social policy decisions. Learning and practicing social policy skills is in the best interest of the profession and its clientele. The absence of social work from social policy practice could be damaging to the identity of the profession and to those persons whose interests they should represent (Figueria-McDouogh, 1993).

Schools of social work do not routinely provide in-depth instruction on policy practice skills. Critical elements such as legislative advocacy, social policy analysis, social action, and reform through litigation require specific training. Figueria-McDouogh (1993) claimed that the lack of information and training in policy practice in schools of social work leave graduates ill-prepared to affect social policy.

The area of administration and planning has also been affected by recent trends. Administrators are facing challenges which require specialized training, which normally falls outside of the scope covered in their social work education. As Lennon (1993) showed, most social work students are avoiding administration and planning. Decreasing numbers of graduates are available to social service organizations. In order to staff agencies with

personnel who will operate according to progressive management techniques, agencies are forced to look outside the discipline for help.

There has been a movement in social service organizations toward management skills which optimize service effectiveness. These organizations are being challenged to prove their worth. Funding sources such as the United Way want to know how effective the agencies have been in meeting their goals. Unlike organizations which have profit margin as their mission, the goals of social service organizations have historically been stated in vague terms, such as to improve the quality of life, to provide the least restrictive living arrangement, or to produce productive members of society.

The movement toward a more scientific style of management has led to the need for competencies in design, delivery, and evaluation in social service organizations where specific management skills and tools are required. Neugeboren (1990) viewed career development in social work administration as a responsibility of schools of social work. Schools providing training in social work have neither the curriculum space nor the faculty capacity to provide in-depth training in all those areas of skill that are now thought to constitute the core of management, such as marketing, finance, and accounting (Figueira-McDonough). Macht & Quam (1986) asserted that schools of social work

fail to prepare students to be effective managers. Yet, social workers have held the majority of management and supervisory positions in social service organizations. Many are promoted to management positions by virtue of their clinical expertise or seniority status in the department. Consequently, many of these organizations have not been administered according to progressive management practices. They have turned to hiring graduates of business and public administration programs and asking them to apply their techniques to the social service organization.

Patti (1983) noticed the trend of business and public administration professionals taking leadership positions in human service agencies. He stressed the urgency of the need for career development in social work administration. Just as most social workers have not been trained in management practices, managers from outside the discipline have not been trained in specific social work philosophies. The profession needs social workers who can combine technological advances with social work ideals.

Social Work's Future Involvement With the Poor

Poverty has been alleged by some economic theorists to be an ingrained component of America's capitalist economic system. The biblical verse, "You will have the poor among you always" (Matthew 26:11) continues to surface when the problem of poverty is discussed. These sentiments suggest

that poverty is a natural part of society. If poverty is bound to exist, then what amount of resources should be devoted to fighting it?

The institution of social welfare has been society's way of dealing with poverty. Figueria-McDonough (1993) called social workers the "implementers par excellence of social welfare" (p. 179). Specht and Courtney (1994) noted that social workers were among the architects of social welfare policy and should be implementers of its mission. They cautioned, "without such a commitment from social workers, the welfare state will be only a collection of programs, some of them in conflict with another, without a guiding purpose" (pp. 8-9).

Reeser and Epstein (1987) compared the attitudes of social workers toward poverty and social action in 1968 and 1984. They found that social workers in 1968 were more involved in direct services to the poor, favored more devotion of social work resources toward helping the poor, and placed greater emphasis on social policy and community organization than did social workers in 1984.

The ranks of the impoverished in the United States continue to swell, and the solution to the problem seems as distant as ever. The current generation of social workers saw promise when the poverty rate was cut in half in the decade following the War on Poverty in 1964. As poverty reached pre-War on Poverty numbers in 1983, they were

reminded of Ronald Reagan's lack of commitment to the plight of the underclass when he said, "We already fought a war on poverty. Poverty won" (Specht & Courtney, 1994).

Poverty is a problem which may be linked to a variety of other social problems: crime, homelessness, broken families, the spread of infectious diseases, and alcohol and drug abuse. Society may be best served by a concerted effort by social workers to take on these problems. Instead, social workers and social work students are turning their attentions elsewhere.

The challenges involved in successfully defeating poverty are enormous. Perhaps contemporary social workers have accepted poverty as a permanent part of the American culture. Russell-Erlick and Rivera (1987) alleged that modern social work has turned its back on the poor. Specht and Courtney (1994) echoed this sentiment in the title of their book, Unfaithful Angels: How Social Workers Have Abandoned Their Mission. The movement of social work away from working with the poor does not bode well for the 36.9 million persons or the 8 million families who fell below the official government poverty level in 1992 (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1993). This population, particularly the 21.9 million children, has no common voice. They are largely helpless to improve their plight without assistance, the assistance which has historically been supplied by social workers.

Objectives

The objective of this study was to explore the extent to which student characteristics and aspects of social work education influence students' attitudes toward the poor and the degree of emotional involvement the students have with the poor. Analyses identified what attributes and experiences are related to more favorable dispositions toward the needy and an emotional involvement in their struggle. The need for injection of classroom material and field placement experiences into the curricula is noted.

Information from this research effort points to the degree of success of social work education in transmitting the desired professional attitudes toward the indigent and a commitment to working toward solving the problem. Such knowledge can be valuable to training programs seeking to ensure that those working with the underclass are likely to act in a manner deemed desirable and representative of the profession's ideals.

Meyer (1983) asserted, "how we social workers determine what a problem is governs what we actually do in practice" (p. 99). Attitudes held by social work students toward the less fortunate, and the level of intensity with which those attitudes are held, point to the profession's future actions on their behalf. This includes the allocation of time, money, and energies to the problem. Students' attitudes toward the poor and the degree of emotional involvement with

which the attitudes are held will shape the priority given to the issue.

Students were asked to indicate in which social work program they were enrolled. This question allowed comparisons between bachelors, masters, and doctoral levels. The results indicated the effect on social work education of attitude position and intensity.

Analyses identified the attitude position and intensity scores of students in the various primary fields of study. Results indicated whether students choosing areas which include poverty-related content are different than those choosing primary areas which do not. Comparisons located domains which housed students with more and less favorable attitudes toward the destitute. If social work education is interested in instilling the proper attitudes, value base, and commitment to their cause in all students, this study will be useful in identifying the degree to which the various concentrations need attention. Educators are encouraged to address discrepancies through the educational experience.

The subjects were polled about their professional and volunteer experiences with the poor. This data was correlated with attitude position and intensity scores to explore the role of working with the disadvantaged in the attainment of professionally desired attributes. The results indicated the degree to which exposure to the poor

through social work contacts was related to positive attitudes and a commitment to work in their behalf. Analyses investigated whether those students working with the needy came away with the desired results or whether the opposite occurred. The findings have implications for practicum, field placement, and internship experiences. The educational experience should structure exposure to the underclass so that students develop an appreciation of the needs of the indigent and a commitment to helping them. The reverse could have disastrous effects on social work's involvement with the poor.

In order to examine the degree to which the social work education experience has communicated the professionally consistent understanding of the origins of poverty, students were asked to state what they believe to be the reason for the existence of poverty. This question is important because what people identify as the cause of a problem determines how they approach resolution of that problem. The results indicated the degree of uniformity regarding students' perceptions of the causes of the problem of poverty.

Throughout the history of social work, social action behavior has been necessary to help bring about change on behalf of the less fortunate. Subjects were requested to indicate what social action endeavors they had participated in over the past 2 years. The index included items

concerning involvement in forms of institutional, noninstitutional, electoral, and professional social action behavior. The results indicated the level of social action participation among social work students as well as the popularity of the various actions.

Social work education must concern itself with the actions of students as well as their attitudes. Positive attitudes toward a group may be useless unless they result in action. Negative attitudes toward the indigent may result in professionally undesirable actions. Findings indicated how attitudes and action are related.

Students were assessed regarding their impression of the relative poverty line in the United States. A similar method was used by Townsend (1979) to assess the relative poverty line in England. In this study, students were presented a range of yearly income levels and asked to indicate which range of income represented the minimum income level for a family of poor with which the family could meet its basic needs.

Social pressure plays an important role in Fishbein and Ajzen's Reasoned Action Theory. The Reasoned Action Theory involves attitudes toward actions rather than attitudes toward objects, such as the poor, which are involved in this study. The concept of social pressure was utilized in this study to investigate each student's perception of their peer's expectations regarding what each student's attitude

position toward the poor should be. Each respondent was also assessed regarding professional expectations. Students were asked to indicate the ideological direction (conservative - neutral - liberal) that they believed they needed to move in order to meet the profession of social work's expectations. Students were also asked to compare their attitude position toward the poor with their peers.

A number of sociodemographic variables were collected for comparison purposes. They included: age, sex, race, marital status, family income, family size, voter registration status, and whether they were members of N.A.S.W.

Preview of Literature Review

The central theoretical areas of this research project are: attitudes, poverty, and social work with the poor. Chapter two addresses eight areas: (1) the history of attitude and attitude research, (2) the popular definitions of attitude, (3) the function of attitudes, (4) the differences and inter-relatedness among attitudes, beliefs, and values, (5) attitude-behavior consistency, (6) attitude measurement, (7) the theoretical orientation adopted by this study, and (8) studies on attitudes toward the poor.

Chapter three explores poverty and the poor in the United States. This chapter is presented in three sections: What is poor?, Who is poor?, and Why are there poor? The

first section defines, critiques, and compares the absolute and relative definitions of poverty. The second section presents the United States Bureau of the Census statistics on the "official" number of poor and identifies the poor according to characteristics such as age, race, region, family composition, employment status, and educational attainment. The three levels of poverty in the United States (the transitional poor, the marginal poor, and the residual poor) are explained. Also, data from a continuing longitudinal study on poverty in the United States conducted by The Panel Study of Income Dynamics are presented. The third section presents, critiques, and compares the dominant explanations given for the existence of poverty: cultural explanations, individual explanations, and structural explanations. The major political ideologies in the United States (conservative, liberal, and radical) are identified and explained because of their utility in understanding the philosophical orientation behind the actions advocated by these three groups.

The fourth chapter has three sections: (1) the history of American attitudes toward the poor, (2) the emergence of social work as a response to dealing with the poor, and (3) programs of relief which have been designed to help the poor. The first section traces American attitudes toward the poor since colonial times. Attitudes toward the poor have influenced society's policies and approaches to the

poor. Attitudes toward the poor have also influenced the emergence of the profession of Social Work as a response to dealing with the poor. The second section reviews efforts taken by social workers on behalf of the poor, such as friendly visiting, the establishment of settlement houses, the development of charity organizations, and political lobbying effort for social reform. Finally, the third section will review efforts taken by government in the United States to relieve poverty. Also, the major programs of assistance currently received by the poor in the United States (such as Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), Social Security Income (SSI), Food Stamps, and Medicaid) are explained.

CHAPTER II

ATTITUDES-REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

History of Attitude and Attitude Research

From the time the study of attitudes was introduced to the field of psychology, social scientists have been intrigued with the concept's potential for understanding human behavior. William Thomas postulated a relationship between attitudes and behavior as early as 1907 (Kahle, 1984). His study of Polish peasants (Thomas & Znaniecki, 1918) has been credited with bringing recognition and acceptance to the concept as a worthwhile topic for investigation. Thomas and Znaniecki declared the study of attitudes "par excellence" in the field of social psychology and defined social psychology as "the scientific study of attitudes" (Allport, 1935, p. 798). In a historical review of modern social psychology, Gordon Allport (1968) called attitude "probably the most distinctive and indispensable concept in contemporary social psychology" (p. 59).

The word attitude originated from the Latin "aptus," which means "adaptedness." It first appeared in the English language in the early eighteenth century (Fleming, 1967).

Initially, attitude referred to bodily position in a painting. The contemporary application of the concept was developed in German psychology (Kahle, 1984). Experiments and writings of the Wurzberg group in the early twentieth century generated extensive interest in the disciplines of psychology and sociology (Allport, 1935).

Early theorists began by postulating their impressions of the composition of 'attitudes.' In the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century, their writings distinguished between "mental" and "motor" attitudes. Investigations were conducted involving muscular preparation and brain activity. Allport (1935) expressed the incorporation of both original meanings when he characterized attitudes as "a neuropsychic state of readiness for mental and physical activity."

By the 1930s, the study of attitudes became the focal point of social psychology. Even those who believed attitudes were in the unconscious, and who had become disenchanted with the lack of measurement capabilities, were stimulated by Sigmund Freud's assertion that attitudes were of use in understanding the unconscious (Allport, 1935).

Developments in the area of attitude measurement by Thurstone (1928), Bogardus (1931), Likert (1932), and others triggered extensive research efforts. Their projects focused on assorted types of attitudes directed toward various groups. Professional journals accommodated volumes

of investigations that were executed utilizing the latest instruments. Many students who had spent most of their academic careers concerned with theory analysis became attracted to the fresh opportunities and challenges posed by the instruments.

William McGuire (1968) noted the decline of attitude research in the 1940s and 1950s. He believed that the fascination with measurement was one factor in the decline. "Students in the field were drawn away from the substantiative issues that in the long run are the main justification for methodological process" (p. 137). McGuire also identified the arduous attempts at conceptual clarification, definition, and distinction from other related concepts as another contributor to the decline. The works of Freud and Carl Jung spawned a popularity with clinical and group work, and appealed to students preferring contact with consumers. Research interests shifted toward social policy concerns.

The work of Carl Hovland during World War II rejuvenated attitude research. He had been studying the effects of public relation efforts. Following the war, attitude change became the focus of theory and measurement advances. Drawing from his experiences with Hovland, Muzafer Sherif developed the "own categories procedure" for assessing attitudes toward social groups (Sherif & Hovland, 1953; Sherif, Sherif, & Nebergall, 1965). Their own

categories procedure uses an individual's latitude of acceptance and rejection for measuring social attitudes. This procedure will be dealt with in more detail later in this chapter. The fact that, when directly asked about their attitudes toward an object, group or action, individuals may respond in a manner they believe is socially expected of them, aroused concern. Sherif's approach claimed to assess attitudes without arousing the individual's awareness that his or her attitudes were being probed.

During the past two decades, textbooks and research publications have drawn extensively from the writings of Martin Fishbein and Icek Ajzen. Their "reasoned action theory" operationalized a formula which advanced experimental and theoretical efforts in the area of attitudes and behavior. This theory introduced "behavioral intentions" as a moderator between attitudes and behavior. This theory will also be further explained later in this chapter. Fishbein and Ajzen's work continues to set the standard regarding predicting behavior from attitudes.

Definition of Attitude

Attitude is a psychological construct, a hypothetical variable that cannot be observed or measured because it occurs 'within' an individual. The existence of an attitude is inferred from behavioral manifestations in the form of

actions or verbalizations. Attitudes may be conscious or unconscious, remaining latent until evoked by a situational stimulus.

Social scientists have conceptualized attitudes in many ways. These differences in interpretations have led to various uses of the construct. Attitude properties suggested by Park (1924) and Osgood, Suci, and Tannenbaum (1957) have been widely recognized. Park offered the following criteria for an attitude:

1. It must have definite orientation in the world of objects (or values), and in this respect differ from simple and conditioned reflexes.
2. It must not be an altogether automatic and routine type of conduct, but must display some tension even when latent.
3. It varies in intensity, sometimes being predominant, sometimes relatively ineffective.
4. It is rooted in experience, and therefore is not simply a social instinct (Allport, 1935, p. 803).

Using their semantic differential technique, Osgood, Suci, and Tannenbaum conducted factor analysis studies of the components of attitudes. They proposed three common factors of attitudes: the evaluative dimension (i.e. like-dislike), the behavioral dimension (i.e. active-passive), and the potency dimension (strong-weak) (Kahle, 1984).

Olson and Zanna (1993) grouped contemporary definitions of attitudes in terms of (a) affect, (b) behavioral predisposition (c) cognition, and (d) evaluation. Attitude measurement pioneer Louis Thurstone portrayed attitude as "the affect for or against a psychological object" (p. 126). Greenwald (1989) concurred that an attitude is "the affect associated with a mental object" (p. 432).

The role of attitude as a potential determinant of behavior has been included by some writers and omitted by others when defining attitude. Various perceptions have postulated the degree of behavioral influence attributed to attitudes. Bogardus (1931) defined attitude as "a tendency to act toward or against something in the environment which becomes thereby a positive or negative value" (p. 62). To Morgan (1934), attitudes were "literally mental postures, guides for conduct to which each new experience is referred before a response is made" (p. 47). Fishbein (1967) called an attitude "a mental and neural state of readiness, organized through experience, exerting a directive or dynamic influence upon the individual's response to all objects and situations with which it is related" (p. 8). Along similar lines, Allport (1968) referred to attitudes as "individual mental processes which determine both the actual and potential responses of each person in the social world" (p. 62). Triandis (1991) defined an attitude as "a state of a person that predisposes a favorable or unfavorable

response to an object, person, or idea" (p. 485).

These authors basically agree that an attitude is a form of readiness for response. It is not a behavior, rather a pre-condition for behavior. This posture exists in all degrees of intensity and usually provokes a behavior that is "directional" in that it has positive or negative connotations.

Most writers agree that attitudes are learned and represent knowledge. Kruglanski (1989) viewed an attitude as "a special type of knowledge, notably knowledge of which content is evaluative or affective" (p. 139). Throughout the socialization process, interactions with objects and other persons involve evaluation. When exposed to a stimulus, the individual draws from previous experiences to determine a favorable or unfavorable response. Attitudes may be seen as the culmination of an individual's knowledge and experiences. Asch (1952) saw attitudes as "particularly enduring sets formed by past experiences" (p. 585). According to Campbell (1963), attitudes are "acquired behavioral dispositions" that "represent a persons' knowledge or view of the world" (p. 120). Sherif, Sherif, and Nebergall (1965) argued that "attitudes express the end products of the socialization of the person" (p. 5).

The belief that attitude formation involves a process of cognitive organization has received popular support. Lewis (1938) described attitudes as "an interrelated set of

opinions organized around a point of reference" (p. 65). Rokeach (1972) included this idea when defining attitude as "an organization of interrelated beliefs around a common object" (p. 116). Newcomb, Turner, and Converse (1965) remarked that "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" (p. 41-42). Fishbein (1967) viewed attitudes as "abstracted from the totality of an individual's belief's, behavioral intentions, and actions toward a given object" (p. 483).

Chein (1972) favored the evaluative dimension in his assertion that an attitude is a disposition to evaluate certain objects, actions and situations in certain ways. To Eagly and Chaiken (1992), an attitude is "a psychological tendency that is expressed by evaluating a particular entity with some degree of favor or disfavor" (p. 1).

Allport (1935) outlined distinctions appearing in the social psychology literature between attitudes of temperament and attitudes of character, between conscious and unconscious attitudes, and between latent and kinetic attitudes. Other authors have also distinguished between natural and social attitudes. The research effort at hand is concerned primarily with the latter. Social attitudes have been defined simply as "individual attitudes directed toward social objects" (Bernard, 1930, p. 6) and as

"consistency in response to social objects" (Campbell, 1950, p. 175). Sherif, Sherif, and Nebergall (1965) added that "social attitudes are a set of evaluative categorizations formed toward an object or class of objects as the individual learns, in interaction with others, about his environment, including evaluations of other persons" (p. 20).

Functions of Attitudes

Rokeach (1972) wrote that attitudes provide a "frame of reference" for evaluation in society (p. 131). In writing on emotion, Charles Darwin (1872) proposed that emotions upset one's equilibrium and that attitudes were necessary to restore equilibrium. There is general agreement that attitudes "facilitate the process of adaptation to the environment" (Kahle, 1984, p. 5). They assist in balancing the affective, behavioral, and cognitive aspects of an individual's life. Katz's delineated four attitude functions: (1) the utilitarian function, (2) the ego-defensive function, (3) the expressive function, and (4) the knowledge function (p. 170). Utilitarian attitudes guide individuals toward means through which valued goals may be achieved. Ego-defensive attitudes help the individual deal with inner conflicts. Expressive attitudes facilitate self-realization through allowing the individual to create an identity by taking stands on issues. Finally, knowledge

attitudes provide an individual with structure and competence for managing in society.

Olson and Zanna (1993) noted the two functions which have received recent attention: value expression and object appraisal. Value expressive attitudes "communicate important values and/or seek social approval." The object appraisal function regards "the categorization of objects and events" (p. 125).

Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs

Attitudes originate from other psychological constructs such as beliefs and values. When studying attitudes, 'beliefs' and 'values' consistently appear in the literature as central themes. These two constructs share characteristics and are cognitively organized to form attitudes. In order for a research endeavor to be worthwhile, the theoretical perspectives employed must be identified. The similarities, differences, and relationships between features demand clarification. The following section will briefly address the definitions of 'beliefs' and 'values,' their link to attitudes, and distinctions and similarities among the three constructs.

As is the case with attitudes, beliefs and values cannot be directly observed or measured. Their existence must be inferred from behavior and verbalization. Beliefs and values have not enjoyed the same conceptual

clarification that attitudes have. Theorists' efforts in operationalizing the constructs have not achieved broad consensus. The development of measurement instruments for attitudes thrived in the first half of the twentieth century. Attempts to assess beliefs and values saw no such progress. Scholars turned their attention to the more popular construct of attitude. Methodological advances had made the study of attitudes an attractive area for conducting research. Until the mid-twentieth century, the conceptual confusion surrounding beliefs and values, coupled with improving attitude-measurement capabilities, resulted in considerably less attention given to beliefs and values as dependent variables in research endeavors.

The seminal work of Milton Rokeach in the 1960s and 1970s provided social psychology with an authoritative perspective through which to view beliefs and values. Attempts at measurement increased, yet the constructs continued to receive less attention as a focus of research. Due to their higher order in the cognitive hierarchy, beliefs and values have, indeed, been more difficult to assess than attitudes. Nevertheless, attempts to understand the nature of human beliefs and values involve attitudes to some extent.

Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) defined belief as "something that links an object to some attribute" (p. 12). Rokeach (1972) conceptualized belief as "any simple proposition,

conscious or unconscious, inferred from what a person does" (p. 113). A belief system refers to an organization of an individual's beliefs about reality. Rokeach (1968) distinguished three types of beliefs: descriptive, evaluative, and prescriptive. Descriptive beliefs are those in which the object of belief may be true or false. Evaluative beliefs involve positive or negative judgement of the object of belief. Prescriptive beliefs define desirable or undesirable end states.

Rokeach (1972) asserted that similarity of beliefs is a major criterion individuals use to accept or reject others. He presented five classes of beliefs which have varying degrees of importance and centrality in an individual's life.

1. Primitive beliefs, 100% consensus - Learned by direct experience with the object of belief. They are reinforced by the individual's reference groups. "They represent a person's 'basic truths' about physical reality, social reality, and the nature of the self" (p. 6).
2. Primitive beliefs, 0% consensus - Learned by direct experience with the object of the belief. These are more individualized in that reinforcement by the individual's reference group is irrelevant.

3. Authority beliefs - Involve personal preferences regarding views of institutions in society an individual has come to accept or reject.
4. Derived beliefs - Acquired through membership in a group and ownership of the group's identity.
5. Inconsequential beliefs - Involve an individual's personal "taste". (pp. 7-11).

Values have been defined as "a type of belief, centrally located within one's total belief system, about how one ought or ought not to behave, or about some end-state of existence worth or not worth attaining" (Rokeach, 1972, p. 124). Values which concern how one ought or ought not to behave are referred to as instrumental. Terminal values involve an end-state of existence. As with beliefs, values contain affective, behavioral, and cognitive components. A value system has been conceptualized as "an enduring organization of beliefs concerning preferable modes of conduct or end-states of existence along a continuum of relative importance" (Rokeach, 1973, p. 3).

Attitudes, beliefs, and values are interrelated. Attitudes are derived from beliefs and values; the three are "organized together to form a functionally integrated cognitive system" (Rokeach, 1972. p. ix). Krech and Crutchfield (1948) claimed "all attitudes incorporate

beliefs" (p. 115). Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) called attitudes "beliefs with an evaluative component" (p. 6). Rokeach (1972) concluded that several beliefs are contained in an attitude and termed an attitude "a package of beliefs" (p. 159). Linton (1945) defined an attitude as "the covert response evoked by a value" (pp. 111-12). Agreeing that values determine attitudes, Mueller (1986) alleged "an attitude toward an object is a function of the extent to which that object is perceived to facilitate the attainment of important values" (p. 4). Rokeach (1973) added "a given attitude is conceived to be determined by several or many values" (p. 105).

Values may be interpreted as incorporating beliefs. Allport (1961) portrayed a value as "a belief upon which a man acts by preference" (p. 454). To Rokeach (1973), a value is a "prescriptive belief" (p. 8). A major distinction between attitudes and values is that values are more abstract. They are also more ingrained in an individual's identity, hence more resistant to change. Another significant distinction regards attitudes being directed toward an object or situation while values are not. The following description is an excerpt from Rokeach's The Nature of Human Attitudes (1973). It appears here because it highlights the thoughts of numerous writers regarding the differences between attitudes and values (pp. 18-19).

1. Whereas a value is a single belief, an attitude refers to an organization of several beliefs that are all focused on a given object or situation.
2. A value transcends objects and situations whereas an attitude is focused on some specified object or situation.
3. A value is a standard but an attitude is not a standard. Favorable or unfavorable evaluations of numerous attitude objects and situations may be based upon a relatively small number of values serving as standards.
4. A person has as many values as he has learned beliefs concerning desirable modes of conduct and end-states of existence, and as many attitudes as direct or indirect encounters he has had with specific objects and situations. It is thus estimated that values number only in the dozens, whereas attitudes number in the thousands.
5. Values occupy a more central position than attitudes within one's personality makeup and cognitive system, and they are therefore determinants of attitudes as well as behavior.

6. Value is a more dynamic concept than attitude, having a more immediate link to motivation.
7. The substantive content of a value may directly concern adjustive, ego defense, knowledge or self-actualizing functions while the content of an attitude is related to such functions only inferentially (pp. 18-19).

Attitudes and Behavior

The most significant reason for studying attitudes is their implications for behavior. As discussed earlier in this review, some theorists have included behavioral implications in their definition of attitude. To Eagly and Chaiken (1992), Triandis (1991), Gergen and Gergen (1986), and Fishbein and Ajzen (1985), an attitude is a behavioral predisposition with an evaluative component.

Students of behavior prediction have targeted attitudes as a potential link to understanding behavior. The premise is that knowing one's attitudes provides information about one's behavior. Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) alleged that knowing the attitudes held by one's reference group could also be suggestive of one's behavior.

Fishbein and Ajzen presented a framework for the study of attitude-behavior consistency. Their "theory of reasoned action" postulated a mediating link between attitude and behavior. Their theory was enthusiastically embraced by the

profession of social psychology. Much of the theory development and research conducted in the field today is based on the theory of reasoned action. Hill (1981) asserted that "during the last half of the past decade, social psychologists devoted more research attention to this formulation than to any other" (p. 356). In 1987, Chaiken and Stangor noted most new models of behavior prediction were based on the theory of reasoned action. Indicating the continued prevalence, Olson and Zanna (1993) commented, "this theory remains the dominant theoretical framework in the attitude-behavior literature" and "it serves as the standard to which new ideas and theories are compared" (p. 131).

The theory of reasoned action postulated 'attitude toward the action' and 'subjective norms' as predictors of behaviors. Subjective norms are a product of one's perceived expectations of his or her reference groups, family, friends, society, et cetera and his or her motivation to comply with those norms. Previous works mainly centered around attitude toward the object. The theory of reasoned action is not concerned with attitude toward the object. Subjective norms and attitude toward the action combine to form 'behavioral intentions.' Behavioral intentions become the link between attitude and action. An intention is a probability judgement that links the individual to some action and a person's belief about his or

her own performance of a given behavior (Fishbein 1978).

The theory of reasoned action has its critics. Researchers have suggested other variables that affect behavior and that are not accounted for in the theory of reasoned action. Past behavior has shown to be a positive predictor of future behavior (Fredericks & Dossett, 1983, Eiser, Morgan, Gammage, & Gray, 1989). Warshaw and Davis (1985) recommended 'behavioral expectation' as a more reliable indicator than behavioral intentions. They claimed that expectations incorporate the individual's factoring of the likelihood of completing the behavior. Other variables which have received attention as moderating the attitude-behavior relationship are, volitional control (situational or internal obstacles to performing the behavior, (Ajzen & Madden, 1986), clarity of intention (how well the intentions are formed, Bagozzi & Yi, 1989), behavioral commitment (the length of time an individual has engaged in a behavior, Skinner & Cattarello, 1989), and environmental support (when the environment is seen to support the attitude, Grube & Morgan, 1990).

The subjective norms featured in the theory of reasoned action are similar to "situation" dynamics addressed by other writers. The process of development from attitude formation to behavioral manifestation occurs under multifarious conditions. Attitude-behavior correlations may be different in each. Eagly and Chaiken (1992) asserted

that a situation which evokes an evaluative response is necessary for an attitude to be formed.

Individuals have attitudes toward situations as well as toward objects and actions. If one's attitude toward the situation is more powerful than the attitude toward the object or action, the resulting behavior could be due to situational dynamics. Volitional control and social pressure are significant variables which change with situations and affect the attitude-behavior consistency. Rokeach (1972) postulated that "a person's social behavior must always be mediated by at least two types of attitudes; one activated by the object, and the other activated by the situation" (p. 126).

LaPiere's (1934) study of espoused attitudes toward a minority group and actual behavior toward a member of that group, was a catalyst for the examination of attitude-behavior consistency. Managers of hotels and restaurants were mailed questionnaires regarding their attitudes toward Chinese people and toward serving them as customers. The replies were strongly negative toward Chinese persons and toward serving them in their places of business. LaPiere sent a neatly-dressed and well-mannered Chinese couple to the establishments to which he'd sent questionnaires. The couple was usually welcomed and served by the businesses. In a similar study, Kutner, Wilkens, and Yarrow (1952) reported that restaurants in New York City usually refused

to take reservations from racially integrated parties, but often seated them if they came in person. The authors of these studies claimed that attitude-behavior consistency was not supported.

Linn (1965) found methodological flaws in these studies, and Dillehay (1973) doubted their relevance to the study of attitude-behavior consistency. No criteria assured that the individuals responding to the mailed questionnaires or telephone calls were the same persons who actually served or seated the customers sent by the researchers. Also, neither study directly measured attitudes, but rather inferred them.

Nisbitt, Borgida, Crandell, and Reed (1976) suggested that people base their attitudes on concrete rather than abstract representations of a social group. In the LaPiere and Kutner et al. studies, the respondents were probably basing their replies on an imagined prototype. A study by Cantor, Mischel, and Schwartz (1982) demonstrated how basing attitudes on prototypes can be misleading. Experiments by Lord, Leper, and Mackie (1984) supported the belief that "attitudes toward a social group will match behavior toward a member of that group only to the degree that the target person matches the prototype that served as the basis for the attitude in the first place" (p. 1263). For example, an individual's attitude toward African-Americans will probably vary depending on his or her idea of a prototypical

representative of the race. Basing attitude on a prototype such as Reverend Martin Luther King would most likely yield a more positive image of the race than would basing attitude on an imagined prototype such as a gang member. One's attitude toward welfare program recipients will be quite different depending upon whether the imagined representative is a hard-working, struggling, widowed mother of four or a physically healthy, drug-abusing young male.

When the establishment workers in the aforementioned studies were confronted with a nonprototypical couple, their behavior was based on direct experience. Kahle (1984) pointed to the additional information supplied by the direct encounter. Such situations may provide information which challenges previously held attitudes. Fazio and Zanna (1978) asserted that "direct experience produces a well-defined and certain attitude" and "enhances that attitude's capacity to predict later behavior" (p. 405).

Prior to the application of the theory of reasoned action in research, several authors claimed attitudes were unrelated or only slightly related to behavior. McGuire (1966) and Wicker (1969) conducted reviews of studies purporting to examine attitude-behavior consistency. McGuire stated that "attitude research has long indicated that the person's verbal report of his attitude has a rather low correlation with his actual behavior toward the object of the attitude" (p. 156). Wicker wrote that "it is

considerably more likely that attitudes will be unrelated or only slightly related to overt behaviors than that attitudes will be closely related to actions" (p. 65) and concluded "the present review provides little evidence to support the postulated existence of stable, underlying attitudes within the individual which influence both his verbal expressions and action" (p. 75). Alwin (1973) and Hill (1981) have noted several potential defects in some of the studies reviewed by McGuire and Wicker. They took issue with the data collection methods and reliability of the measurement indices used.

The pessimism of the 1960s gave way to a more optimistic view in the 1970s. This sentiment was tapped by Kelman (1974) when he proclaimed that "attitudes are alive and well and gainfully employed in the sphere of action" (Hill, 1981, p. 349). The utilization of the theory of reasoned action in research has significantly improved the reliability of attitude-behavior consistency investigations. Reviews of attitude-behavior studies began to claim positive results (Calder & Ross, 1973, Schuman & Johnson, 1976, Fishbein & Ajzen, 1977). Over the past two decades, research has consistently indicated the value of attitudes in predicting behaviors. As the theory of reasoned action is refined and other influential variables are introduced, the model becomes even more powerful. Recent reviews (Hill, 1981, Cooper & Croyle, 1984, Chaiken & Stangor, 1987, Tesser

& Shaffer, 1990, Olson & Zanna, 1993), have acknowledged the important role played by attitudes in behavior prediction. Rather than investigating whether attitudes are of utility in predicting behavior, theorists and researchers have shifted their attention to the improvement of existing models and development of alternative models.

Attitude Measurement

In order to be of utility in scientific research, a psychological construct must be measurable. Varying perceptions of attitudinal properties have promoted mixed responses to measurement applications. The quantification process involves the use of psychophysical scales. The scales attempt to identify attitude position on an affective continuum. An individual's attitude position toward an object may lie anywhere between "very positive" and "very negative." This section will briefly describe the major attitudinal scaling methods.

Thurstone Scales. Louis Thurstone pioneered attitude-measurement methodology. His theoretical postulations and measurement ideas were a catalyst for a generation of social scientists who speculated about the significance of attitudes in understanding human behavior. Thurstone scales are comprised of statements of opinions ranging from extremely favorable to extremely unfavorable toward the attitudinal object. The statements or opinions are

submitted to the subject for his or her endorsement or rejection.

Thurstone (1927) operationalized the process of constructing an attitude scale. He began with collecting hundreds of opinions relating to the attitudinal object. Two to three hundred judges were involved in the process of selecting, evaluating, and arriving at the optimal list of statements that would tap attitude position toward the attitudinal object. The final scale consisted of about 20 statements. Subjects are asked to indicate the items with which they agree.

Thurstone recommended that an attitude scale indicate (1) the mean position the person occupies on the scale, (2) the range of opinions the person is willing to accept, and (3) that one opinion which the person selects as the one which most nearly represents his or her own attitude on the issue at stake. Using the statement scale method, Thurstone developed three attitude-scaling techniques (1) the method of equal-appearing intervals, (2) the method of successive intervals, and (3) the method of paired comparisons.

Likert Scales. Renis Likert (1932) offered an alternative attitude-scaling method. Like Thurstone, he sought a spectrum of opinions regarding the target object. Only statements which implied something positive or negative about the attitudinal object were considered for pool placement. Neutral items could not be included. The pool

of items was administered to a group of respondents for item analysis purposes. The scores were correlated with each other, with the goal of eliminating negatively correlating and zero-correlating items.

The final scale includes about twenty statements. Subjects are asked to indicate to what extent they agree or disagree with each statement. The response categories usually range from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree." Depending upon the position advocated by the statement (positive or negative toward the target), the subject's responses are accorded points. If five categories are being used with positively stated items, "strongly agree" would receive five points and "strongly disagree" would receive one. The sum of the points corresponding to each item represents the subject's attitude. The higher the score, the more positive the attitude, and the lower the score, the more negative the attitude.

Guttman Scales. Like Thurstone and Likert, Louis Guttman (1944) collected diverse opinions regarding the attitudinal object for his item pool. Statements were ranked according to their degree of favorableness or unfavorableness toward the attitude object. Groups of items ranked incrementaly according to their degree of favorableness toward the target are administered to a response group. A response matrix is calculated in order to locate items which will not be useful as final scale items.

Subjects look at brief, usually five-item, groups of statements arranged in order of positiveness. They indicate a cutoff point at which they endorse all statements below a certain item and disagree with all statements above the item. Scores are based on the cutoff point. Guttman referred to this as "reproducibility." The method is probably the most unidimensional of attitude scales. The narrow focus of the items and delineation of the location an individual stops supporting the graded statements contributes to quality interpretation of their attitude position.

Semantic Differential Technique. Charles Osgood (1957) adapted the semantic differential for use in attitude measurement. Through factor analysis, he attempted to identify adjective variables which would serve as the basis for exploring meaning dimensions of attitudinal objects. The adjectives are paired with their opposite (good - bad, strong - weak) with usually seven equal response categories between them. Osgood also recommended item analysis to eliminate insignificant items.

The final semantic differential usually includes no more than ten adjective pairs. These pairs imply an evaluative meaning. The subjects indicate which of the seven positions between the adjectives best describes the meaning they assign to the target object. Similar to Likert scoring, the most positive response receives a seven and the

most negative a one. The responses to each adjective pair are summed. High scores indicate a positive attitude toward the attitudinal object and low scores a negative attitude.

Own Categories Procedure. Sherif, Sherif, and Nebergall (1965) proposed using one's own evaluative processes as basis for determining his or her attitude. It is more typical of the way individuals make decisions than scales with restricted response sets and lengthy instructions. The task is viewed as an objective evaluation of the items.

The number of items included in the instrument may range up to or even over one hundred. The items are statements about the target object. They may be positive, negative, or neutral toward the target object. Anchor items from the "favorable" to "unfavorable" extremes are represented in the pool of statements. A large number of "neutral" or ambiguous items (with respect to the extremes) must be included. Responses to these neutral items, become "displaced" away from the attitudinal position of the subject. Neutral items and their displacement in the evaluation process are a critical element of this procedure.

Responses are placed into categories between the two extremes. Subjects are asked to place the items into categories based on how "favorable" or "unfavorable" they are toward the attitudinal object. They may use as many categories as necessary to reflect their evaluation of the

statement. Individuals who are highly involved with the target object tend to use fewer categories and place more items toward the extremes than those who are not. The procedure yields an attitude position location on a continuum and another index for the degree to which the individual is involved in the matter. Attitude position and intensity scores are a result of the where the statements are placed.

A particularly valuable attribute of own categories procedure is its application to a "disguised" structure. Attitudes may be assessed without arousing the subject's awareness that his or her attitudes are being measured. Instruments asking directly about attitudes toward an object may produce responses believed to be expected by the researcher or deemed socially desirable.

Eagly and Chaiken (1992) have noted the increased interest in attitude measurement over the past few years. They presented several factors that have contributed to this trend. The first factor regards the "concern about the applied relevance of attitude research" (p. 82). Scales are being developed to measure attitudes toward numerous present-day issues. Investigations are conducted "to demonstrate that the scales have sufficiently high reliability and validity to be useful for predicting and understanding the correlates of attitudes." Another factor is that "the increased use of sophisticated statistical

techniques for testing mediational models of attitude change focuses concern on measurement issues." A third factor is "the growing awareness that the study of relationships between theoretical variables cannot be divorced from the issue of how these variables were measured." Measurement techniques hold implications for different inferences (p. 82). Jaccard (1979) recognized this matter when he noted how "different types of attitude scales imply different relationships between attitudes and behaviors" (Kahle, 1984, p. 91). This point was supported by Kahle (1984):

1. True Likert scales, which sum multiple items measuring the same concept, imply that the higher the score on the scale, the greater the probability of engaging in target behaviors.
2. Guttman scales, which assume that a respondent will endorse every item up to a point and none of the items beyond it, imply that behavior is an all-or-none function of attitudes.
3. Thurstone scales imply a kind of rising and falling of behaviors with given attitudes (p.91).

Theoretical Orientation

As outlined in previous sections, the psychological construct of attitude has many interpretations. In research, the definition that is adopted guides the

endeavor, which, in the case of this research, is to identify social work students' attitudes toward the poor. The way attitude is conceptualized holds implications for methodology, data analysis, and the interpretation of results. In order for the project to be understood and reproduced, the conceptual orientation of critical variables must be explained.

In most definitions of attitude, 'affect for or against' a psychological object maintains a central role. Consensus wanes regarding the inclusion of behavioral implications in the definition of an attitude. While predicting future behavior toward a target object from the knowledge of a person's or group's attitude toward that object is a paramount concern in attitude research, such a capability is not always possible. Situational variables often affect the range of options available. A person may act according to his or her attitudes in private life, but act differently in public life. A person such as a politician, teacher, or human service worker may behave contrary to attitudes in private and in the politically correct manner in public because it is expected in that person's professional role. In private, he or she may act according to their attitudes because social pressure is reduced and public examination of behavior is not an issue. There are numerous studies which establish that attitude-behavior consistency is not one hundred percent. Attitudes

and behavior may be related in some situations and unrelated in others. They are "separate psychological phenomena and should be defined as such" (Mueller, p. 4). To include one in the definition of another can be misleading.

This project will provide a definition of attitude which does not include behavioral implications. The effort at hand is concerned with attitudes toward an object, the poor, and not attitudes toward an action. Thurstone (1931) defined attitude as "the affect for or against a psychological object" (p. 261). Assessing affect for or against the poor is a major goal of this research. Thurstone's definition is consistent with the desired aim.

Social Judgment Theory

Social judgment theory provides the theoretical framework for this research effort. It is concerned with "how people form impressions of the world around them and how they communicate these impressions through their expressive behavior" (Eiser, 1990, p. 2). The cognitive processes people use to evaluate the social world are a major focus. The theory also incorporates intensity of ego-involvement. Olson and Zanna (1993) proclaimed that "the social judgment approach is more popular than ever before" (p. 146). This theory was chosen because of its unique properties. Also, the theory focuses exclusively on attitudes toward social objects. Theories such as the

reasoned action theory focus on attitudes toward actions.

Groundwork for the social judgment approach was developed by the psychophysicist, Fecher (1860). "Much of Fecher's work was concerned with identifying the limits of subject's ability to differentiate between stimuli that were close to one another in terms of physical magnitude" (Eiser, 1990, p. 3). He specified a unit of measurement termed "Just Noticeable Difference" (JND). The JNDs were used to distinguish "the subjective difference between any pair of stimuli" (Eiser, 1990, p. 4).

In order to be of utility in research and subject to investigation, a theory should lend itself to measurement. Techniques and instruments are designed specifically for the conceptual foundations of the theory. Thurstone (1928) was an advocate of the application of quantitative measurement techniques to "people's subjective experiences and evaluation of their social world" (Eiser, 1990, p. 6). Eiser summarized Thurstone's thinking, "if one could apply Fechner's techniques to the measurement of sensory experience, there should be no basic conceptual reason why attitudes could not also be measured" (p.6). Thurstone developed an interval scale which consisted of a subjective continuum of personal acceptability-unacceptability.

Stevens (1957, 1966, 1975) "was able to show that subjects could quite successfully provide 'direct' numerical equivalents of the magnitude of any sensation produced by a

stimulus or of the magnitude of any difference between stimuli" (Eiser, 1990, p. 4). This development in judgment research facilitated the ability to "assess stimuli along a whole range of dimensions" and "the comparability of judgment across many different kinds of stimuli" (Eiser, 1990, p. 5). Stevens (1966) pointed out the applicability of his scaling method to social stimuli.

Muzafer Sherif and his associates (Sherif, Hovland, & Volkart, 1949, Sherif & Hovland, 1953, Sherif & Sherif, 1956, and Sherif, Sherif, & Nebergall, 1965) originated a measurement technique derived from the principles of social judgment theory. Sherif et al. sought to expand the scope of attitude measurement beyond that offered by uni-dimensional scales developed by Thurstone, Likert, Guttman, and Osgood. Attitudes were viewed as multi-dimensional and required a more comprehensive method of assessment. These writers agreed with Thurstone's (1928) assertion that "an attitude is a complex affair which cannot be wholly described by a single numerical index" (p. 530). Including the cognitive processes involved in judging the attitudinal object was proposed to facilitate a more valid measurement of attitudes toward that object. Sherif, Sherif, & Nebergall (1965) suggested "an attitude is more adequately represented as a range of latitude of acceptance" (p. vi).

The own categories procedure developed by Sherif et al. proposed assessing latitudes of acceptance and rejection as means for measuring social attitudes. Latitude of acceptance refers to the position on an issue (or toward an object) that is the most acceptable, plus other acceptable positions. Latitude of rejection refers to the most objectionable position on the same issue, plus other objectionable positions. Latitude of noncommitment refers to those positions not categorized as either acceptable or objectionable in some way (Sherif, Sherif, & Nebergall. 1965).

Central to the own categories approach to measuring social attitudes is the notion that "an individual's attitude on an issue can be assessed adequately only if the procedures yield the limits of the position he accepts and the limits of the position he rejects, relative to the bounds of available alternatives defined by the extreme positions on the issue" (Sherif, Sherif, & Nebergall, 1965, p. 3). Sherif et al. are concerned with (1) how does the individual discriminate? (2) how many categories does the individual use? and (3) how does the individual distribute judgments when he or she can make his or her own decisions in these respects?

The own categories technique asks the respondent to evaluate a set of statements regarding the attitude reflected (favorable, neutral, unfavorable) toward the

target object. Each statement is judged and placed into a category which is determined by the subject. Hence they are the respondent's own categories. The range of responses is not limited to the structure imposed by the researcher. The data yield information regarding attitude position and attitude intensity. Sherif and Hovland (1953) asserted "the way an individual categorizes various positions on a social issue will indirectly reveal the individual's attitudes more clearly than the answers given to standard attitude items when one is conscious of the possible interpretation by others of his answers" (p. 135).

Items indicating extreme positions serve as anchors for judging the other items. The judgment of neutral items is postulated to be of value in assessing attitude position. "The highly involved person puts disproportionate numbers of judgements in the categories he accepts, and especially in those he finds unacceptable, and he neglects intermediate categories. But he also uses fewer categories than the less-involved person, thereby heightening the typically bimodal distribution of judgements" (Sherif, Sherif, & Nebergall, 1965, p. 138).

Eagly and Chaiken (1992) summarized the social judgment theory's core propositions as:

1. A person's own attitude serves as a judgment anchor in encoding attitudinal stimuli.
2. Latitude widths determine whether a message's

advocated position will be assimilated or contrasted. Positions falling within the latitude of acceptance(or nearby in the latitude of noncommitment) will be assimilated toward the recipient's own latitude. Positions falling within the latitude of rejection (or nearby in the latitude of noncommitment) will be contrasted away from the recipient's own attitude.

3. Ego-involvement broadens the latitude of rejection and narrows the latitude of noncommitment.
4. Both assimilation and contrast effects increase as a positive function of message discrepancy (the distance between the message's position and the recipient's own attitude.
5. Ego-involvement increases the anchoring property of initial attitudes, so that both assimilation and contrast effects are amplified for ego-involved recipients.
6. Greater assimilation produces more positive evaluations of message content which, in turn, produce greater amounts of attitude change. Conversely, greater contrast produces more negative evaluations of message content which, in turn, produce lesser amounts of attitude

change.

7. Stimulus ambiguity enhances the likelihood of judgmental distortions. Therefore propositions 4-6 should be more apparent when recipients are exposed to persuasive messages whose (or, perhaps, content) are ambiguous (p. 371).

In Thurstone, Likert, Guttman, and Osgood techniques, it is relatively easy to ascertain what is being measured. The own categories procedure may be presented in a "disguised structured" fashion. This attribute holds advantages in measurement and generalizing areas over practices which directly ask "what is your attitude?" Edwards (1957) discussed the issue of "social desirability" in attitudinal investigation. Individuals may give responses which they think are in-line with the expectations of his or her social group. Also, they may give responses which they imagine are within the researcher's expectations.

The own categories procedure can be used without making the subject aware of the intent of the study. The judgment task is presented as an objective exercise. This approach is particularly important when studying issues such as social work students' attitudes toward the poor. There is a social work norm which makes an open stand against the poor not the thing to do. When administering instruments which make the subject aware that his or her attitudes toward the poor are being measured, many individuals respond in terms

of the researchers' expectations rather than their views.

Most attitude assessment instruments yield only an indicator of attitude position. The own categories procedure also yields an indicator of ego-involvement with the attitudinal object. Sherif and Cantril (1947) defined ego-involved attitudes as those that are part of the person's self-concept or "ego," attitudes that "have the characteristic of belonging to me, as being a part of me" (p. 93). The intensity with which an attitude is held has long been recognized for its utility in predicting future behavior (Krech & Crutchfield, 1948). Efforts at determining an individual's intensity have not been as fruitful or commonplace as those concerned with position. Recent investigations by Petty and Krosnick (1992) and Krosnick and Abelson (1992) have demonstrated a renewed interest in the area. They "argue that strength should be routinely measured in attitudes research" (Olson and Zanna, 1993, p. 123).

Intensity scores are derived from the number of categories used in the placement of items and the number of statements in the categories. Sherif and Hovland (1953) hypothesized "individuals with strong personal involvement in an extreme stand on a controversial issue would (1) use fewer categories for judging relevant statements than less involved subjects, and (2) place fewer statements in the extreme category most acceptable than in the opposite

extreme" (Sherif, Sherif, & Nebergall, 1965, p. 109). In their study assessing attitudes toward African-Americans, Sherif and Hovland (1953) found this to be true. African-American subjects used fewer categories than average White subjects. African-American subjects also placed a "disproportionate number of items in the extreme category farthest from their most acceptable position (Sherif, Sherif, & Nebergall, 1965, p. 110).

Studies on Attitudes Toward the Poor

Studies examining beliefs about the causes of poverty have largely followed the work of Feagin (1972). He offered three explanations for the existence of poverty. Being impoverished as a result of "laziness" or some personal malattributes was termed an "individualistic" explanation of poverty. "Structural" explanations involved economic (capitalism), political factors and societal factors (discrimination) as responsible for poverty. Factors such as 'just bad luck' or 'wrong place at the wrong time' comprised "fatalistic" explanations. Reeser & Epstein (1987) added two more explanations to their inquiry into espoused beliefs about the reasons for poverty. The lack of knowledge or techniques necessary to eradicate poverty formed "technological" explanations. The "group" explanation suggests that competing groups must compromise with one another about resources and power to put an end to

poverty.

Feagin (1972) randomly selected a cross-section of adults from around the United States. About half the sample chose "individualistic" explanations and slightly less than half chose "structural" reasons for the existence of poverty. In a tri-national effort, Macarov (1981) compared social work students' explanations for the causes of poverty. In the United States and Australia, "structural" explanations outnumbered "individual" by more than two to one. Israeli students gave "individual" deficiencies as the primary reasons for poverty. Furnham (1982) examined the reasons Britains give for the existence of poverty. He reported conservatives to be most likely to endorse individualistic explanations. Reeser & Epstein (1987) compared reasons given by professional social workers in 1968 and 1984. The sample in 1984 were more likely to identify structural factors as the most credible influences on poverty. Undergraduate social work students (Schwartz & Robinson; 1991) chose structural circumstances as most salient and individual attributes, least important.

Fox (1968) reported prior work experience with the poor was negatively correlated with attitudes toward the poor. Orten asserted life experiences are more consistent in their effect on attitude intensity than on attitude position. Grimm and Orten (1973) found coming from a high income family and never having worked within a public welfare

setting, were correlated with positive attitudes toward the poor. Individuals from low-income families were most negative in their attitudes toward the destitute in a study of South African social work students (Baggett & Orten, 1991).

Orten (1981) reported students preparing for social work were more favorable toward the poor than students preparing for other professions. Social work students generally hold positive attitudes toward the poor (Schwartz & Robinson, 1991). Students are exposed to the profession's fundamental values and ethics in the classroom, field, and professional publications and become aware of the attitudes toward social groups and social issues desirable within the profession.

Reeser & Epstein (1987) compared the findings of surveys of professional social workers conducted in 1968 and 1984. They observed several changes in social workers' attitudes toward activism, poverty, and the poor. More emphasis was placed on policy, planning, and community organization in 1968. There was a shift from an involvement with services to the poor toward services with the middle-class. The subjects in 1968 chose individual malattributes as a main reason for the existence of poverty, whereas the 1984 sample chose structural differences. The 1968 social workers believed that more training was necessary to deal with poverty effectively. The 1984 sample felt that they

had the training and techniques, but that powerful interests do not want to eradicate poverty. The latter group preferred affecting politics as a mechanism for change. The authors concluded that social workers in 1968 seemed more committed to the profession's involvement in social change and serving the poor. They asserted, "despite their attribution of poverty to systematic causes, social workers in the 1980s apparently do not regard the elimination of poverty as a priority of the profession" (p. 621).

The values and attitudes held by students who choose social work are different from those who enter other fields (Enoch, 1988). They have a personal orientation toward social work values prior to professional education (Koerin, 1977). According to Schwartz and Robinson (1991), "M.S.W. programs have been unable to uniformly affect student values in expected directions." Sharwell indicated that social work students developed significantly more favorable attitudes toward the poor over the course of their graduate education. Cryns (1977) concluded they developed more unfavorable attitudes toward the poor. Varley (1968) and Hayes and Varley (1965) found that in regard to more abstract dimensions of values considered important to the profession, social work students either did not change or changed in undesirable direction as a result of their professional education. Merdinger (1982) found that social work curricula can favorably influence attitudes toward

public dependency programs and recipients.

Merdinger (1982) reported that professional values were most strongly influenced by courses early in the major. Varley (1975) asserted that younger students apparently are most positively influenced by the educational process. Koerin (1977) suggested an introductory course focusing on social work values and the students' awareness of their personal values.

CHAPTER III

POVERTY AND THE POOR-REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Poverty is arguably America's most significant social problem. Views regarding poverty's definition, origin, measurement, and abolishment are abundant. Much has been written on the subject, and reviewing all the literature on poverty would be a dissertation in itself. Three questions have been at the center of arguments about poverty and the poor: (1) what is poor?, (2) who is poor?, and (3) why are they poor? This chapter will address and critique five areas of literature, chosen because these areas uncover a variety of perceptions that have led to diverse responses to the above questions:

1. The two prevalent definitions for poverty used in the United States.
2. Information about the "official" United States poverty line.
3. The three types of poor in the United States.
4. The three dominant explanations for the existence of poverty in the United States.

5. The premises of the three major political ideologies represented in the United States government which guide arguments about the role of government in helping the poor.

What is Poverty?

The resources of society are unequally divided among its members, causing some to have less than others. "Poverty" suggests a level of living that is less than that of the rest of society. Because there are no empirical guidelines by which to determine poverty, how many "officially" poor there are in the United States depends on how the government chooses to measure the poverty level.

Common to most definitions of poverty is that poverty involves the lack of resources necessary to meet basic needs such as food, shelter, and health. The prevailing definitions of poverty in the United States fall under the categories of absolute definitions and relative definitions. Absolute definitions suggest an amount of money which is necessary to function minimally in society. Relative definitions compare the resources of individuals to the resources of other individuals in their society. The following section will describe, critique, and compare absolute and relative definitions of poverty.

Absolute Definitions of Poverty

Absolute definitions of poverty identify a level of income that separates the poor from the non-poor. The poverty level is adjusted yearly to compensate for fluctuations in the amount of money necessary to meet one's basic needs. Holman (1978) listed three characteristics shared by absolute definitions of poverty:

1. The poverty level is set at an amount that will allow people to be physically efficient.
2. It is based on the bare essentials.
3. It is not related to the income of those in society (pp. 7-8).

The official United States poverty line is an absolute definition of poverty. The concept of the poverty line was developed by the Social Security Administration in 1964. It was intended to reflect "the minimum amount required to support an average family of a given composition at the lowest level consistent with standards of living prevailing in this country" (Orshansky, 1965, p. 214). The poverty line was

> "determined from the Department of Agriculture's 1955 survey of food consumption that families of three or four persons spent approximately one-third of their income on food; the poverty level for these families was, therefore, set at three times the cost of the economy food plan" (United

States Bureau of the Census, 1993, p. A-7).

The Department of Agriculture food plan was the least expensive food plan that would still offer adequately nutritional value. In 1969, it was decided that adjustments in the poverty level would be based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI) rather than the Department of Agriculture food plan. The CPI also reflects the average price of food. "The poverty thresholds rise each year by the same percentage as the annual Consumer Price Index" (United States Bureau of the Census, 1993, p. A-7). In 1992, the official poverty line for a family of four was $14,335 (United States Bureau of the Census, 1993).

Absolute definitions of poverty offer a gauge of persons who can and cannot adequately meet their basic needs. This capability became critical in 1964, when the "War on Poverty" set the stage for government's large scale participation in relief to the poor. President Johnson's administration allocated federal funds for programs which were to assist Americans in need. Some criterion was needed to determine who would be the recipients of services and who would not. The poverty line provided such a yardstick.

Absolute definitions allow for the identification of factors which are associated with poverty (such as age, race, sex of the family household head, family size, education, and unemployment). The numbers and characteristics of persons entering and leaving poverty can

be monitored, and programs may be developed to focus on empowering those who remain persistently poor. Also, absolute definitions enable government to explore the impacts of programs and policies over time.

Numerous criticisms have been leveled against absolute means as the official standard for distinguishing the poverty line in the United States. These criticisms generally fall into one of the following categories:

1. Absolute definitions do not reflect how people actually spend their money.
2. Using cash-only income neglects any in-kind benefits which are provided by government programs.
3. Basing the poverty line on food needs does not reflect all other living expenses.
4. Living expenses vary in different parts of the country.

Absolute standards assume that purchasing goods and services is done with the utmost scrutiny, but many of the poor do not shop according to the United States Department of Agriculture's food plan. Most likely, many of the poor have probably never seen the plan, much less use it as a guideline. Also, items such as cars, televisions, and video cassette recorders are not factored into the poverty line, yet are often purchased by the poor. Neither are recreation and entertainment expenses, such as going to the movies and dining out considered when determining the poverty line.

According to these criticisms, using absolute methods for determining the poverty line results in the poverty rate's being underestimated; as a result, less financial assistance is provided than is actually necessary to function as a social being.

Many of the poor receive services and benefits which, if their cash value were counted as income, would push many considered poor above the poverty line. The most popular of these services are food-stamps, Medicaid, Medicare, and subsidized public housing. Devine and Wright (1993) observed that these services cost the government 80-90 billion dollars a year to administer. Using this figure, if such in-kind services were "cashed-out," about twenty-five hundred dollars would be added to the annual income of each poor person in the United States (p 16). For this reason, some have alleged that the poverty rate in America is overestimated.

There are problems associated with attempting to cash-out the services and benefits directed toward the poor. If the government were to include the non-cash benefits received by the poor, it should also compare the non-cash benefits which go to the non-poor. Many of the non-poor receive employer-paid health and life insurance, tax breaks, and college tuition subsidies which are not counted as income (O'Hare, 1988). It is likely that if these benefits were cashed out, their value would total more than the

twenty-five hundred dollars worth of benefits that go to the poor. Thus, if the non-cash benefits of both the poor and non-poor were counted as income, the gap in total income between the poor and the non-poor would be broadened.

Basing the poverty line on three times the cost of the Department of Agriculture's economy food plan has drawn several criticisms. The two most prominent of these are that (1) the plan does not allow enough money to afford an adequately nutritional diet, and (2) using food does not consider all other costs of living.

The food plan was designed to provide an adequate nutritional diet for emergency use based on a two-month period. Applying a formula used by Devine and Wright (1993) to current United States poverty statistics raises a question regarding whether a nutritionally balanced diet can be achieved with the amount of money allocated using the food plan. In 1992, the poverty line for a family of four was $14,335. According to the government, in 1992, the money earmarked for food for a family of four was $4,778. Dividing this number by four individuals and 365 days leaves each person $3.27 a day or $1.09 a meal to spend on food (p. 14). It is doubtful that a family of four can meet their nutritional needs with $13.08 a day to spend.

Basing the poverty level on the cost of food fails to include many other costs incurred by the poor. The costs associated with housing, for example, can be considerable

and are not factored into the poverty line. Furniture and appliances are also important to achieving a basic level of subsistence. Utility bills pose potential problems; the costs of cooling a house in the South and heating a house in the North are not constant, but must be met regardless of the weather. Many households also face costs for garbage pick-up, telephone services, television services, and residence maintenance. Including such housing-related costs would most certainly increase the poverty line.

The poverty line does not allow for the variations in the cost of living in different geographical areas. For example, it assumes that living in a Northeastern metropolitan area will cost the same as living in a Southern rural area. The costs of rent, food, and health care in an area such as New York City are generally higher than the same costs in an area such as Bogart, Georgia. For these reasons, persons in New York City may not be provided with enough resources to meet their basic needs, while persons in Bogart may be provided with ample or more than enough resources to meet their basic needs.

Relative Definitions of Poverty

Relative definitions compare the wealth of members of society with one another. The relative poverty line is determined by people's perception of what is poor or by an arbitrarily selected percentage of the median income. The

poverty line in most countries is about fifty percent of the income of the population.

Because relative definitions of poverty are largely based on society members' perceptions of what is poor, these explanations are able to incorporate a number of factors which more accurately reflect the costs of living than do absolute definitions. Relative definitions allow for variations in the way people spend their money on housing, food, and recreation. For example, to most members of society, it might seem reasonable that a family of four should be able to provide a birthday cake for their children or afford going out to the movies once a month. Also, citizens of Minnesota will be sensitive to the costs associated with keeping warm during long winters, as will residents of Florida be aware of the costs of keeping cool during tropical summers.

Because different people have different ideas about what constitutes poverty, the determination of what is a luxury and what is a necessity becomes an important question. Does a seven year old beginning Little League Baseball need a fielder's glove? By absolute standards, no, but by relative standards, probably, yes. Do those living in the southern Arizona desert need air conditioning? Relative standards would suggest they do, but absolute measurements make no allowance for it.

Critics of relative definitions have felt that what many Americans consider necessities are actually luxuries. They question the seriousness of poverty in the United States when the poor have cars, telephones, homes with indoor plumbing, medical coverage, televisions, and numerous appliances. Such things are not even obtainable by middle-class citizens in many other countries. Shuster (1988) asserted that America should not compare its conditions with Utopia, rather with other countries of the world. Shuster claimed that, "for over a billion people worldwide, American poverty would seem like unleashed luxury" (p. 30). On the other hand, proponents of relative definitions cite that America is the richest country in the world and has more than adequate resources to provide each citizen with a relatively comfortable life style.

The use of relative terms implies that there will always be a percentage of the population that is poor. Within a capitalist society, some people will always be worse off than others. Even if everyone in America were given say, twenty thousand dollars, some would still be worse off relative to others.

Relative poverty lines are not as useful as absolute poverty lines for research purposes. Absolute methods which use a constant mathematical formula for determining the poverty line offer a more reliable method for documenting and tracking the numbers and characteristics of the poor.

The methods used to set the United States official poverty line have important implications. Many assistance programs use the poverty line to determine eligibility for services. A shift in the poverty line of a few hundred dollars would result in many people being either eligible or ineligible for benefits. If the poverty line is set too low, many of those who are in need of services would be defined as nonpoor. If the poverty line is set too high, the costs associated with providing for all the poor may be prohibitive. Popple and Leighninger (1990) noted that relative definitions of poverty yield a higher number of poor persons in America than do absolute definitions. "Even when the very low relative poverty line figure of 44% of median income is used in the United States, the relative line comes out to be 10% higher than the absolute line" (p. 160). Given the U.S. government's interest in seeing the poverty rate as low as possible, this may be one reason why the United States government uses the absolute method.

This research project will proceed employing the relative definitions of poverty and incorporating the idea that a person must pay the costs associated with his or her environment. Absolute standards do not make adjustments for this; as a result, many poor receive welfare assistance but still must live in homeless shelters because of prohibitive local rental rates. Many of the so-called luxuries which relative standard critics claim are exorbitant may indeed be

necessary to function minimally in society. It is difficult to find and hold a job without a telephone for contacts, a car for transportation, and indoor plumbing to enable the individual to show up clean everyday. The lack of a television may put the poor at a disadvantage. Television sets keep most Americans in touch with the happenings in their world. Many elderly poor who are not ambulatory, and many inner-city poor who are afraid to go out at night, rely on television sets to pass their time. Maintaining a poverty line relative to the rest of society would be more likely to assure that the poor are kept at an adequate level of subsistence than would maintaining an absolute poverty line that is based on faulty premises and doles out less a than realistically ample amount of funds, suggesting that the poor do the best they can with what they get. Senn (1971) asserted, "no matter which method is used, the core of the poor people will continue to be included in the measurement, fluctuation will only occur among those higher on the economic scale who sometimes fall within and sometimes outside of the definition of poverty" (p. 240).

Who is Poor?

The means by which poverty is measured directly affects how many persons are "officially" poor. Because there are no figures available by which the number of poor is broken down into relative terms, the following section will

describe the characteristics of the poor population using the absolute standard of the United States Census Bureau (1993). Also, the distinction among three levels of poor people will be discussed: (1) the transitional poor, (2) the marginal poor, and (3) the residual poor. The Panel Study of Income Dynamics at the Survey Research Center of The University of Michigan has been conducting a longitudinal survey on family economic status since 1968 (Duncan, Coe, Corcoran, Hill, Hoffman, & Morgan, 1984). This group interviewed the same five thousand American families each year and continues to do so. Some of their findings will be presented here.

Official United States Census Statistics

According to the United States Bureau of the Census (1993), there were 36.9 millions Americans below the official government poverty level in 1992. That number of poor showed a statistically significant increase from 1991, when 35.7 million were poor. This represented the third consecutive annual increase in the number of poor. The poverty rate was 14.5% in 1992, up from 14.2% in 1991. The number of poor in America in 1992 was the highest since 1962 when 38.6 million Americans were poor (p. viii).

Age. In 1992, the poverty rate for all children under 18 was 21.9%, 11.7% for persons 18 to 64, and 12.9% for the elderly. While the elderly were underrepresented in the

poverty population, children were overrepresented. The elderly represented 10.8% of persons below the official poverty level, and children represented 39.6% of the poor. Poverty rates for children increased at a higher rate than any other age group. Since 1974, the poverty rates for children have been higher than any other age group (p. x).

In 1992, one in five children (and one in four children under age six) in the United States lived in poverty. Of these children under age six, 61% were White, 21.2% were of Hispanic origin, and 16.3% were Black. About 78.8% of all poor families were families with children (p. x).

Race. In 1992, the poverty rate was 11.6% for Whites and 9.6% for non-Hispanic Whites. For Asians and Pacific Islanders the poverty rate was 12.5%, 29.3% of persons of Hispanic origin were poor, and one-third of all Blacks were poor. The majority of the poor are White, and half of the poor were non-Hispanic Whites. Blacks constituted 12.6% of the entire population in the United States, but 28.8% of the poor. About 18% of the poor were of Hispanic origin, although they represent only 8.9% of the entire population (pp. x-xi). The disproportional representation of racial minorities among the poor suggest the presence of institutional racism.

Regions. The poverty rate of 16.9% in the South was the nation's largest, followed by 14.4% in the West, 13.1% in the Midwest; the rate of 12.3% in the Northeast was the

lowest. Forty percent of the poor lived in the South in 1992, compared with 34.4% of the population. The South was the only region in which there was a statistically significant increase in the poverty rate between 1991 and 1992 (p. xi).

States. Poverty rates for states are based on comparisons of two-year moving averages (1990-91 versus 1991-92). Poverty rates were the highest in Mississippi at 24.5%, followed by Louisiana at 24.2% and West Virginia at 22.3%. Poverty rates were the lowest in Delaware at 7.6%, followed by New Hampshire at 8.6% and Utah at 9.3%. Four states had statistically significant changes in their poverty rates between 1990 and 1992. While the poverty rates did not decrease in any state in this period, the rates increased in California, Nevada, North Carolina, and Rhode Island (pp. xi-xiv).

Metropolitan/Non-metropolitan Residence. The non-metropolitan poverty rate in 1992 of 16.8% was higher than the metropolitan rate of 13.9%. Central cities of metropolitan areas had the highest poverty rate, 20.5%. In 1992, 42.4% of the poor lived in central cities, compared to 30.1% of all persons. The number of poor and the poverty rate in the nation's metropolitan areas did not change between 1991 and 1992, while the number of poor persons living outside metropolitan areas did increase significantly (p. xiv).

Poverty Areas. About 34.5% of the nation's poor lived in areas of high poverty concentration. The poverty rate of 31.7% in large cities was the highest among poverty areas, followed by a rate of 31.7 in suburban areas, and 27.7% in nonmetropolitan areas (p. xiv).

Families and Family Composition. The number of poor families increased by 248,000 between 1991 and 1992, and the poverty rate for families grew to 11.7%. The poverty rate of 8.9% among White families was the lowest, followed by a poverty rate of 26.2% for families of Hispanic origin, and 30.9% for Black families. Of all poor families, 64.8 percent were White, 30.6% were Black, and 17.5% were of Hispanic origin (p. xv).

The poverty rate for families with a female head of the household with no spouse present was 34.9%. The poverty rate for married couple families was 6.2%. While 52.4% of all poor families had a female head of the household with no spouse present, only 17.5% of all families in the United States had a female head of the household. In 1992, half of the both Black and Hispanic origin families with a female head of the household with no spouse present were below the poverty level (p. xv).

Educational Attainment of Family Head of the Households. In 1992, 56.1% of poor family heads of the household twenty-five years old and older were high school graduates, compared with 80.7% of all heads of households.

Poverty rates decreased dramatically as years of schooling increased; the poverty rate was 24.1% for heads of householders who had not completed high school, 11% for those who had a high school diploma, but had not attended college, and 7.2% for heads of households who had attended college but had no degree. Of the heads of households with at least a bachelors degree, only 2.2% were poor in 1992 (pp. xv-xvi).

Gender and Race

One can hardly look at poverty in the United States without noticing the interrelationship of race and gender. As illustrated by the preceding United States Bureau of the Census statistics, poverty is not randomly distributed among the American population. Women, children, and African-Americans, as well as other ethnic minorities, are overrepresented. Diana Pearce (1978) coined the term "feminization of poverty" to describe the increasing representation of women among the ranks of the poor. Pearce suggested that if the proportion of poor in female headed households continued to increase at the same rate as it did from the mid-sixties to mid-seventies, the poverty population would be composed solely of women and their children by the year 2000. More recently, families headed by women account for over 90% of the nearly 4 million families receiving Aid to Families with Dependent Children

(AFDC) (Pearce, 1989).

There are several reasons why women have been historically and are currently vulnerable to poverty. Women have historically not had an equal access to the same employment and education opportunities as men. This discriminatory pattern has limited women's earning potential and the subsequent benefits attached to them. Cultural expectations have viewed a woman's role as "housekeeper." Tasks associated with this domestic role such as child care, care for the elderly and ill, cleaning, laundry, shopping, etc., are time consuming and provide no monetary reward. If women with children do enter the paid labor force, they still must manage to meet the families' needs. When they do not enter the paid labor force, they may be labeled "dependent" (Whithorn, 1993).

In the United States families headed by women have doubled in proportion to all families over the past thirty years. This shift in America's demography has contributed to the increasing proportion of impoverished women and can be partially explained by several social changes of the late twentieth century. Divorce often ends with the mother becoming a single parent with the economic burden of raising the children. Also, the number of never-married mothers has increased. While families with two parents working have been able to escape poverty status, families with only one wage earner have been left more vulnerable to poverty.

Finally, women tend to live longer than men leaving women single and at risk to enter into poverty later in life (Whithorn, 1993).

The history of welfare in the United States regarding benefits for women has been full of ambiguities and contradictions. Abramovitz (1985) suggests that "the family ethic as a social norm" shapes the relationship between the welfare state and women. The family ethic views "a woman's place as in the home to marry, bear, and raise children and be supported by and subordinated to a male breadwinner" (p. 212). Abramovitz postulates that the family ethic as a method of social control reinforced the social welfare system "through policies and procedures that encourage women to choose traditional family life over work, relief, or alternative family forms" and "punishing those who do not" (p. 213). The author notes the conflicting messages coming from welfare policies that "channel poor and minority women into the paid labor force while upholding the belief that a woman's place is in the home" (p. 213). Finally, Abramovitz proposes that class and race distinctions made by social welfare programs which coerce poor women to work function to distort and disrupt family life rather than strengthen it.

Handler and Hasenfeld (1991) argue that social welfare policy reflects and reinforces fundamental gender and race beliefs and is based on an unequal sexual division of labor. The authors describe welfare programs such as social

security and unemployment compensation as "masculine" programs because they are based on participation in the paid labor force. "Feminine" programs, such as AFDC, are based on a woman's status as an unpaid domestic homemaker. Handler and Hasenfeld portray masculine programs as "national, generous, and generally, nonintrusive; the beneficiaries are 'rights-bearing' citizens" and feminine programs as "inadequate, intrusive, and humiliating; the clients are effectively denied the attributes of social citizenship" (p. 6).

Pearce (1984) noted the transformation of ideology among welfare policy makers in the 1960s as indicative of the how views toward welfare mothers changed;

> "questions about how best to keep together families who had lost their male breadwinner, so that children could grow up with an at-home mother and with income security, were replaced with questions about what incentives would encourage or even force welfare mothers to seek paid work outside the home and break out of welfare dependence" (p. 507).

When welfare mothers did go to work they often found themselves in positions which did not provide income or benefits to meet their families' needs. Training programs placed women in low-income jobs. Also, these women were faced with finding and financing child care, often without

child-support from the fathers. They encountered sexual discrimination, sexual harassment, and unequal pay. These factors have contributed to locking many women into poverty and a dependence on welfare.

African-American women face racial barriers in addition to gender barriers in the labor market. In 1992, single-parent families headed by women constituted 46.7% of African-American families and half of those families were below the poverty level (United States Bureau of the Census, 1993, p. xv). According to Pearce and McAdoo (1981) the African-American single mother is less likely to marry or remarry than the White single mother, is less likely to receive child support, and receives lower wages.

The distinction between the "deserving" and the "undeserving" poor is at the center of welfare policy. It defines who is excused from work and who are societies' "deviants." Among women, widows and wives of the blind or disabled have usually been considered deserving poor. Unmarried, minority, or divorced mothers have usually not been considered deserving poor. Who and how people are defined as poor has implications for framing our attitudes about the poor. Handler and Hasenfeld (1991) claim welfare policy is used "to blame the urban ghetto ethnic minorities for their poverty predicament" (p. 6). Urban African-American women have been particularly stigmatized for their single-motherhood and persistent poverty. To many, the

stereotypical welfare recipient is the young African-American single mother. This group is deemed the most likely to remain on welfare and is the primary target of "workfare" programs.

Welfare policy may be viewed as affirming the "dominant social values of work, family and gender roles, and social status" (Handler & Hasenfeld, 1991, p. 17). Stigmatizing those who do not work upholds the values and confirms the status of those who do work. As a result of degradation of the poor, the value of work and consequence of deviance are reinforced. Social forces are structured so that those who are able to work will not choose welfare. Racism and sexism largely determines who is poor and fuel attitudes toward the poor.

Levels of Poverty in the United States

Segalman and Basu (1981) proposed that there were three types of poor: the transitional poor, the marginal poor, and the residual poor. The transitional poor are those persons who fell into poverty because of some disruption in normal day-to-day life. This group stays poor only briefly, leaving poverty when his or her life situation stabilizes. The transitional poor include immigrant groups which take some time to adjust to American culture, newly divorced or widowed who have lost their primary financial source and must find a job, victims of job lay-offs and plant closings

who must obtain skills before re-entering the force work, and college students who do not work but will work after their graduation.

The most recent information available on poverty transition comes from the Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP, 1992). According to the SIPP, the most recent longitudinal estimates indicated that in 1991, 11.3 million persons experienced poverty transition. While 5.1 million persons moved out of poverty, 6.2 million persons moved into poverty (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1993, p. xx).

Whites were the most likely race to leave poverty, and persons of Hispanic origin were the most likely to enter poverty. Children were the most likely age group to enter poverty, and the elderly were the least likely to exit poverty. Persons who remained in married-couple families were more likely to exit poverty than persons who did not. About 42% of poor persons who worked year round and full-time exited poverty, while 8.5% of the poor whose family had no workers in 1992 exited poverty. These figures suggested that being a White, married, non-elderly adult, and working full-time were most closely associated with moving out of poverty; being unmarried, under the age of 18, of Hispanic origin, and not working were most closely associated with moving into poverty (U.S. Bureau of the Census. p. xx).

The marginal poor are those persons who remain near poverty year after year, rising out of poverty for a period

then sinking back into it. This group is also referred to as the working poor. Due to one or a combination of personal, social, or economic factors, they are not able to earn as much as they need. Many of the marginal poor work part-time, seasonally, or full-time in minimum wage jobs. This population lives paycheck to paycheck, trying to earn enough to meet their basic needs, and many do not receive fringe benefits. A job promotion, increase in wages, or moving to full-time could result in their flight from poverty, while the loss of their job, an extended illness, could result in their plunge deeper into poverty.

Devine and Wright (1993) provided a look at the composition of the working poor and near-poor.

> "In 1987, there were 2,750,000 retail sales workers whose median weekly earnings did not exceed the poverty standard for a family of four, 336,000 banks tellers, 142,000 private child care workers, 146,000 servants and cleaners, 188,000 bartenders, 1,200,000 health service workers, over half-million waiters and waitresses, 711,000 sewing machine operators, and 570,000 farm workers" (p. 54).

The marginally poor do not usually have job security. When the economy is doing well, many of the working poor join the labor force. However, when the economy begins to slide, they are the first to be terminated from their

positions. When the marginally poor become injured or too ill to work, they are usually not compensated as a salaried employee. Loss of income coupled with medical bills may result in descent into poverty. Among poor married couple families, 48.1% of husbands who did not work gave illness or disability as the reason they did not work in 1992 and 39.6% of the husbands reported that they were unable to find work (U.S. Bureau of the Census, p. xv).

The number of divorces in America have also contributed to many families among the marginal poor. Women, children, and minorities run the highest risk of joining the marginally poor. Courts primarily award child custody to the female, but do not mandate ample child support money to support them. Child support conditions are often not strictly enforced. These single mothers become entrapped in a double bind. Their only road out of poverty is through employment, but they also must make sure the children's needs are met. In 1992, 63.7% of poor female heads of the household gave family responsibilities as the reason they didn't work (United States Bureau of the Census, 1993, p. xi). Some have found it more practical to remain unemployed and receive welfare benefits than to try to support their families through working. The following scenario presented by Devine and Wright (1993) illustrates this conflict and is worth quoting here.

> Consider the situation of a poor woman with children who is eligible for Aid to Families With Dependent Children (AFDC). In the more generous states, that woman will receive (1) a monthly cash payment of several hundred dollars, (2) Medicaid benefits (whose worth is easily a few hundred dollars a month), (3) food stamps, (4) possibly a Section 8 housing voucher that can be used in lieu of rent, and (5) at least in some states, subsidized day care for children. If her alternative to all this is working, say, 25 hours a week at the minimum wage, then the overwhelming rational decision is not to work. As the late Michael Harrington observed, this woman would have to hate her children to take the job rather than stay on AFDC (p. 55).

Because of their large dependence on welfare benefits, the members of the residual poor are the persons that come to the minds of most Americans when imagining a prototypical poor person. They are likely to be poor year after year and generation to generation. The residual poor have also been referred to as the "underclass." Myrdal (1962) used the term underclass to "warn that economic progress threatened to leave behind a sector of the population who were either unemployed or unemployable" (Weir, 1993). Marx (1894) "viewed the underclass as either the lowest stratum of the

working class or as the contemporary lumpen-proletariat" (Devine & Wright, 1993, p. 79).

Devine and Wright (1993) noted four characteristics which have been used to define the underclass: economics, social psychology, behavior, and spatial concentration. The economic feature referred to the chronic nature of poverty. Those in the underclass usually stay in the underclass. Glasgow (1980) defined the underclass as "a permanently entrapped population of poor persons, unused and unwanted, accumulated in various parts of the country" (p. 3). The social psychology element refers to a general disregard for societal norms and values. According to the social psychology interpretation, the poor see themselves as outside of a society which does not offer them a way out of poverty. The behavioral dimension refers to deviant activities which this population engages in, such as crime, alcohol and drugs, and out-of-wedlock children. The behavioral dimension also refers to the pimps, drug dealers, and con artists who further victimize the poor. The ecological dimension suggests that there are areas which are conducive to poverty conditions. Such pockets of impoverished neighborhoods are usually found in the inner-cities where those who could afford to live elsewhere already have moved out.

Trattner (1989) noted how the view of welfare recipients as a deviant underclass was reinforced by Oscar

Lewis' (1968) "culture of poverty" theory and Daniel Moynihan's, The Negro Family (1965). These works suggested a subculture of patterns among the underclass which prevented them from taking advantage of opportunities available to better their lives. This subculture was alleged to lack the will to change their lot.

Devine and Wright (1993) discussed how middle-class views of the seemingly irrational behavior of the underclass perpetuates a belief in fundamental differences between "us" and "them." They asserted that middle-class people gain significant psychological and social benefits from believing that they are different from the poor. The authors suggest that the poor value the same things (i.e., happiness) as the rest of society; however the underclass is blocked from attaining it. The "truly meaningful distinction between the underclass and the rest of society lies in the differential capacity to translate and actualize one's values into a socially desirable repertoire of behaviors" (p. 127). The seemingly irrational behavior of the poor may actually be a rational response to their despair and hopelessness.

The Panel Study Of Income Dynamics (PSID)

Interviewing the same sample of 5,000 families yearly over an extended period of time has allowed the PSID to observe characteristics and patterns which are associated with economic success or failure. The PSID has published

data from the ten-year period from 1969 to 1978. The transitional poor or temporarily poor were defined as those people who were poor for only one or two years of the period. The marginal or intermittently poor were defined as those persons who were poor for three to seven of the years studied. The residual or persistently poor were identified as those people who were poor for at least eight of the ten years. They reported that 13.5% of the united States population were temporarily poor, 8.3% were intermittently poor, and 2.6% were persistently poor (Duncan et al, 1984).

One quarter of the population in the United States fell into poverty for at least one year during the study. Blacks comprised 62% of the persistently poor. Families headed by a female accounted for 61% of persistently poor families, and 31% of the persistently poor were headed by a Black woman. White males constituted the minority of persistently poor at 10% and the majority of the temporary poor at 58%. Half of the persistently poor lived in the Southern United States. About one-third of the persistently poor lived in urban cities of one half-million persons and one-forth of the persistently poor lived in rural towns of ten thousand or less. Marriage and entering the work force were the best indicators for climbing out of poverty.

Why Are There Poor?

It is difficult to find anyone with out views on

poverty and almost everyone is affected by poverty in some way. The way an individual sees poverty is important because it largely determines how that person will deal with the poor. Views on poverty are constructed from experiences, thoughts, and values. They are rooted in an individual's basic philosophies about humankind. Combined with one's understanding of society and the economic system, these views form the reality through which the individual sees poverty and the poor. This section will address the individual, cultural, and structural explanations which have been given for the existence of poverty.

While explanations about the causes of poverty are abundant, an awareness of the central themes of these causes is critical to understanding the action proposed and taken by the groups. For this reason, this section will also identify the prevailing political ideologies in the United States, explore their economic philosophies, and discuss how they influence the way in which the poor are treated.

Cultural Explanations of Poverty

Cultural explanations of poverty suggest that there is a subculture of poor persons with shared beliefs, values, and behavior patterns which are different from those of larger society. This concept was introduced by Oscar Lewis (1959) and generally refers to inner-city African-Americans who are persistently poor. This segment of the poor is

characterized by isolation from the rest of society, disrupted families, and a tendency to stay poor generation to generation.

Following World War I, millions of African-Americans migrated to large industrial cities in the northern United States in search of work. They were largely prevented from moving into white neighborhoods, and as a result they lived together in predominantly all African-American communities. Those who were steadily employed were able to improve their living situation from what they had experienced in the South. In the 1960s, civil rights efforts relieved some formal and informal racial barriers which had inhibited black's upward social mobility. Opportunities for employment, education, and housing opened the doors for many African-Americans to move into the middle class (Lemann, 1986).

The majority of this African-American middle-class left their neighborhoods in search of better homes, better schools, and a safer living environment. Their influential institutions such as churches and community centers were established in the new neighborhoods. With them, they also took their money, work ethic, and political influence. Many of those who had provided moral leadership among the black communities were gone (Lemann, 1986).

The ensuing decades of the 1970s and the 1980s witnessed a financial, moral, and physical deterioration of

the inner-city African-American neighborhoods. Numerous social problems such as out-of-wedlock childbearing, drug and alcohol abuse, gang violence, unemployment, low educational achievement, and single female-headed families became prominent. According to Culture of Poverty theories, these problems were due to values which were not consistent with the values generally deemed acceptable among the rest of society, values such as work, education, family, and self-sacrifice.

A class of African-Americans became trapped in the ghettos and dependent on government assistance. According to cultural explanations for poverty, the above-mentioned destructive behavior patterns were part of their culture. Robb (1988) called the self-defeating patterns of behavior of the poor "the enemy within" (p. 82). Loury (1988) postulated that "there is an identifiable culture of poverty shaping attitudes, values, aspirations, and violent behaviors of the population trapped in long-term poverty" (p. 84). Compared to the rest of society, they appeared less concerned with the potential consequences of their actions such as unemployment, addiction, illegitimate children, jail, or even death.

Larger society expected the underclass to behave like the rest of society and share the same values. To many, the continued destructive behaviors of the poor in the face of government help, lends credibility to Culture of Poverty

theories. The persistently poor are viewed as unwilling to help themselves, essentially deserving to remain poor.

Groups develop a culture in response to their environment, in this case, inner-city African-Americans to the ghettos. These chronically poor engage in activities that appear to the rest of society to be irrational, but in their world are actually functional. Criminal activity (such as drug dealing, robbery, and burglary) offers youths opportunities to make much more money than a minimum wage job would offer. Gang membership provides a sense of belonging usually unavailable through the family experience. Alcohol and drugs seem to serve as a means of coping with the unstable world in which the underclass lives. Dwelling on the hectic environment could result in anxiety, depression, frustration, and stress.

Critics of Culture of Poverty explanations argue that while the behaviors of the underclass are different than the rest of society, their values are not. Both classes value love, friendship, a nice place to live, money, happiness, leisure time, and the opportunity to self actualize (Devine & Wright, 1993). Also, many middle class persons engage in the same destructive behaviors as the underclass. Alcohol and drug abuse, out-of-wedlock child-bearing, criminal activity, family disruption, and school drop-outs occur across all classes. The difference seems to be that many middle-class persons don't engage in such activities to

support themselves.

One tenet of Culture of Poverty explanations (as well as of structural explanations, which are discussed later in this chapter) is that opportunities for escaping persistent poverty are blocked. In the case of children, many lack role models who support the value of education and hard work. Some children must attend school amidst metal detectors and security guards checking for guns, drug trafficking, and gang violence. Many cannot get to the library due to unsafe streets. Dropout rates are high. It is difficult to imagine this environment fostering an escape from poverty.

Harrington (1962) thought that lack of jobs was responsible for chronic poverty. Opportunities for meaningful employment in the ghettos are scarce. Piven and Cloward (1971) commented that "when men cannot earn enough to support families, they may desert their wives and children, or fail to marry the woman with whom they mate. The first signs of the resulting demoralization and uncertainty are usually indices of crime, family breakdown, vagrancy, and vandalism" (p. 11).

Individual Explanations of Poverty

According to individual explanations of poverty, the poor are inferior in some way to the rest of society. The disinherited have personal inadequacies which leave them

ill-equipped to enter and remain in the labor force. This perception that the indigent have genetic or mental defects has led to derogatory labels (such as stupid, lazy, and alcohol- or drug-dependent).

Since IQ tests were developed, inner-city African-Americans have consistently scored lower than individuals in the middle and upper classes. This finding has been used to underscore the existence of lower intellect among the underclass. When those without means marry within their class, they are said to create another generation of sub-average intellect (Devine & Wright, 1993). Such IQ tests have been challenged on grounds of cultural bias, yet continue to be used to measure intelligence.

Jesse Jackson (1988) claimed that persistent inequality and discrimination were the main obstacles faced by the African-Americans who are chronically poor. He remarked that some African-Americans fight discriminatory elements to succeed in a white-dominated society, while others turn to crime, drugs, sex, or violence to get what they need. Reverend Jackson argued that African-Americans were given teaching, postal service, and custodial positions, but kept out of business. They were "a payday away from poverty" (Dudley, 1988, p. 89-90). Those who were able to beat the odds and acquire the necessary skills to compete in the marketplace as doctors, lawyers, counselors, and businesspersons seldom were patronized by whites.

Thomas Malthus (1798) asserted that "poverty was due to poor people's reckless sexual practices which increased the population beyond their ability to care for themselves" (Hartman, 1986, p. 18). David Ricardo (1817) doubted the destitute's ability to exercise self-restraint and have fewer children. Ricardo formulated "the iron law of wages" which postulated that wages tend toward the level of subsistence and any increase in wages would result in an increase in birthrates. He wrote that the swelled numbers of poor would cause a surplus of workers and lead to death through starvation and disease (Hartman, 1986, p. 30).

Lawrence Mead (1986) maintained that much of the unemployment among the needy is a result of personal choice and behavior. Mead asserted that through hard work, the welfare-dependent underclass could rise out of poverty, but many poor persons will turn down jobs for reasons such as low pay, too far to travel to work, or unpleasant working conditions. He mentioned several immigrant groups who were ineligible for unemployment compensation or welfare, yet seemed able to find jobs and rise out of poverty through hard work (Dudley, 1988, pp. 72-75).

Frederick Taylor's (1911) scientific management approach proposed that industrial efficiency was a product of the worker's speed of work, and amount of effort expended, amount of rest allowed for recovery of strength. Thurow (1970) developed a formula which considered a

worker's skills and knowledge and determined how much his or her labor was worth. According to this "human capital" approach, an individual's worth in society was determined by the ability to produce through labor. As a consequence of their deficiencies, the poor's human capital was diminished.

Critiquing individual explanations, few people actually choose to be poor or wouldn't escape poverty if they had the opportunity. Most poor want to work, but cannot find work because it is unavailable or because they lack skills. It is hard to imagine 37 million people impoverished because they are lazy, stupid, or drunk. William Ryan (1970) introduced the "blaming the victim" syndrome. The syndrome proposed that it is hard for some members of society who have "made it" through hard work to understand how others cannot do as well. These people fail to acknowledge significant social and economic forces at work and hold the poor at fault for their lack of success.

There is a common notion in society that America is the land of opportunity and one can escape poverty through hard work. The corollary is that those who fail to capitalize on chances for upward social mobility through hard work must not be trying hard enough. Senn (1971) noted that if hard work alone was the mechanism through which to escape poverty, there would be very few poor people. The poor often do the hardest and dirtiest work. Gans (1972) pointed to the functionality of the underclass who do laborious jobs

that no one else likes to do. Senn challenged hereditary notions of affluence, "if hard work on the part of one's ancestor's made one rich, then almost every black in America would be rich" (p. 239).

Structural Explanations of Poverty

Structural explanations of poverty regard social and economic forces as contributors to conditions which restrict individual's upward social mobility. According to structural explanations, America'a economic system and patterns of institutionalized social inequities, including racism and sexism, have created the underclass. America's social and economic structure, not the poor themselves, are responsible for impoverished conditions. Maladaptive behaviors on the part of the underclass are a response to an oppressive social reality (Devine & Wright, 1993).

Following the industrial revolution in the mizd-eighteenth century, many Western nations had increased production capabilities. Through new technologies, they were able to turn their natural resources into products for consumption by the masses on a large scale. Individuals could sell their labor to the industrialists, thus earning wages, and the industrialists could sell the products, thus earning profits. Financial gains obtained through the production process were not divided equally among the workers, creating classes of persons who had more than

others. This economic system became known as capitalism.

Capitalism is the economic system functioning in the United States. It is a system marked by,

1. private property in the means of production, whether land, tools, machines, or ideas;
2. a legal framework entitling the owner of those means to the profits they generate subject only to nonarbitrary taxation;
3. a framework of contracts within which sales and purchases relevant to the production activity can be carried out, especially the right to hire and fire workers; and
4. the legal right of the owner to dispose of the profits as well as the property generating those profits in any way he or she chooses, subject to well-specified and justiciable limits (Desai, 1993, p. 112).

As the list of characteristics noted above illustrates, capitalism is structured in favor of the owners. Social scientists, most notably Karl Marx, have argued the role of capitalism in propagating poverty among the workers. Marx spent most of his life documenting the alleged evils of capitalism. He encouraged a more socialist economic system which would distribute the fruits of labor among all society members.

According to Marxist theory, the structural components of capitalism cause poverty. Marxist theory postulates that there are two fundamental classes in capitalist societies, the workers and the capitalists (the proletariat and the bourgeoisie). The capitalists own the means of production and employ workers to carry out that production. The capitalists are dependent upon the workers for a labor force, and the workers are dependent upon the capitalists for wages. The capitalists decide what to do with the profits of the workers' efforts.

Power in capitalist societies lies almost exclusively with the owners. The owners have a wide range of resources they can employ to get their way. The major structural element of capitalism that has been blamed for causing poverty is the capitalists' financial resources that they use to gain political power, thus influencing policies which adhere to their self-interests. The owners use financial resources to gain political power that influences policies which adhere to their own self-interests. As a result, the poor do not have capabilities to shape policies to serve their own interests (Desai, 1993).

Since many governments are dependent upon capitalism for their financial support (taxation of wages and sales), it is in these governments' best interest to shape society so that the capitalists succeed. The governments' allocation of funds serves the capitalists. The funds

raised through taxation go to build schools and roads and to finance police and military forces. Through training, individuals become an effective member of the labor force and a growing physical infrastructure that facilitates increasing commerce through the opening up of markets. The police and military maintain civil order, protecting the capitalists from overthrow.

Advocates of structural explanations of poverty claim that capitalists have the opportunity to assure that their self-interests are actualized while the workers do not. Desai (1993) suggested the numerous mechanisms through which capitalists may use their wealth to shape the direction of government policies: "financing politicians, political parties, and policy think tanks; financially controlling the main organs of the mass media; offering lucrative jobs to high-level political officials after they leave state employment; and extensive lobbying" (p. 145).

Opitz (1988) argued that capitalism solves the problem of poverty. He asserted that historically poverty, not affluence, has been the natural state of mankind. He also asserted that capitalism has been responsible for the prosperity enjoyed by many of the world's industrial societies (Dudley, 1988). Under the feudal system, everyone other than nobility were poor. Capitalism has allowed nations to utilize their resources toward production of goods and to sell and trade their goods for profits. While

some of Opitz's assertions are valid, it is the case that capitalism has also created conditions conducive to downward social mobility.

Dominant Political Ideologies in the United States

The term "political" is used here to refer to "the creation, institutionalization, and utilization of power in a social setting" (Smelser, 1969, p. 504). The term "ideology" refers to "the body of doctrine of a social movement, an institution, or large class with reference to some political and cultural plan, along with devices for putting it into operation" (Random House College Dictionary, 1980). The two primary political ideologies which have governed in the United States are conservative and liberal. A third political ideology, radical, has not gained support in the United States to the extent that conservative and liberal ideologies have, but has exerted pressures which at times have influenced public policy decisions.

Examining the premises of political ideologies is important because "ideologies shape our social construction of reality" (Macht & Ashford, 1991, p. 63). Understanding a group's political ideology provides crucial information for determining that group's beliefs about the poor and their likely actions toward the poor. In the United States, conceptualizations regarding what is poor, who is poor, why they are poor, and what should be done about the poor are

drawn largely along ideological lines. "Ideology provides justification for the social priorities or interests of certain powerful groups" (p. 63). To say one is conservative, liberal, or radical often connotes his or her approach to dealing with the poor.

Political ideologies also include theoretical orientations regarding accompanying economic policies which best serve the group's objectives. To have political power is to have influence over economic practices. The economic policies supported by government hold enormous ramifications for the citizens of a country. As is often the case, the economic policies of one group create living conditions which are in opposition to the ideological principles of another group.

The concept of distributive justice deals with how much freedom individuals should have in earning and spending their income, and how much equalizing of the wealth through redistribution should take place on the basis of need. The discipline of "political economy" serves to "examine the relationship of individuals to society, the economy, and the state" (Gourevitch, 1993, p. 725). Political economy analyzes the impact of ideology-based practices of wealth distribution on individuals. In the study of poverty, political economy is important for its use in identifying economic practices which contribute to or alleviate poverty and social inequality. This section will address the

characteristics of conservative, liberal, and radical ideologies and the social implications of their economic systems.

Conservative Ideology

Conservatives believe that capitalism is good and that government should not interfere with the free-market economy. They believe that capitalism will work out in the best interests of all if left alone. Government exists to serve as a "night watchman" by protecting the natural proceedings of capitalism. The influential writings of Adam Smith (1778) asserted that if the market was left alone and each individual acted from their own self-interest, the economy would achieve a natural balance. He felt that these two conditions would result in economic justice by increasing wages, productivity, and incentive to work. Robert Nozik (1974) believed that individuals should be left alone to conduct business however they see fit without interference from government.

Rabkin (1993) noted three themes of conservative thought: resistance to utopian thinking, respect for traditional thinking, and defense of traditional institutions. Regarding the utopian thinking (which serves to challenge existing conditions and point to how society could be) conservatives fear loss of control through forfeiting some of their influence. Conservatives seek to

protect the status quo by rejecting en vogue ideas which have not been proven and would disrupt the way things have always been. The final conservative theme is that they seek to protect the institutions of family, church, and state. For these reasons, conservatism can also be seen as a situational or reactive ideology. Rather than a specific political ideology, conservatism exists to oppose change which would result from unacceptable alternatives proposed by groups with different ideological beliefs. The (Kreiger, 1993, pp. 183-88).

Conservatives generally claim that the poor are responsible for their own failures. Conservatives prefer cultural and individual explanations of poverty because they designate a person's or group's cultural, genetic, or mental deficiencies as the reason they are impoverished. They criticize structural explanations for absolving the individual of her or his societal responsibility for self-support. Since conservatives believe that capitalism is good and offers individuals and groups opportunities to improve their plight above that of previous generations, it is those who fail to take advantage of opportunities who are to blame for their being poor, not capitalism. These sentiments are functional in that they absolve the nonpoor for the victimization of the poor.

With the poor at fault for their conditions, conservatives see no reason to restructure the distribution

of money. Conservatives believe that to solve poverty, the poor must change and model themselves after the behavior of the nonpoor. They believe that government assistance will not induce the poor to become productive contributors to society; rather it will further encourage them not to work by providing financial support for nothing in return. They criticize government programs for creating "reverse incentives" which have led to a dependent underclass. Murray (1984) stated that government relief programs have made it more profitable to be on welfare than to work. According to conservatives, the government relief to the poor is a drag on the economy.

Conservatives have been associated with the principle termed "laissez faire," which means to "let events go ahead and happen as they might" (Greenwald, 1994, p. 632). This principle suggests that whatever happens was meant to happen and government intervention only interferes with nature's plan. Some Social Darwinists who believe in "survival of the fittest" have suggested that the poor be allowed to starve as a means social cleansing. They believe that there are reasons that there are poor and nonpoor, and to help the poor disrupts natural proceedings of birth and destiny.

Conservatives advocate decreasing government involvement in alleviating poverty. They believe that welfare should be limited to private voluntary charity, not compulsory gifts. Conservatives also believe it is unjust

to take their hard earned money and give it to the poor who have done nothing to earn it. Nozick noted that supporting the poor through compulsory taxation is like forcing someone to work to pay for someone else's well-being.

Liberal Ideology

Liberals believe that capitalism has created an unequal system of distributing the wealth. They are concerned with correcting the social inequality which has been the product of capitalism. Liberals do not seek to disassemble capitalism, rather to "minimize the numbers of people not benefitting from it" (Macht & Ashford, 1991, p. 63). Liberalism "considers individuals the seat of moral value and each individual is of equal worth"; therefore "the individuals should be free to choose his or her own ends in life" (Kreiger, 1993, p. 538). They believe that everyone should have an equal opportunity to succeed economically and to be involved in the laws which affect them. Liberals contend that massive military and police forces would not be necessary if everyone had an equal say in their government. Liberals are not rigidly committed to tradition; they believe that social improvements should be sought and applied when morally indicated. Also, liberals hold that religious teachings encourage alms and kindness toward the poor.

Liberals believe that government should atone for the unequal conditions created by capitalism and has the power to do so. Government should provide opportunities which have been blocked by social (discrimination) and economic (distribution of wealth) inequities. Merton and Nisbet (1961) suggest that, "along with the increased standard of living comes certain social problems and social welfare becomes a legitimate function of the government and industrialized society" (p. 3).

Concerned with social inequality, John Rawls proposed a "social contract theory." Under this theory, society would be designed using a blind-draw system by people who did not know what their position in the world would be. One could be born either sex of any race and could be the richest or poorest or sickliest or healthiest person on earth. Rawls (1971) reasoned that, under these conditions, the designers of society would want to arrange a world so the inequities of rank and fortune would be to the advantage of all.

Liberals prefer structural explanations which attribute societal and economic conditions as the reasons for poverty. They believe that to solve poverty, the societal structure must change to accommodate the needs of the people. Liberals dispute cultural and individual explanations for the existence of poverty, asserting that it is easy to blame individuals for their economic condition because it ignores society's and government's failures in dealing with the

problem.

Liberals seek to expand the role of government in alleviating poverty. Bowie and Simon (1977) stated that well-being is a natural right; the more affluent the society, the greater obligation there is for society to take care of its members. Liberals support policies which increase the allocation of funds to social services and are committed to civil liberties. They argue that it is not fair that some individuals are born with handicaps and into poverty and through no fault of their own. To compensate for injustices, government should see that the needy are clothed, fed, and provided shelter.

Radical Ideology

Radicals believe everyone should have an equal voice in government, but that the poor are excluded. They claim that capitalism does not function in everyone's best interest, rather heavily favors the ruling class. The poor are systematically excluded from government. Society is divided into the owners and the workers. The owners have all the power and use it to exploit the workers. They cannot be expected to concern themselves with the abolition of poverty because they have an investment in maintaining two separate classes. The owners need the workers for their labor power. The more productive the laborers are, the richer the owners get, thus increasing their power over the workers (Sigmund,

1993).

Radicals believe that the economy should work to help everyone. Wealth producing properties should be brought under the control of the working class. Radicals support public ownership and operation of industries. Government should take control of the distribution of wealth and assure all able-bodied persons are given the opportunity to work. Radicals acknowledge that the capitalists will not voluntarily share power. Gans (1972) concluded that, "change will come about only if poverty becomes an intolerable condition for the nonpoor, or when the poor themselves manage to form a power base sufficiently strong to bring it about" (Hartman, 1984, p. 188). Others, such as Marx, have suggested that the poor organize and revolt against the owners. Only through placing power in the hands of the working class could exploitation of the poor be eliminated.

Both radicals and liberals favor structural explanations of poverty. However, radicals criticize liberals for the association with capitalism. Radicals believe that liberals do not go far enough with their ideas of reform. They believe that as long as there is a ruling class, the poor will be exploited and will not have the opportunity to affect their conditions. Radicals believe that the wages of the working class will be kept at a subsistence level.

Radicals generally believe that people want to work and would not choose to be dependent. If government would perform the duty of establishing work opportunities for the poor, the need for welfare benefits would be minimal. Only the sick, disabled, elderly, and children would require the support of the public, and even they would not be totally unproductive. Radicals see welfare programs as merely patching some of the problems caused by capitalism. Welfare serves social control functions for the government. The poor are not given enough resources to rise out of poverty, but are provided enough to avoid making their conditions bad enough to consider an overthrow of the government. Piven and Cloward (1971) proposed a massive drive to swell the welfare rolls, creating a crisis which would force the government to initiate reforms. Both Harrington (1962) and Piven and Cloward proposed a coalition of groups which could join with the poor to achieve structural changes.

One radical movement, Liberation Theology in Central and South America, emerged in the 1960s to work for the liberation of the poor from the economic and political oppression of dictatorial governments. The movement's founder was Gustavo Guiterrez, a Catholic priest. Fundamental to the movement are the biblical teachings, that encourage Christians to work toward the liberation of the poor. The three important elements of Liberation Theology are, "it is critical of the status quo, it is committed to

action by and for the poor, and it is biblically based" (Sigmund, 1993, p. 542). Liberation Theologists condemned the exploitation of the poor and proposed social ownership of industry. They believed in organizing the poor so that they could be "agents of their own liberation" (p. 542).

CHAPTER IV

THE EMERGENCE OF SOCIAL WORK AND SOCIAL WELFARE-REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Throughout American history, attitudes toward the poor and beliefs about the reasons poverty exists have influenced the way society has dealt with the needy. Perceptions regarding the reasons for poverty have generally shifted between postulations of individual inadequacies and societal conditions which favor some persons while discriminating against others. According to changes in ways the needy have been viewed, practices of relief given to the destitute shifted.

America's earliest means of dealing with the poor had their origins in English "poor laws." The Statute of Laborers in 1531 was the first doctrine to decree government involvement in the problem of poverty. According to this statute, the poor were to be registered with town officials and were allowed to beg only within geographical territories set by local officials. Beggars judged "able-bodied" were to be punished.

Begging was soon recognized as being an inadequate mechanism for providing for the masses of poor. The subsequent Statute of Laborers in 1536 set guidelines for what provisions were to be furnished, how the provisions would be distributed, and what government's role in relief to the poor would be. The Elizabethan Poor Laws of 1601 established conditions for dealing with those without means:

1. Relief was to be locally administered and financed.
2. The administrator had to be a public official.
3. The unemployed were categorized; both treatment and benefit were to be related to the individual's relationship to the work force. No able-bodied person was to benefit by the relief system. Handicapped and elderly people who could work 'the worthy poor' should be given help.
4. Families were to be responsible for themselves.
5. Children were to be given apprenticeships or training to ensure they would be productive members of society (Macht & Ashford, 1991, pp. 124-126).

Poverty in colonial America was a natural part of life. According to Betten (1973) most immigrants arrived poor, and at least one-third came as servants and slaves. Although unemployment was not a major problem, those who became ill,

orphaned, widowed, or elderly were particularly susceptible to poverty.

Despite becoming impoverished through no fault of their own, the poor in colonial America were generally viewed as lacking in character in some way and not be provided for. Religious leaders supported the notion that poverty was predestined and "indicated a lack of God's grace" (Betten, 1973, p. 1). "The Reverend Thomas Hooker, founder of Connecticut, argued that the poor should not be aided from the fund that supported the ministry" (p. 2). Cotton Mather asserted in a sermon that "for those who indulge themselves in idleness, it is God's command that we should let them starve" (p. 2).

The colonists did not distinguish among the different underlying reasons individuals fell into poverty. Rothman (1971) noted that the poor, insane, and criminal were grouped together into one class of deviants and all treated the same way. Those without jobs were punished or "warned out" of town, and local governments adopted laws which allowed imprisonment and public whipping for the able-bodied poor.

As was the case in England, families and communities bore the responsibility for taking care of members who fell into poverty. If the families could not provide for themselves, the children were placed with other families, and the able-bodied adults went to work for someone in the

community. Local care of the poor required that the community, family, and church all work together. Large formal institutions were not considered an answer to dealing with poverty.

Toward the end of the colonial period IN 1176, communities were no longer capable of placing all their poor with local families. Until the early-nineteenth century, the poor were placed in poorhouses which usually involved their working on a farm. The use of poor farms continued to a lesser extent until the early twentieth century.

Beginning in the 1720s, the Great Awakening was taking place. Religious groups continued to play a major role in the way society viewed the poor; however, religious teachings encouraged more favorable attitudes toward the poor. Religious leaders noted environmental factors which were partly responsible for poverty. Helping the poor was a moral obligation. Sentiments such as "share your brother's fate" and "we are all God's children" encouraged charity and a more empathetic view of the needy. Helping the poor was viewed as a way of doing God's work on earth.

By the early nineteenth century, the Industrial Revolution (which had begun in England in the 1760s) had spread to the United States. Immigrants from Europe, African Americans in the North, and the unemployed from rural areas came to large cities in the Northeastern United States to take jobs in factories. Opportunities arose for

those who had been poor due to the scarcity of work to now climb out of poverty. Despite the new availability of jobs, a segment of the population remained poor.

During this time, industrialists gained power and increasing amounts of influence over public opinion. They claimed that those who did not take jobs were sinners and drunks, and as a result individual explanations of poverty returned to favor. Thomas Malthus (1798) asserted that poverty was in accordance with God's will and warned that helping the poor would only lead to further deviance. This gave the wealthy industrialists a justification for poverty and reason not to concern themselves with the plight of the destitute.

If states were going to solve the problem of poverty, they needed to know its origins. State agencies began to investigate the reasons people were poor. The findings of these studies were similar to that of the New York Society for the Prevention of Pauperism in 1818, which concluded that "ignorance, idleness, intemperance, want of economy, imprudent and hasty marriages, lotteries, pawn brokers, houses of prostitution, and the generosity of charitable organizations" were all causes of poverty (Trattner, 1979, p. 50).

Rothman (1971) noted that previous means of dealing with the insolvent had become ineffective. Rapid population growth rendered communities unable to provide for all those

without funds, and so communities became concerned with maintaining social control. Betten (1973) postulated that "the major social welfare institutions that became prominent during this period viewed their role as guarding against the possibility that the lower classes would take advantage of charitable agencies" (p. 3). Able-bodied persons were not to be supported at public expense.

The use of institutions as a means for dealing with the poor spread in response to local communities' inability to care for their poor in the 1820s. Leiby (1978) noted examples of such institutions: "state and county penitentiaries, houses of refuge for neglected and delinquent youngsters, schools for the deaf, dumb, and blind, general hospitals, and asylums for lunatics" (p. 48). The trend toward institutional placement of the poor gained momentum with the Poor Law Reform Act of 1834 in England. The law was critical of the poor and stated that no relief should be given to anyone not in a workhouse. Macht and Ashford (1991) pointed out that workhouses "were like penal institutions ... the conditions were so bad that no one would want to go there" and "England officially declared poverty a crime" (p. 132).

Until the development of such institutions, the poor were grouped together with other custodial groups such as the insane and the criminals. This grouping reflected the widely held view that the poor were disordered in some way

and to be feared.

Charity Organization Societies

Hundreds of philanthropic charity organizations were established in the nineteenth century to provide relief to the poor. Each had its own ideas about who should be helped and what assistance they should receive. The organizations were largely supported by the upper classes who, although they believed that poverty was due to personal shortcomings, felt that they had an obligation to help the poor (Specht & Courtney, 1994).

Relief-giving was largely unorganized among private charity organizations: Some people would receive public and private assistance, while others in need received none. It was thought that professional beggars received a disproportionate amount of alms, which depleted resources that were intended for the deserving poor as defined by the public agencies. The Charity Organization Societies (COS) were formed "to end the abuse of charity, to make charity more effective for those who really deserved it, and to mobilize the forces of helpfulness" (Leiby, 1971, p. 111).

The first COS in the United States was established in 1877 by Reverend Stephen Gurteen in Buffalo. The concept quickly spread and in a few years most industrial cities had functioning Charity Organization Societies. The leaders of the COS movement believed in "scientific charity"; no one

would receive charity without a thorough investigation of their situation. According to Betten (1973), "the COS regarded itself as the policeman of the charity movement" (p. 3). The COS did not provide relief to the needy directly; rather, "they screened applicants for the charities; those found to be worthy of assistance were referred to an appropriate charity" (Specht & Courtney, 1994, p. 74).

The COS would send out "friendly visitors" to homes of those requesting charity to assess their situation and refer them for assistance. The friendly visitors would also advise the poor on some of their affairs (shopping, nutrition, hygiene, sanitation). These COS workers were one of the two groups of forerunners of professional social workers.

In 1915, Abraham Flexner argued that social work was not a profession, rather a network of traffic management between clients and services. His remark upset social workers, because he dismissed the organization of a network of community resources and means for getting the resources to those who need them as a legitimate function worthy of professional status. Actually, the functions served by the friendly visitors formed the basis for community resource referral which continue to be a critical part of social work today.

As the COS pushed toward a scientific model, good intentions soon were not considered enough to qualify individuals to be caseworkers. Social caseworkers needed specific training and skills to competently perform their tasks. In 1898, the New York School of Philanthropy began offering summer courses in social work related issues. Schools of social work were established in many universities to provide instruction for proper methods of investigating the poor. The notion that social caseworkers needed specific skills and the subsequent establishment of schools of social work marked the movement toward the professionalization of social work and the beginning of a decline of volunteers as social workers.

Social work education and social work methods became popular in the early twentieth century. Mary Jarret at Smith College became influential in providing training in the skills necessary to perform social casework. In her book Social Diagnosis in 1917, Mary Richmond described a "scientific" method for investigating the poor. Richmond presented a framework which encouraged investigation of the conditions and situations affecting how the poor lived. This method was a precursor to the social systems theory which social workers use today. Although social diagnosis practices did not provide directions for what to do with the information gathered from the investigation suggested by Richmond, it did represent the first efforts to include the

poor in assessing their situation. As Specht and Courtney (1994) pointed out, "the reason was that up to that time it had not occurred to the people who dealt with the paupers that anything of value could be learned by talking to them...the upper classes were confident that they understood the cause of dependency" (p. 79).

Nineteenth century America saw a proliferation of industry. Technology improved rapidly and fed industry with mechanisms that factories needed to meet the demands of a growing country. As a result of technological advances, Americans saw promise in the field of science for its potential to positively impact their lives.

From science came the major arguments in opposition to large-scale organization of alms for the poor. The phrase "survival of the fittest" originated with Herbert Spencer and was reflected in Charles Darwin's 1859 book, On The Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection. Darwin's theory postulated that those species which are best adapted survive and weaker species must die out. Those who applied Darwin's theory to the poor were termed Social Darwinists. Partially due to their identification with science, Social Darwinists held considerable influence over public opinion. The Social Darwinists' main spokesman, Herbert Spencer, argued that the poor were the weakest of the human species and should be allowed to die out. Providing assistance to them would only "lead to the weakening of the species" by

"interfering with the natural selection process" (Macht & Ashford, 1991, p. 145).

Macht and Ashford (1991) claimed that COS were guided by Social Darwinist principals (one of which was contempt for the poor). Poverty was seen as a result of personal shortcomings. The COS were more oriented toward social control than social reform. The primary philosophy of COS was to provide for the basic needs of the poor, but not to change the social conditions that contributed to their being poor.

Settlement Houses

Despite the claims of Social Darwinists, religious ideas continued to be "the most important intellectual influences on American welfare institutions in the nineteenth century" (Leiby, 1971, p. 12). Faver (1986) noted that social workers' religious beliefs historically have been reflected in their professional practices. Leiby (1971) noted, "two important American types to whom the settlement idea appealed, the social-minded clergy, and the college woman" (p. 127-128). They were drawn together by three common goals, "the desire that American society move to social democracy, the desire to 'share the race life,' and a certain renaissance of Christianity" (p. 129).

The motivations of the clergy represented the ideology of the Social Gospel Movement. Several religious groups

rejected Social Darwinists' claims that the poor were immoral and not worthy of reform. Unemployment, which resulted from depressions in the 1870s, left many people poor who were able and willing to work. Betten (1973) noted that the Social Gospel Movement reflected a change in American perceptions about the poor, "concern moved from a focus on the destitute to a focus on the mass of poor" (p. 4). The Baptists, Catholics, Episcopalians, Jews, and Presbyterians all formed organizations to help the poor. Macht and Ashford (1991) claimed that the Social Gospel Movement was "an attempt by conscientious ministers and priests to get their congregations to address problems of the poor" (pp. 151-52). These clergy argued that "Christian ethics demanded an attack on a destructive economic system which created and perpetuated poverty" (Betten, 1973, p. 4).

The college educated men and women who staffed the settlement houses represented a growing group of individuals who wanted not only to investigate the poor, but also to become directly involved in providing services to them. The women were largely from wealthy families, but gender barriers prevented them from opportunities to enter traditionally male jobs, such as doctors, lawyers, and businesspersons. They saw their place in society as helping the less fortunate (Leiby, 1978).

The first settlement houses in the United States were modeled after Toynbee Hall in England, which was established

in 1884. Jane Addams, the most well-known and influential settlement house worker, established Hull House in Chicago in 1889 after visiting Toynbee Hall. Settlement house workers created a college campus environment in the ghetto. Educated upper and middle class well-intended women moved into the impoverished neighborhoods and opened their doors to the poor (Macht & Ashford, 1991).

Settlement house workers viewed economic, political, and cultural factors as responsible for poverty. Political machines governed many large cities and served in their own self-interests. Assuring their survival usually meant trying to structure society to the benefit of the capitalists. Government was seen as unresponsive to the needs of the poor, who were disproportionately African Americans and immigrants. For the African Americans, discriminatory housing, education, and hiring practices made it difficult for them to compete in a white-dominated society. The immigrants faced many of the same conditions as African Americans, and their inability to read, write, or speak English presented more obstacles to moving out of poverty (Leiby, 1978).

The settlement house movement used direct contact between the classes as a means for educating the poor on skills deemed necessary to adjust to society. Job training classes were offered to enable the poor to acquire skills so that they could enter the work force. Women's clubs were

organized to instruct the poor on domestic skills, boys and girls' clubs offered recreation facilities, and kindergartens began orienting children toward the American culture. The settlement house workers did not insist that their culturally diverse client groups abandon their heritage, in fact they celebrated cultural diversity in some ways. However, they were involved in social control by seeking to "Americanize" immigrants (Lubove, 1983).

Settlement house workers believed that changes in the social environment were necessary if the lives of the poor were going to get better. They became committed to social reform efforts that pushed for child labor laws, disability compensation, eight hour work days, six day work weeks, minimum wage standards, pension plans, labor unions, the elimination of unnecessary diseases, safer working conditions, and public recreation facilities.

Settlement house workers thought that America's democratic political process could function to improve the conditions which had perpetuated poverty. Their vision was a cooperative venture between private agencies and the government to eradicate poverty. They began to investigate the political platforms of local politicians and educate the public regarding political issues. Voter registration drives created a reformist power base which politicians could not ignore. Settlement house workers openly supported candidates and encouraged the citizens to vote for

representatives who would use their office to pass legislation which benefitted the needy (Leiby, 1978).

The social reformers of the settlement house movement became major players in the drive for social change which became known as America's Progressive Era. The Progressive Era covered roughly the first twenty years of the twentieth century. This period was characterized by social reform and social justice movements. Social workers were joined by groups of farmers, urban residents, businessmen, ethnic classes, and middle-class individuals who supported social reform goals. The Progressives sought to eliminate political corruption and make local politicians accountable for affecting social policies which would benefit their constituents (Link & McCormick, 1983).

The Progressive Movement spread to the state and national level. The Progressive party was organized by Theodore Roosevelt in 1912 after he failed to secure the Republican nomination for president. Jane Addams nominated Roosevelt for the presidency that year. Although Roosevelt lost the election and stayed with the party only four years, he had brought credibility to the movement and exposure to the Progressive platform (Finegold, 1993).

The Progressive Era brought unprecedented changes in the ways Americans viewed and dealt with the destitute. Social reform efforts became nationally recognized and accepted as worthwhile. Advocacy for the poor was no longer

restricted to religious groups and pockets of volunteers. Government involvement in reform held great potential for improving the plight of the poor. Rather than only investigating the poor, settlement workers engaged them in self-empowerment.

The Progressive Era probably signified the profession of Social Work's birth. Social work may have had more power and influence in society than at any other time in history. The discipline organized support from middle America to achieve professional goals. Significant political clout was gained through the establishment of a power base, identification with influential politicians, and extensive lobbying efforts. Social workers were enthusiastic and saw promise in such a new profession that organized Americans to support their causes, gained political power, and positively impacted the conditions under which the impoverished lived.

The Progressive Movement began to lose momentum during World War I. The Bolshevik revolution in Russia led to the spread of communism in parts of Europe, and as a result Americans became concerned that communism could spread to the United States and wondered if overthrow of the ruling class could happen in this country. The reform ideas of the Progressives were labeled radical and became suspect as an anti-Communist sentiment swept across the United States. Jane Addams' pacifist stance during World War I was seen by many Americans as unpatriotic. Addams noted, "any proposed

change was suspect, even those considered praiseworthy before the war" (Karger, 1987, p. 91). Social reformers became viewed as subversives and so was Hull House, "a hotbed of radicalism." Addams was blacklisted by the American Legion, expelled from the Daughters of the American Revolution, and called, "the most dangerous woman in America" (Specht & Courtney, 1994, p. 84).

Developments in psychology also contributed to the decline of the Progressive Movement. Mary Richmond's social diagnosis method for investigating the poor had led to the establishment of formal training programs in psychiatric social work. As the settlement house workers were doing work with the poor, psychiatric social workers became eager for interventions they could use in their work with the needy. Mary Richmond failed to deliver on her promise to write a book on social work treatment a follow-up to Social Diagnosis (Leiby, 1971). Sigmund Freud had published numerous books in the early twentieth century containing theories about the nature and treatment of mental illness. Psychiatric social workers embraced Freud's theories as offering new insights and interventions which they could use in their work with the poor. By combining Richmond's social diagnosis framework with Freud's psychoanalytic approaches, psychiatric caseworkers felt that they were in a position to take positions dealing with clients which had previously been restricted to the medical profession.

At the time Freud's writings were gaining prominence in the United States, some social workers were already working under psychiatrists. Adolf Meyer and John Cabot were employing social workers in hospitals. While the psychiatrists worked directly with the patient, social workers worked with the family and assessed the patient's social environment. Social workers were also working in child guidance clinics. The clinics provided the training, opportunity, and environment to do psychiatric social work.

The return of soldiers from World War I with mental problems, the growing value of science, and the development of mental hospitals closer to patients gave psychiatry prestige and importance. Psychiatry focused its interventions toward changing the individual. The restructuring of societal forces which was central to social reformers' ideology had become unfashionable among social workers, because they feared being labeled communist. Also, the field had been criticized for the lack of a scientific foundation. As a result, social work was eager for professional status.

An identification with psychiatry offered social work opportunities for professional status. Social work saw psychiatry as a field with a solid scientific knowledge base which would lead to its professionalization. The end of the Progressive Era and social work's identification with psychiatry marked the beginning of social work's distancing

itself from the poor.

America became more conservative in the 1920s. Society became frustrated with government's inability to solve the problem of poverty. Many of the sentiments that were popular during the Progressive Era lost credibility. Public welfare largely fell back into the hands of the rich. Industrialists such as Andrew Carnegie and John D. Rockefeller contributed $350 million and $530 million, respectively, in foundations to help the poor. Community chests were developed in which businessmen could give to one big fund rather than trying to ascertain which of the hundreds of smaller ones were worthy. Leiby (1971) called community chests, a "device to help the local elite of merchants, manufacturers, and professional people carry out their responsibility for philanthropy and service" (p. 171). Scientific management principles developed by Frederick Taylor initiated a push toward more efficient management of charities. Boards of charities and bureaus of inquiries were established to advise public and private charities on budgeting and management practices (Leiby, 1971). A particular importance of this movement was the two-fold impact of fundraising efficiency, but conservative impact on agencies.

The New Deal

With the onset of the Great Depression in 1929, America

was faced with mass unemployment and growing social unrest. One quarter of the labor force was out of work, and strike-related violence was on the rise. Devine and Wright (1993) called the Great Depression "the turning point in public awareness of poverty and in the nation's response to it" because "Americans were forced to rethink their ideas about poverty and the proper role of government in responding to it" (p. 8). Millions of Americans were forced into poverty despite a willingness and an ability to do hard work. That so many people were poor because they had lost their jobs seemed to contradict the view that people were poor because there was something wrong with them. Americans came to view the lack of jobs as the primary reason for people being poor and the poor became more accepted and viewed in a less negative light (Betten, 1973).

Despite President Hoover's assertion that local public and private agencies could handle the growing numbers of poor created during the Great Depression, existing organizations became inadequate in their ability to provide relief which was needed on a large-scale. While Hoover was vetoing legislation designed to provide assistance to the poor, Americans became increasingly aware that existing policies and programs were not meeting the needs of the people. The belief that federal intervention was necessary to bring about the structural changes which would be needed to stimulate the economy and provide aid to the masses of

"worthy" poor gained momentum.

The sentiment that the government should take responsibility for economic recovery and relief to the poor culminated in the election of Franklin Delanor Roosevelt in 1932. During his speech accepting the Democratic nomination for president, Roosevelt promised "a new deal for the American people" (Brinkley, 1993, p. 625). When Roosevelt took office in 1933 (during the worst period of the Great Depression) he enacted several policies and programs designed to stabilize the economy and provide temporary relief for the masses of unemployed. These policies and programs were referred to as the New Deal and represented the first time federal government assumed the function of developing and implementing assistance to the poor.

New Deal Programs. The first relief programs were the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA) and the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). The FERA provide funds to states to help finance relief. The CCC employed youths in positions which included forestry and civil engineering tasks. The first programs designed to stabilize the economy were the National Recovery Administration (NRA) and the Agricultural Adjustment Association (AAA). The NRA encouraged the regulation of wages, production levels, and prices. The AAA provided a production framework for the nation's farmers. Roosevelt also moved to regulate the banking and securities industry (Ehrenreich, 1985).

The "welfare state" as we know it today is a result of the Second New Deal of 1935. In response to growing strike activity, radical labor and political movements, and the Supreme Court which declared both the NRA and the AAA unconstitutional, Roosevelt moved "sharply to the left by proposing the Second New Deal" which "represented a far more dramatic shift in American social policy than his first efforts. Now Roosevelt moved to create a 'welfare state' (Ehrenreich, 1985, p. 95).

The major new policies which comprised the Second New Deal were the National Labor Relations Act (the Wagner Act), the Works Progress Administration (WPA), the Fair Labor Standards Act, and the Social Security Act. The Wagner Act restored many of the provisions included in the NRA such as collective bargaining protections and the right to join unions and it also created the National Labor Relations Board to oversee compliance of the Act. The Fair Labor Standards Act "established a national minimum wage, the forty-hour work week, and national child labor laws" (p. 96). The WPA was another jobs program, similar to the CCC, but for adults. Devine and Wright (1993) pointed out that the CCC and WPA attempted to preserve self-esteem by providing work opportunities rather than fostering dependency through direct income transfer schemes. The Second New Deal also included housing programs which created low rent housing.

The most enduring and significant program of the Second New Deal was the Social Security Act. The Social Security Act "was the first real federal intervention into the social welfare arena" (Macht & Ashford, 1991, p. 293). Heise (1977) noted that the Social Security Act took the immense step of acknowledging that the poor were not necessarily to blame for their own situation and did not deserve punishment in the form of stigma and deprivation" (p. 10). Brinkley (1993) wrote that the Social Security Act "established the framework of the modern United States welfare state" by creating "two important social insurance programs: old age pensions and welfare benefits" (p. 626). Social security insurance provided funds to wage earners and their dependents in the case that the wage earner becomes ill, aged, disabled, or dies. Those families in which there are no wage earners, or whose wages are inadequate to lift them out of poverty, are provided "welfare" benefits by the Social Security Act.

The Social Security Act has evolved over the past fifty years. The next section will describe welfare programs as they exist today. DeSwaan (1993) described a welfare state as "national, collective, and compulsory arrangements which have emerged in order to cope with the adversities and deficiencies that affect individual citizens in industrial society" (p. 972). The welfare state is made up of policies and programs which are designed to enable individuals and

families to meet their basic needs through a redistribution of funds and goods. In the United States, the major staples of the welfare state are Social Security Income (SSI), Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), Medicaid and Medicare, General Assistance (GA), nutrition programs, and housing programs.

Social Security Income is for "persons who have been medically certified as permanently and totally disabled, are unable to support themselves, and are without responsible relatives who can support them" (Segalman & Basu, 1981, p. 94). Aid to Families with Dependent Children provides financial support to homes where one of the parents cannot contribute to the household due to absence, disability or death. Medicaid pays for hospital and medical services for those who cannot pay for the services on their own. Medicare primarily covers the aged who are unable to meet the expenses associated with their care. General Assistance provides funds to those who are in need of assistance, but are not eligible for AFDC or SSI. Several nutrition programs are part of America's welfare state. Child nutrition programs (School Breakfast Program, Child Care Food Program, National School Lunch Program, Special Milk Program, Nutrition Education and Training Program) provide nutrition to school age children.

The Women, Infant, and Children (WIC) program provides nutrition for pregnant and nursing women and preschool age

children. The Family Nutrition Program (Food Stamps) provides coupons which may be used as cash to purchase groceries. The Elderly Nutrition Program provides meals (such as Meals on Wheels) for the elderly (Macht & Ashford, 1991). Finally, the Federal Housing Administration, the Farmers Home Administration, and the Veterans Administration all have programs designed to enable poor families to buy homes. Segalman and Basu (1981) noted that, "all seek to accomplish this purpose by loaning money directly to the home buyer (Farmers Home Administration); by making it easy for the buyer to obtain financing through guaranteed mortgages (Veterans Administration); by making subsidy payments to mortgage lenders on behalf of buyers; and by insuring the mortgage lender against any loss in the event of default, foreclosure, or inability to satisfy the outstanding obligation from the proceeds of a foreclosure sale (Federal Housing Administration)" (p. 276). Also, subsidized housing programs provide low-rent public housing for families with limited means.

Social Work and the New Deal. Social work in the 1930s became involved in "in-house" issues. The rank and file movement and the split between diagnostic and functional schools of social casework comprised "the crisis in social work" (Ehrenreich, 1985).

The New Deal marked the beginning of the welfare state. The federal government assumed responsibility for some

aspects of welfare of particular groups of Americans. National policy 'entitled' some groups of citizens to certain benefits. The majority of established social workers supported New Deal legislation. Prominent social workers such as Harry Hopkins, Grace Abbott, and Frances Perkins took on official responsibilities within New Deal programs.

A minority of social workers were unhappy with "both the aims and the accomplishments of the New Deal-and their colleagues who supported it" (Trattner, 1989, p. 261). They comprised the "rank and file movement" in social work. Many were young, new recruits to the field. The rank and file movement was led by Mary van Kleeck of the Russell Sage Foundation and Harry Lurie, head of the Council of Jewish Federations and Welfare Funds. The movement came to publish its own journal, Social Work Today, and formed "discussion clubs." The movement advocated for greater and more encompassing changes than were proposed by the New Deal. They were concerned that an alliance with government would facilitate a movement within the profession toward protecting the status quo. Such an alliance would jeopardize ideologically driven, progressive changes on behalf of their clientele (Ehrenreich, 1985).

The membership of the rank and file movement saw the reforms of the New Deal as "an evasion of the need for a planned society in which production decisions would be based

on need, not profit" and "argued that the economic programs of the New Deal helped big business and big agriculture, but not society as a whole" (Macht & Ashford, 1991, p. 157).

The rank and filers were especially disappointed with the defeat of the Lundeen bill which included workers' unemployment, old age, and social insurance benefits. Adding to their displeasure was the administration's failure to enact health insurance legislation. Furthermore, the rank and file movement was critical of the passage of the Social Security Act because of its contributory nature, limited coverage, and often less than adequate benefits. Rank and filers favored benefits originating from general tax revenues which were not means tested.

Trattner (1989) noted that the African-Americans were more critically affected by the Depression than Whites and that many New Deal programs were biased in favor of Whites. The Civilian Conservation Corps (C.C.C.) restricted the enrollment of African-Americans to 10% of the total. African-Americans lost jobs resulting from government crop reductions guidelines under the Agriculture Adjustment Act (A.A.A.) and the closing of small businesses under the National Recovery Administration (N.R.A.). The N.R.A. became referred to by African-Americans as the "Negro Removal Act" (p. 257).

Social Security was "based primarily on the insurance principle rather than on the public assistance model, it

provided 'welfare' only to the needy, aged, and young-the unemployable or deserving poor" (Trattner, 1989, p. 265). Like previous programs such as Mothers' Pensions, these programs were primarily for Whites, while African-Americans and immigrants competed for low-paying jobs in the labor force. Programs were based on past earnings and contributions rather than need and many who needed the help of the Social Security Act were not included under its provisions.

The split between functional and diagnostic schools of social casework took place as a result of varying ideas about the role of casework. Both schools adopted psychiatry, but had different views on how it should be applied. Virginia Robinson's 1930 A Changing Psychology in Social Casework, criticized Richmond's "narrow" focus on the environment. Robinson felt that any casework which did not address mental hygiene as critical, was irresponsible. The split came as Robinson and Jessie Taft (the functional school) followed the writings of Otto Rank, while Florence Hollis and Helen Perlman (diagnostic school) closely adhered to the teachings of Freud. The functional school felt that the agency environment was central to the helping relationship. They advocated letting the client be involved in describing the problem. They endorsed addressing the presenting problem and not a "personality overhaul" as they accused the diagnostic school of promoting. The diagnostic

school advocated a formal diagnosis and psychoanalysis. They focused on the role of the therapist as the key to the helping relationship. Each side fought to assert their orientation as better. At stake was the direction social work would take. The functional school subsided after 15 years, but left a permanent mark on casework (Lubove, 1983).

With Social Work being preoccupied with its professional status and methods of casework, the focus on the plight of the poor subsided, never to return to the prominence it had enjoyed until this point. Social Work drifted away from social reform and became more allied with the power structure. The charismatic leaders were replaced by centralized bureaucracy. Emphasis on scientific management and cost effectiveness invited a new type of board of directors to social service organizations. Volunteers were either eased out of the profession or their function and status changed.

The War on Poverty

John F. Kennedy encountered poverty during his 1960 presidential campaign through West Virginia. Michael Harrington's (1962) book The Other America brought the problem of poverty to the nation's attention. Once elected, President Kennedy considered ways to attack the problem of poverty. Following President Kennedy's death in 1963, it fell to President Johnson to operationalize the anti-poverty

concepts into a set of specific policies and programs. During his first State of the Union address in January, 1964, President Johnson declared the War on Poverty. This action marked the first time since the Great Depression that the Federal government took on the end of poverty as part of the national agenda (Devine & Wright, 1993).

As Congress began to consider policy proposals, critical questions regarding the extent and dynamics of poverty in America needed to be addressed if any actions with reasonable chances for success were to be undertaken. The Social Security Administration was assigned the task of defining poverty. They introduced the poverty threshold in 1964 (Devine & Wright, 1993).

Annual reports of the United States Department of Commerce identified groups of individuals and families especially vulnerable to poverty (aged, children, large families, families headed by women). Rural families and minority group members were particularly at risk. Individuals who worked but were still poor became known as the "working poor." By December 1964, the total number of AFDC recipients had reached more than 4 million (Axxin & Levin, 1982).

The Economic Opportunity Act was passed in August 1964, with the intent of providing all Americans the opportunity for "education and training, the opportunity to work, and the opportunity to live in decency and dignity" (U.S. 88th

Congress). The Economic Opportunity Act provided education and training programs for youths such as Job Corps and grants and loans to farmers and small businesses through Titles III and IV. Title V provided job training for unemployed parents. Community Action Programs included under Title II were conducted by public or private nonprofit community action agencies and called for the "maximum feasible participation" of residents in the area to be covered (Axxin & Levin, 1982).

Agencies were free to fund and administer projects which they believed would benefit the community. Day care centers, recreation centers, health centers and programs such as Head Start and Upward Bound were established. The "maximum feasible participation' concept opened new sources of psychological, financial, and political power as the poor found themselves having a say in, and in some instances even controlling, the programs and institutions that affect their lives" (Axxin & Levin, 1982, p. 258).

The Economic Opportunity Act did not provide money or jobs, rather education, training, and various social services. The assumption was that if people had access to education and training they could work their way out of poverty. Also assumed was that if people were involved in the political process that governed their lives, they could make it work for them. The Act did not challenge the roots of social structure rather provided ways for the poor to fit

in.

During the initial decade of the War on Poverty, the poverty rate was cut in half, reaching its all-time low of 11.1% in 1973. Conservative critics such as Murray (1984) point to the "welfare explosion" as fostering dependence and destroying the family ethic and work ethic among the poor. More liberal writers such as Harrington (1984) concluded that War on Poverty policies were effective and worked as intended. Suggesting that the Nixon and Reagan administrations surrendered the War on Poverty as the tide was beginning to turn, Devine and Wright (1993) noted that "the rate of poverty declines when spending on welfare programs increases (1964-1973), except when general economic conditions are extremely troubled (1973-1980), and the rate of poverty increases when welfare spending is cut (1980 to date" (p. 31).

Social Work and the War on Poverty. From the time the New Deal programs became entrenched in American social policy, the majority of social workers fell in line with the idea of government handling social policy. The New Deal programs provided opportunities for new recruits to enter the profession. Although some of these became involved in the rank and file movement, the most social workers were not involved in the development of social policy. However, social policy was central in shaping social work. Over the next two decades, social work had become resistant to social

change and had withdrawn from its historical client groups. Many became attracted to middle-class clients where they could practice psychotherapy with a paying clientele. Concerned with professional status and public acceptance, they avoided social reform (Ehrenreich, 1985).

As the "maximum feasible participation" model emerged in communities, social workers were needed for their organizing skills. Many new recruits to the profession were African-American or Hispanic. These new social workers helped to organize client groups who wanted a say in their communities. Another growing voice in social work was social work students who were part of a radical campus atmosphere. Movements such as the civil rights struggle had aroused college students to social action. Social work unions, often led by radicals also emerged. These groups all challenged tradition social work. They advocated a commitment to client needs rather than professional concerns (Ehrenreich, 1985).

Also during this time Social action theorists such as Saul Alinsky, Frances Fox Piven, and Richard Cloward suggested radical measures to bring about change. These authors advocating organizing the poor to help bring about change on their own behalf. Alinsky outlined Rules for Radicals (1972) to organize and challenge society for a fair share. Piven and Cloward (1977) suggested that social movements must be initiated by the lower class because the

ruling class will not respond unless the lower class threatens social order (Macht & Ashford, 1991).

Several groups did emerge to challenge social order and press for changes. The Black Panther Party, founded in 1966, sought to protect and defend African-Americans. They believed that the African-Americans were responsible for doing the necessary work in African-American communities. The Black Panthers became involved in survival and community oriented services. They brought needed services to the people. Their goals included:

1. full employment of blacks,
2. the right to control politics of black community,
3. decent housing,
4. education that teaches black history,
5. exemption of blacks from military service,
6. release of all blacks in prison,
7. an end to police brutality,
8. trial by jury of peers, and
9. land, bread, housing, education, clothing, justice, and peace (Frazier, 1970).

Social workers became involved in social reform. Social workers with skills in community organization, administration, and direct work with client groups became involved in community action programs. They advocated for consumer and community participation. Social workers helped to organize public assistance clients into the National

Welfare Rights Organization (NWRO). This group demanded rights for poor people. Consisting of primarily welfare recipients and social workers, the NWRO engaged in a variety of social action behaviors designed to change public policy. They advocated for a guaranteed income plan and sought to enroll all eligible people on welfare rolls. Other groups which include social workers were the Association of Black Social Workers and the Women of the American Revolution. Both of these groups felt that tradition social work agendas were not addressing their needs (Trattner, 1989).

In response to mounting pressures from within and outside the profession, established social work organizations and schools of social work addressed the concerns of the new coalitions. The 1969 National Conferences on Social Welfare agreed to provide a forum at the 1970 conference where the concerns of the groups would be presented. Schools of social work were charged with adjusting to the changing needs of society. As students pressed for training which would leave them to prepared to take on social issues, many schools added community organization and social policy tracks (Ehrenreich, 1985). Conservative politics dominated the 1970s and 1980s as the Nixon and Reagan administrations held office. Their policies created a shift in funding welfare and social service programs. Social work also shifted toward the conservative, creating the dilemas described in Chapter 1.

Hypotheses

Reasearch question: Do social work students' educational, personal, and professional characteristics affect their attitudes toward the poor, intensity of attitudes toward the poor, and level of social action behavior?

Hypotheses:

1. Social work students' attitude position (favorable-neutral-unfavorable) will increase as does level of education (BSW, MSW, PhD).
2. Social work students' attitude intensity (high-medium-low) will be stronger as the level of education increases.
3. Favorable attitudes toward the poor and emotional involvement with the poor will be associated with the degree of exposure to the poor through professional and volunteer experiences.
4. Favorable attitudes toward the poor and emotional involvement with the poor will be associated with a pattern of choices which reflect a personal commitment to the problem of poverty and the poor.
5. Students' level of social action behavior will be associated with a pattern of choices which reflect a personal commitment to the problem of poverty and the poor.

CHAPTER V

METHODOLOGY

Subjects

The subjects were students enrolled full-time in six schools of social work. This population represented six of the seven schools of social work in the Mid-Atlantic and Southeastern United States that offer Bachelors, Masters, and Doctoral degrees in social work: the main campuses of The University of Alabama, Clark Atlanta University, Florida State University, The University of Georgia, Howard University, and Virginia Commonwealth University. The only school in the population that met the requirement of having all three levels of education and was not included in the research was The University of Tennessee, at which the principal investigator (Paul Baggett) is currently enrolled. The study did not include the investigator's current classmates.

Equal numbers of students were sought from each of the six schools. An equal representation was also pursued from the undergraduate and graduate programs. Seventeen of the eighteen programs solicited participated in the study. A

total of 342 instruments were mailed out, and 243 students responded with their participation in the research. Eleven respondents identified themselves as not being social work students and were not included in analyses. It was felt by the principal investigator that another six respondents did not understand the instructions, and they also were excluded from analyses. Included in data analysis were 227 students. The sample included 56 undergraduate students, 88 Masters students, and 83 doctoral students.

For the undergraduate and graduate programs, the instrument was administered to a class within each program during a one-hour class meeting and collected at the end of the meeting. This sampling method was used because it was less disruptive of the school's program and less disturbing to the students selected than assembling a list of all the students in each school and each program and randomly selecting the subjects. Also, this sampling method minimized the chances of disproportionate representation from certain colleges and degree programs. It allowed the investigator to take a "natural" group (such as a class within the school) as the unit of sampling. This process was also more administratively convenient and economically feasible. Data collected from entire classes will be more useful at a later time to both the investigator and the colleges and will form a better basis for research (Thorndike, 1971). Also, administering the instrument

during a class meeting was designed to facilitate a better response rate than could be expected by mailing the instruments directly to all students and requesting that they mail them back.

Doctoral classes are usually quite small, including only 5 to 10 students. After the first two years in the program, most doctoral students are through with classwork and become engaged in independent research projects in order to complete their dissertation requirements, so administering the instrument to a class of doctoral students within each program would not have yielded enough participants from this group to make comparisons with the other two degree programs. Consequently, all doctoral students in the population were asked to participate.

Design

The project consisted of a survey design. Several initial steps were taken in order to meet the requirements of The University of Tennessee Human Subjects Review Board. A letter describing the research and requesting cooperation was mailed to deans of each school of social work on December 11, 1992. Follow-up phone calls were conducted to identify schools that had agreed to participate. Any concerns or questions the deans may have had were discussed at that time. Each of the deans at the above-mentioned schools of social work agreed to participate. On January

23, 1993, another letter was sent to each dean. This letter requested they forward to the principal investigator a brief statement indicating their willingness to participate in the study. Each dean cooperated by providing such a statement.

Also during the telephone conversations with the deans, each identified the program chair or a representative in their school who would be the appropriate contact person. These contact persons were sent letters describing the research and requesting their cooperation. The letter included specifically what was being requested of each of them, and they were encouraged to share the information with their staff.

After securing he cooperation from the contact persons, the principal investigator gave each the option of having him come to their campuses administer the instrument himself. Having a representative from each program administer the instrument was suggested so that it could be done at their convenience and at a least disruptive time to their program.

All contact persons in the undergraduate and graduate program chose to be responsible for the administration of the instrument at their campuses. Doctoral contact persons were either to distribute the questionnaires themselves or to provide the principal investigator with the names and addresses of their students. Two doctoral contact persons chose to distribute the instruments via the students' on-

campus mailboxes. The students at these schools were asked to return the completed instruments directly to the principal investigator. For the other three programs, the contact person provided the researcher with their mailing list. Instruments were mailed directly to the homes of the students in these programs. A cover letter explaining the project was mailed along with the instruments (appendix B), and these students also were asked to return the instruments directly to the researcher. The contact person at Clark Atlanta University was unresponsive to numerous attempts to recruit the program, so the doctoral students from Clark Atlanta University were not part of the study.

The survey at hand used written questionnaires that were mailed to the schools' contact person. Nachimas and Nachimas (1981) listed several advantages and disadvantages of survey research using mailed questionnaires. The benefits of survey research include lower cost, reduction in biasing error, greater anonymity, considered answers and consultations, and accessibility. The flaws are that mail questionnaires require simple questions, there is no opportunity to probe, there is no control over who fills out the questionnaire, and they typically have a low response rate (pp. 180-181). The following section will briefly discuss the manner in which these advantages and disadvantages of using mailed questionnaires in survey research apply to this study.

For researchers attempting to include a large number of subjects in their samples, the lower cost of mailing survey instruments has made it the most popular method. "The mail questionnaire does not require a trained staff of interviewers; all it needs is the cost of planning, sampling, duplicating, mailing, and providing stamped, self-addressed envelopes for the returns" (p. 180). The geographic area covered in the sample ranged from Washington, DC to Tallahassee, Florida. The travel, meals, and lodging costs associated with personally administering the instruments at each location would have been difficult to absorb by the principal investigator.

An individual's attitude toward the poor is a personal matter. When responding to such sensitive material, one wants to assure that his or her identity remains anonymous. Societal and professional expectations suggest that social work students have favorable dispositions toward the needy. Negative ramifications could result from being identified as having professionally undesirable attitudes. The perception that others may become aware of one's responses could discourage his or her participation. Subjects may avoid personal interviews where this would occur. The mailed questionnaire allows the respondent to remain anonymous, hence making him or her more comfortable in participating. This, in turn, assists in obtaining the desired response rates.

The statements which comprise the list used in the instrument used in this effort purposefully represent a wide range of viewpoints. Many of them are controversial and reflective of opposing ideologies. There are no right or wrong answers, rather subjects are asked to judge the statements objectively as representing a favorable or unfavorable attitude toward the underclass. The nature of this evaluation process requires a type of mental weighing process. It is important that the respondent be allowed to devote the time he or she needs to complete the task, and mailing the instruments provided this opportunity. Making available sufficient time to answer the questions thoughtfully is not always possible with personal interviews, which normally require immediate answers.

In order to be able to generalize the results of this survey, the principal investigator wanted to include students from different schools in the population. By mailing questionnaires, greater accessibility to the students was obtained than would have been afforded through personal interviews. The time and expense associated with training enough interviewers to reach the sample and paying for their travel would have been prohibitive. Also, by mailing the questionnaires, any biasing errors that may have resulted from differences in the interviewers was reduced.

One of the disadvantages of mailing the instruments was that there existed no opportunity for any clarification of

instructions. Although detailed instructions accompanied the instrument, it cannot be assured that all respondents achieved the desired understanding of how to complete the scale. Six respondents did not seem to comprehend the instructions for completing the instrument. On two of the questions, several students indicated that they were not sure how to respond. Personal interviews would have facilitated clarification of the intent of items. The interviewer could have probed ambiguous responses to assure the respondent was answering the items according to the intended instructions.

Another limitation of mailed questionnaires is that the researcher typically has no control over who fills out the questionnaire. In this study, the principal investigator was confident that the instrument was administered to social work classes only. However, non-social work majors may take these classes. Eleven such students were found among the sample. Given that this project is concerned only with the attitudes of social work students, the responses of the non-social work majors had to be excluded from data analysis.

Probably the most significant disadvantages of mailing questionnaires is the potential for a low response rate. The participation rate for mail surveys is typically lower than that for personal interviews. It is important to collect enough data to provide support for the criteria suggested by the design. At each school, the principal

investigator went through a contact person who agreed to select a social work class in that program. the contact person also arranged for a student to distribute the instrument during a scheduled class meeting. This method provided an environment where the students did not have to each be responsible for getting their completed instrument to the researcher. Rather in a sealed envelope, the designated student forwarded all completed instruments from each respective class to the contact person. The contact person then mailed all the instruments together to the principal investigator.

Each contact person with whom this arrangement was reached cooperated by returning the instruments. For the doctoral programs in which the instruments were mailed directly to the students' homes, self-addressed stamped envelopes were provided. Seventy-two percent of the students in the sample completed the instrument. The response rate for Baccalaureate programs was 60%. The return rate for Masters programs was 71% and 67% for the Doctoral programs. These rates were much higher than the 20 to 40 percent that is typical of most mail surveys (Nachimas & Nachimas, 1981).

The instruments were color-coded according to level of education. They were also numerically coded to ensure all pages of each completed instrument were kept together. A consent letter for study participation informed subjects of

the nature of the research (appendix A). Subjects were also informed of the voluntary status of their participation and their ability to discontinue at any time during the administration. Each subject received $1.00 stapled to the last page of the instrument. This was done to encourage each subject to complete the instrument.

The each contact person had been offered the option of either allowing the principal investigator to pay postage or for him to come to their campuses to pick them up. Only the principal investigator and a statistical consultant had access to the data. Only the principal investigator had access to the consent letters for study participation that contain the names of the respondents. The completed instruments and consent letters for study participation were kept in separate locked file cabinets in the principal investigator's home.

Data Collection

Attitude scales determine attitude position from a point occupied on a continuum. This point represents the product of an individual's collective responses to items contained in the instrument. The items of an effective instrument must successfully discriminate between favorable and unfavorable attitudes by spreading people out. The broader the range of variability offered by the instrument, the more effective the instrument is in distinguishing

between favorable and unfavorable attitude positions.

In this survey, the dependent variables were 'attitude toward the poor' (positive-neutral-negative) and 'intensity of attitude.' These two dependent variables were measured by The Disguised Structured Instrument for the Assessment of Attitudes Toward the Poor (AATP). Developed by Peterson (1967), the AATP allows a broad range of variability (appendix C). Attitude position scores on the AATP may lie between 40 and 440. Attitude intensity scores fall between 0.5 and 150. The number of response categories offered by the AATP allows a wide latitude for the placement of items. There are 11 response categories in the AATP. The instrument has advantages in its capabilities to spread people out. Likert-type and most other attitude scales restrict the available response range to 5 categories.

The instrument consists of 40 selected statements about the poor. In the administration of the scale, subjects are asked to judge each statement by indicating on an eleven-point gamut whether they think it represents a favorable or unfavorable attitude toward the poor. The list contains anchor items for the favorable and unfavorable ends of the instrument: the majority of items are neutral and thus easily displaceable (Sherif, Sherif, & Nebergall, 1965). Subjects will displace neutral statements to the opposite end of the instrument from their own positions (Helson, 1959; Orcutt, 1964). The instrument yields a quantifiable

measure of the subjects' attitude position (favorable or unfavorable) and the intensity with which they hold the positions (Baggett & Orten, 1991).

Attitude positions are believed to reflect the cognitive element of attitudes. The higher the score on the AATP, the more positive the attitude toward the poor. Attitude intensity is considered to be a function of the degree of emotional involvement the subjects have with the object of the attitude. Intensity is a factor that helps determine the influence of attitudes on the behaviors of those who hold them and the extent to which attitudes are susceptible to change. The higher the score, the more intense the attitude. Intensity scores do not indicate whether the attitudes were more strongly favorable or unfavorable toward the poor, only how strongly they are held (Grimm and Orten, 1973).

Pro-poor and anti-poor groups were used to examine whether the instrument could differentiate the two. Peterson (1967) compared members of Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA) with members of a conservative political group who actively opposed assistance programs. Significant differences were found. Fox (1968), used college students whose attitudes toward the poor were known. The instrument successfully distinguished between the two.

Fox also looked at the reliability using college students. They were tested and retested in five weeks. He

reported a reliability coefficient of .662 for the intensity measure and .765 for the position measure (Gross & Passmore, 1981).

The Assessment of Attitudes Toward the Poor does not directly ask the subjects about their attitudes toward the poor. It asks them to evaluate statements made about the poor. There are no questions, only judgements. The instrument is less sensitive to socially desirable response sets than instruments directly asking a subject to identify her or his attitudes toward the poor. Orten (1979) added that it is "disguised" in that knowing one's attitude was being measured would not necessarily prevent a valid performance.

A concern regarding attitude scales is that they can become outdated. Political, social, and economic currents affect how people view the poor. The items which make up the Assessment of Attitudes the Poor contain beliefs central to the way the poor are viewed and treated. Many of these beliefs have existed since the disadvantaged were identified as such.

In this survey, the independent variables were collected by a 33-item questionnaire (appendix D). The instrument addresses areas of social work education, profession-related activities, characteristics of the population, and ideas about social work and poverty. The primary independent variables of interest in the research

are (1) level of social work education (undergraduate, graduate, doctoral), (2) level of exposure to the poor, (3) career plans, (4) level of social action behavior, and (5) area of concentration or primary interest.

Several other variables were collected and included in analyses. The number of ethics classes the subjects had and the time in their life they decided to go into social work were explored for their affects on the dependent variables. The instrument posed questions probing the ideas subjects had about the reasons for the existence of poverty and what social work's major mission for the 1990s should be. One item dealt with the respondents' impression of what the "official" poverty level for a family of four should be. The following descriptive information was elicited as well: age, sex, race, marital status, number of children, number of siblings, household income while growing up, political affiliation, NASW membership, and voter registration status.

Data Analysis

To illustrate the main effects of the independent variables on the dependent variables, multivariate analysis of variance procedures (MANOVA) were utilized. This technique was useful in indicating any differences in levels of the independent variables, such as level of education (undergraduate, graduate, doctoral), on attitudes toward the

poor. Where differences were found between levels, a multiple comparison procedure, such as Wilk's Lambda, was used to show where the differences were.

Similar steps were taken to look for differences within the levels of the independent variables. These included analysis regarding differences in the undergraduate programs on attitudes toward the poor among subjects in the different areas of concentration or primary interest.

Multivariate analysis of variance procedures were also useful when attempting to identify the presence of interaction effects. These procedures explored whether the effects of one independent variable differ at varying levels of the other. Illustrative of such an inquiry was the search for differences among the three levels of social work education in the effect of exposure to the poor on attitudes toward the poor.

Subjects were classified into groups of high and low attitudes toward the poor. Cross-classification tables with a chi-square measure of association were employed. These rectangular tables contain frequency counts of outcomes. They identified which personal, educational, and professional attributes were associated with high and low position scores and high and low levels of emotional involvement.

Frequency distribution tables were presented to describe the sample. Charts and graphs were employed where

appropriate to present findings. Tables of means and standard deviations illustrated comparisons of data.

While the internal validity of a research endeavor is a function of the project's design, the external validity is a function of the sampling method. The external validity of a research effort is important in order to generalize the findings to a population. To enhance generalization of findings, the researcher must select the sample so it is as similar as possible to the population as a whole. The composition of the sample involved in this study was similar to the population of social work students in the United States in all areas which were reported by the Council on Social Work Education (age, ethnicity, gender, concentration of study, and concentration of field instruction) (Lennon, 1993).

Random sampling is the ideal method for maximizing the ability to generalize the findings of a study to a population. Two factors prevented this project from incorporating a random sample. One reason was that the deans of the schools targeted for participation could not guarantee the cooperation of each program in helping the principal investigator generate a list of all students in the program, randomly selecting a sample from those students, and administering the instrument to those students. Several deans cited program disruption and time and energy demands on the staff as barriers. The other

reason for the lack of a random sample was that due to the small number of doctoral students in the population, it was necessary to request that all doctoral students participate in the study to yield a sufficient number for comparison with the other programs. Difficulties in obtaining enough doctoral students for an adequate sample may be a primary reason why there have been no prior studies which have assessed their attitudes toward the poor.

Several strategies were employed to attempt to increase the external validity of the research:

(1) The principal investigator had no control over whether any student in the schools or programs was involved in the study. A form of cluster sampling was used where the faculty representatives of the undergraduate and graduate programs were asked to randomly select a class within their program to participate in the study.

(2) With a few exceptions, studies assessing students' attitudes toward the poor have been conducted at single universities. In order to increase the external validity of this study, the instrument was administered to students at six universities.

The emphasis of this research was to investigate and compare the influences of educational, personal, and professional characteristics on attitude position, attitude intensity, and social action behavior. The research did not aim to compare the six universities on these attributes.

The nonrandom nature of the sampling method could not ensure that the information reported on the universities would provide a valid indication of the students' performance as representative of the school. To avoid drawing potentially inaccurate conclusions regarding the universities' performance, schools were not compared.

Since a sample is only a portion of a population, observations obtained from a sample may not be representative of the observations which would have been obtained if the entire population had been studied. The chi-square test for inferring the probability of a relationship between variables in a population indicates whether the relationships observed in a sample are representative of those which would have occurred if the entire population had been studied. The test compares the observed distribution with a hypothetical distribution of variables for a population in which there is no relationship between variables. The larger the total difference, the greater the probability that the observed distribution was not drawn from a population similar to the hypothetical distribution created for a population with no relationship between variables. In other words, the larger the difference, the more likely the observations did not occur by chance, rather occurred because the sample was representative (Eckhardt & Ermann, 1977, pp. 180-182).

Table 1 presents the distribution of students by school and program. In the case of this research, the total chi-square value was 24.37. This value would appear to imply that the odds that the sample was drawn from a population in which there is no relationship between school and program is less than one in one hundred. Therefore, the relationship is likely to be accepted as significant and unlikely to have occurred as a result of selecting a sample from a population in which the variables are unrelated.

This inference however, must be viewed with caution. A sample is representative of the population from which it is selected if all members of the population have an equal chance of being selected in the sample (Rubin & Babbie, 1989). Unfortunately, the chairperson of Clark-Atlanta's doctoral program failed to cooperate with the research. Consequently, doctoral students from Clark-Atlanta University did not have an opportunity to be represented in the sample. The lack of observations in the cell designated for Clark-Atlanta doctoral students differentially inflated the total chi-square value. Statistically significant findings in the research on variables such as: career plan, explanation for the existence of poverty, NASW membership, peer expectations, and race may have been affected differently by the involvement of Clark-Atlanta's doctoral students.

Table 1: Distribution of Students by School and Program

	BSW	MSW	PhD
The University of Alabama	12	14	19
Clark-Atlanta University	9	16	0
Florida State University	10	10	17
The University of Georgia	8	22	13
Howard University	6	14	14
Virginia Commonwealth University	11	12	20
	56	88	83

An important feature of this research endeavor was the inclusion of doctoral students. Multiple problems associated with recruiting ample doctoral students for a study such as this one have been mentioned previously in this dissertation. A research design strategy incorporated in this study to increase the external validity involved assessing students at six universities rather than at just one university as has been the norm in studying students' attitudes toward the poor. This strategy however, also contributed to problems with external validity. The differential representation of programs restricts the ability to generalize findings to the population of social work students across the United States. The effect of the differential representation has not been determined, however, this issue raises questions regarding whether the differential representation may bias results.

Nevertheless, this research is useful in describing the characteristics of a large population and offers capabilities to make assertions about the students in the population. Despite the lack of involvement of one program, students in 17 of the 18 programs in the population did have a chance of being represented in the sample. As is generally consistent of survey research, this study is strong on reliability, but has some weaknesses on validity.

CHAPTER VI

RESULTS

The following section will present the findings of the research in four parts: (1) the significant main effects of the independent variables on the dependent variables, (2) the significant findings from 2 x 2 interactions of level of education with each of the other independent variables, (3) the significant findings of measures of association which used independent variables hypothesized to associated with high/low categories of the dependent variables, and (4) descriptive information, including frequency tables and cross-tabulated tables, for independent variables which did not produce statistically significant differences or associations. For independent variables which housed statistically significant findings, information describing the sample will be presented when the variable is first discussed in this chapter.

Main Effects

Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) procedures for testing the significance of differences among means were

used to observe the effects of the independent variables on the two dependent variables. In this research, MANOVA used Wilk's Lamba multivariate test of significance. The alpha level was set at .05 for the Wilk's Lamba and, where significant main effects were discovered, Tukey's multiple pairwise comparison procedure was used with an alpha level of .10. For each independent variable that contained statistically significant differences, means, standard deviations (SD), F-values, degrees of freedom, and p-values are presented in tables. The tables will also indicate the levels of the independent variables which were significantly different.

Level of Education (Table 2; Figure 1). One-quarter of the sample were BSW students, 38.7 % were MSW students, and 36.5% were PhD students. A statistically significant difference (F=3.436, df=226, p=.008) was discovered between position scores among the three levels of education. Pairwise comparisons revealed that MSW students were significantly more positive in their attitudes toward the poor than BSW students. While no significant differences were discovered among levels of education in attitude intensity scores, MSW students were the most intense and doctoral students were the least intense in their attitudes toward the poor.

Career Plans (Table 3). Students' career plans were rather evenly distributed among four areas of social work;

Table 2: Level of Education

	BSW	MSW	PhD
Sample size	56	88	83
POSITION			
mean	299*	316*	309
standard deviation	31	28	27
INTENSITY			
mean	52	55	49
standard deviation	43	39	36

F = 3.436 df = 224 p = .008

* = comparison significant at alpha = .10

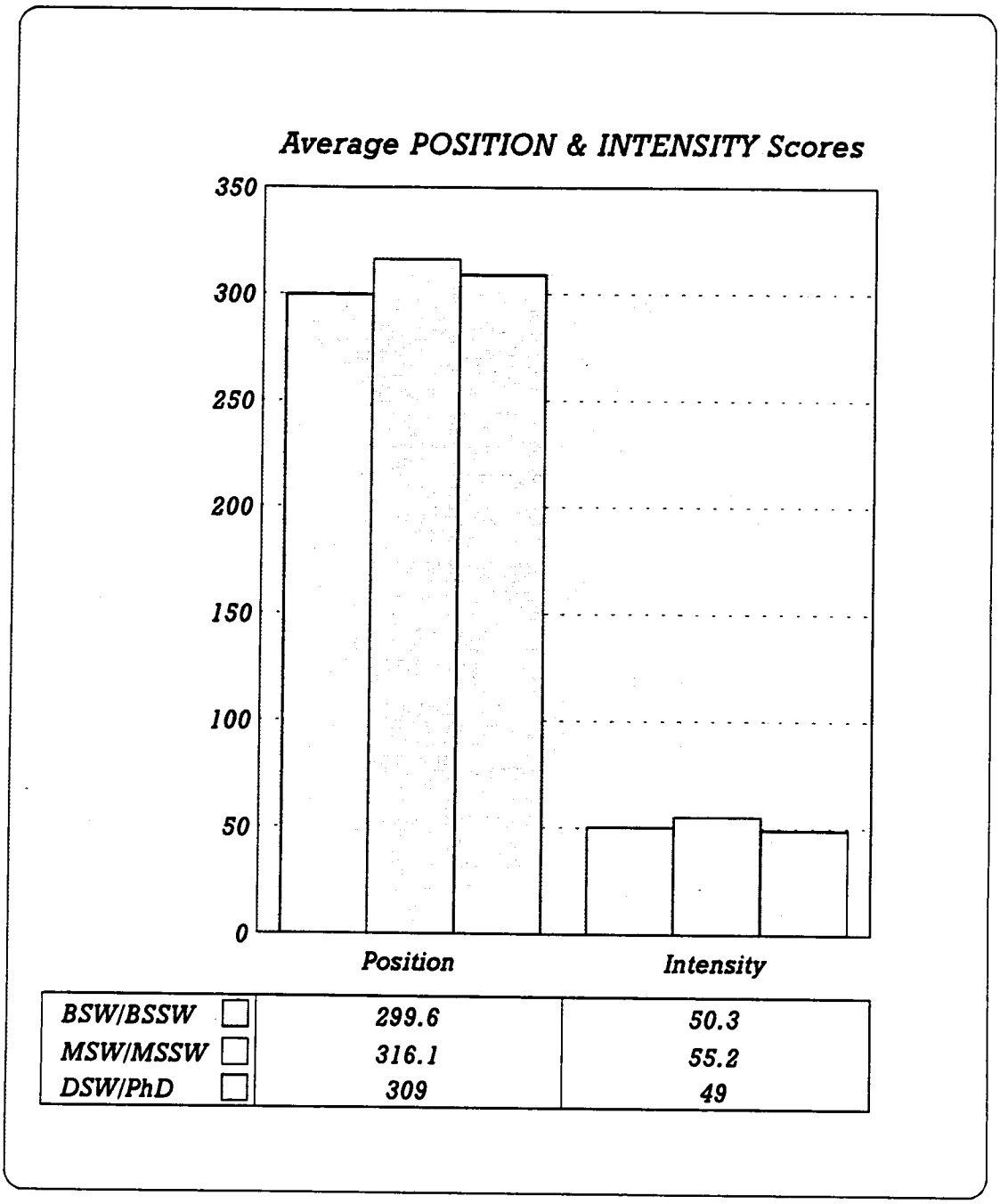


Figure 1: Level of Education

Table 3: Career Plans

Variable Levels	n	Position Mean	Position SD	Intensity Mean	Intensity SD
Administration/policy	35	313**	25	49	32
Family and children services	40	308**	31	49	41
Gerontological social work	3	321	.5	78	39
Medical social work	18	282***	41	33*	26
Psychotherapy/counseling	40	314**	24	67*	48
Public welfare	8	308	31	65	48
Research	13	313**	20	53	50
School social work	11	322**	26	55	33
Social work education	38	314**	30	49	35
Other/multiple	19	302	25	42	26

F = 1.868 **df=215** **p = .0168**

* - comparison significant at alpha = .10

** - comparison significant from *** at alpha = .10

17.8% of the students in the sample planned to go into psychotherapy, 17.8% planned to go into family and children services, 16.9% planned to go into social work education, and 15.6% planned to go into administration and policy. Together these four areas of social work accounted for the career plans of 68.1% of the students in the sample. The least popular career choices were gerontological social work (1.3%) and public welfare (3.6%).

Among the three levels of social work education, students' career plans were less evenly distributed. In the undergraduate programs, 32.1% of the students planned to work in family and children services and 21.4% planned a career in medical social work. In the masters programs, 20.4% planned to go into family and children services, 21.5% planned to go into administration and policy, and 28.4% planned a career in psychotherapy. Among doctoral students, 14.4% planned to work in research, 15.6% intended to work in administration and policy, and 39.7% planned to enter social work education.

An examination of the students' career plans and levels of social work education suggested that choosing certain areas of social work practice were related to levels of social work education. The number of undergraduate and masters students planning to work in family and children services was the same (n=18), but the number of doctoral students planing to enter family and children services (n=4)

was less considerably. Also, the number of undergraduate students and doctoral students planning a career in psychotherapy were similar (n=8 and n=7 respectively), while masters students accounted for 62.5% (n=25) of aspiring psychotherapists. Finally, doctoral students accounted for 92.3% of the students in the sample planning a career in research and 86.8% of the students planning a career in social work education.

Statistically significant differences (F=1.868, df=224, p=.016) were found within the ten levels of career plans. Students who chose medical social work were different on both position and intensity scores from students planning a career in several other areas. On position scores, students planning a career in medical social work (n=18) were significantly less favorable in their attitudes toward the poor than those students planning a career in either family and children services (n=40), psychotherapy (n=40), social work education (n=38), administration and policy (n=35), research (n=13), and school social work (n=11). On intensity scores, those students planning a career in medical social work were significantly less intense in their attitudes than those students planning a career in psychotherapy.

Explanation for the Existence of Poverty (Table 4). Students were given four ideologically different explanations for the existence of poverty. They were asked

Table 4: Explanation for the Existence of Poverty

Variable Levels	n	Position Mean	Position SD	Intensity Mean	Intensity SD
Group explanation	31	298	38	42	30
Individual explanation	6	301	33	84	74
Structural explanation	154	313	27	56*	39
Technological explanation	28	308	26	38*	30
Multiple explanations	5	309	23	34	30

F = 2.278 **df = 219** **p = .0214**

* - comparison significant at alpha = .10

to select the explanation which most closely reflected theirviews about why poverty exists. A solid majority (68%) selected the structural explanation (Powerful economic and political interests are fundamentally opposed to the solution of the problem of poverty) and a distinct minority (2.7%) chose the individual explanation (Poor people are not adequately motivated to take advantage of existing opportunities). Also, 13.8% of the students supported the group explanation (People representing different interests do not often enough sit down together to work the problem out) and 12.5% indicated the technical explanation (We do not possess the necessary knowledge and techniques to eradicate poverty).

There was a statistically significant difference (F=2.278, df=223, p=.021) in the levels of reasons for the existence of poverty. Those students who believe poverty is due to structural factors in society were significantly more intense in their attitudes toward the poor than students who believe that poverty exists because society does not possess the techniques to eradicate poverty.

N.A.S.W. Membership (Table 5). Sixty percent of the students in the sample were members of the National Association of Social Workers. Within the three programs, 30% of the BSW students, 65% of the MSW students and 73% of the doctoral students were N.A.S.W. members. A statistically significant difference (F=6.282, df=224,

Table 5: N.A.S.W. Membership

Variable Levels	n	Position Mean	Position SD	Intensity Mean	Intensity SD
N.A.S.W. member	135	315*	25	54	40
Not a member of N.A.S.W.	90	302*	33	48	38

F = 6.282 **df = 223** **p = .0022**

* - comparison significant at p=.10

p=.002) was found among position scores between students who were members of N.A.S.W. and students were not members of N.A.S.W. Those students who identified themselves as being N.A.S.W. members (n=135) were significantly more positive in their attitudes toward the poor than students who indicate that they were not N.A.S.W. members (n=90).

Race (Table 6). Significant differences were discovered between races of social work students (F= 2.342, df=224, p=.0180). Only two categories of race included enough subjects to make a reliable comparison: "African American" (n=78) and "White" (n=132). Nearly 59% of the

Table 6: Race

Variable Levels	n	Position Mean	Position SD	Intensity Mean	Intensity SD
African American	78	303	37	57	44
Arabic	1	289	--	31	--
Asian	6	318	19	44	13
White	132	313	26	49	36
Other	8	301	30	51	51
F = 2.342	**df = 220**		**p = .0180**		

students in the sample were white and almost 35% were African American. Within the programs, African American students accounted for 53% of the BSW programs, 41% of the students in the MSW programs, and 16% of the doctoral students. White students accounted for 42% of the BSW programs, 57% of the students in the MSW programs, and 72% of the students in the doctoral program. For African Americans, as the level of education increased, the percentage of African Americans in the programs decreased. The opposite was true for white students, as the level of

education increased, so did the percentage of white students in the programs. Pairwise comparisons did not indicate any significant differences between races. However, the mean position score for Whites (313.41) were considerably higher than the position scores for African Americans (303.47). Also, the attitude intensity mean score for African Americans (56.79) was higher than the mean score for Whites (49.59).

Peer expectations (Table 7). Over half of the students in the sample believed that their peers expected them to think favorably about the poor. Over one-fifth of the sample were unclear about their peers expectations of them and 14.2% felt that their peers expected them to be neutral in their disposition toward the poor. Less than half of the BSW students reported they believed that their peers expected them to think favorably toward the poor and 28.5% of the BSW students were unclear what their peers expected them to think in terms of attitudes toward the needy. The majority of MSW students (65%) thought that their peers expected them to think favorably about the indigent and 11.3% were unclear about their peers' expectations. For doctoral programs, 56% of the students believed that their peers expected them to have a favorable view of the less fortunate and 26.5% were unclear about what orientation toward the underclass they were expected to possess.

Table 7: How do you believe the majority of the students in your program expect you to think about the poor?

Variable Levels	n	Positive Mean	Positive SD	Intensity Mean	Intensity SD
Very favorably	56	317	24	64**	44
Somewhat favorably	75	308	28	45*	35
Neutral	32	309	35	59	44
Somewhat unfavorably	6	290	49	69	62
Very unfavorably	4	325	13	79	16
They don't care what I think	5	321	54	51	47
I'm unclear what they expect me to think	48	303	24	39*	25

F = 2.568 **df = 219** **p = .0027**

* - comparison significant from ** at alpha = .10

Measures of Association

It is generally accepted that chi-square tests require a relatively large number of observations because the sampling distribution of the test statistic approximates the sampling distribution given in the chi-square table only when the number is large. Expected frequencies of at least five in each cell is necessary to make use of this test (Blalock, 1960). Although the number of observations in some cells was below five, cells with less than ten observations were not considered for determining statistical differences.

Social Action Behavior. Only 8 students (3.5%) responded that they had not engaged in any form of social action behavior over the past two years and 68% had engaged in three or more social action activities. In order to investigate whether social action behavior was associated with a pattern of choices which reflect a personal commitment to the problem of poverty and the poor, social action behavior was entered as a dependent variable. Social action activity was divided into three levels (high-medium-low) for use in cross-tabulated tables with a chi-square measure of association. Several variables, which were assumed by the researcher to hold characteristics valuable in attempting to indicate one's level of commitment to the poor (Major area of concentration, Social Works's major mission for the 1990s, When decided to pursue an education

in Social Work, Explanation for the existence of poverty, Career plans, Peer expectations), were assessed for their influence on social action behavior. Three significant associations were discovered among these characteristics.

Major Area of Concentration (Table 8). Students were asked to indicate the primary field of study they were involved in. Of those students who had selected a primary concentration (6.6% of the sample were undeclared and another 6.6% chose multiple areas or areas not listed on the questionnaire), family and children services was the most popular area. Studying family and children services was the most popular choice for BSW and MSW students while research was the most popular choice for PhD students. Considering the entire sample, 28% of the students were in the family and children services concentration, 23% were primarily studying mental health/psychotherapy, and 18% were in administration and policy. The least popular choices for primary field of study were gerontology (1.5%) and public welfare (1.5%).

Interest in studying areas of social work varies between the levels of education. In the BSW programs where 20% the students had not declared a primary area of interest and 16% chose multiple areas/other areas, of the students who had declared a major area of concentration 39% were in the family and children services concentration and 25% were studying school social work. Among the MSW students who had

Table 8: Social Action Behavior and Concentration

Major area of concentration in program		ADMIN /POLICY	FAMILY AND CHILDREN SERVICES	GERONTOLOGY	MEDICAL SOCIAL WORK	MENTAL HEALTH/ PSYCHO-THERAPY	PUBLIC WELFARE
Social Action Behavior	LOW	3	14	0	3	8	1
	MEDIUM	8	20	1	5	13	1
	HIGH	25	21	2	4	25	1

Major area of concentration in program (Continued)		RESEARCH	SCHOOL SOCIAL WORK	SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION	UNDECLARED	OTHER
Social Action Behavior $\chi^2_{(20)} = 32.369$ $p = .040^3$	LOW	3	0	2	3	5
	MEDIUM	4	9	3	6	8
	HIGH	13	3	5	6	2

3 = significant at p=.05

chosen a primary area of study (95% had), 36% were in the family and children services concentration, 30% had chosen to study mental/health psychotherapy, and 21% were most interested in administration and planning. In the doctoral programs, 26% were primarily involved in research, 23% were concentrating on mental health/psychotherapy, and 22% were studying administration and policy.

The only area of concentration which housed double-digit numbers of students across all three levels of education was family and children services. Primary fields of study which were popular within some programs, but unpopular in another programs. Only one BSW student was in the administration and policy concentration while 18 MSW and 17 PhD students were in that area. There were 3 BSW students studying mental health/psychotherapy but 25 MSW and 18 PhD students who most interested in mental health/psychotherapy. All 20 of the research students in the sample were in doctoral programs. Finally, there were no doctoral students, but 9 BSW students who were in the school social work concentration.

In the sample, the administration and policy students were highest in their attitude position scores, followed closely by school social work and mental health/psychotherapy students. Students interested medical social work were the lowest in attitude position scores. Attitude intensity scores were similar among students in

four areas: administration and planning, family and children services, mental health/psychotherapy, and research. The students who indicated that their primary area of interest was social work education were by far the lowest in attitude intensity scores and were next to lowest on attitude position scores.

Several major areas of concentration were associated with a high level of social action behavior (Chi-square=32.369, P=.040): administration and policy, counseling/psychotherapy), and research. School social work majors were associated with a medium level of social action behaviors. No primary ares of concentration were associated with a low level of social action behavior.

Time Decided to Pursue an Education in Social Work (Table 9). Students were asked to indicate what time in their academic lives they decided to pursue an education in social work. Less than 10% of the students in the study decided to enter social work education before they graduated from high school and 79% of the students made the decision to pursue an education in social work after they had already entered an undergraduate program.

Among BSW students, 21% chose to pursue an education in social work before they entered an undergraduate program and 70% decided to enter social work education after they had entered an undergraduate program. Less than one-quarter of the MSW students decided on an education in social work

Table 9: Social Action and Time Decided to Pursue an Education in Social Work

When did you decide to pursue an education in SW		BEFORE HS	DURING HS	AFTER HS, BUT BEFORE ENTERING UG PROGRAM	DURING UG PROGRAM	AFTER UG PROGRAM, BUT BEFORE GRADUATE PROGRAM	DURING GRADUATE PROGRAM	OTHER
Social Action Behavior $\chi^2_{(12)} = 31.713$ $p = .002^4$	LOW	3	3	2	15	12	4	3
	MEDIUM	0	5	13	37	17	3	3
	HIGH	4	7	4	28	45	6	13

4 = significant at p=.05

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before they entered an undergraduate program, 28% chose to enter social work education after entering an undergraduate program, and 43% did not decide to pursue an education in social work until after they had graduated from an undergraduate program. In the sample of doctoral students, 10% decided on social work education before they attended an undergraduate program, 19% had already entered an undergraduate program before they decided on social work education, 42% chose social work after graduating from an

undergraduate program, and 14% did not decide on social work education until they had entered an graduate program.

The three groups of students who decided to pursue an education in social work either during high school, after graduating from high school but before entering an undergraduate program, and after graduating from an undergraduate program were similarly high in attitude position scores. The group of students that decided to go into social work education during high school were highest in the attitude intensity scores and the students who decided on an education in social work before high school were the lowest in attitude intensity scores.

A statistically significant association (Chi-square=31.713, p=.002) was discovered between the levels of social action behavior and the levels of "when did you decide to pursue an education in social work." Choosing to pursue an education in social work after graduating from an undergraduate program, but before entering a graduate program was associated with the high level of social action behavior. Of those students who decided to pursue an education in social work during an undergraduate program, 46% had a medium level of social action behavior and 35% were in the high category.

Career Plans (Table 10). As was the case for students in the administration and policy concentration, students who were planning a career in administration and policy were

Table 10: Social Action and Career Plans

What are your career plans		ADMIN /POLICY	FAMILY AND CHILDREN SERVICES	GERONTOLOGY SOCIAL WORK	MEDICAL SOCIAL WORK	PSYCHO-THERAPY/ COUNSELING	PUBLIC WELFARE
Social Action Behavior	LOW	0	12	1	3	9	2
	MEDIUM	9	15	1	9	15	2
	HIGH	26	13	1	6	16	4

What are your career plans (Continued)		RESEARCH	SCHOOL SOCIAL WORK	SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION	OTHER
Social Action Behavior $\chi^2_{(18)} = 29.181$ $p = .046^5$	LOW	3	0	7	3
	MEDIUM	3	4	10	10
	HIGH	7	7	21	6

5 = significant at p = .05

associated (Chi-square=29.181, p=.046) a high level of social action behavior. Of the 35 students planning to enter administration and policy as a profession, 74% were high in their social action activity and none of them were in the low range. No areas of career plans were associated with a low level of social action behavior.

Attitude Position and Attitude Intensity. To investigate which student and educational characteristics were associated with high attitude position and attitude intensity scores, the range of scores divided was into high and low categories according to the median values. The medians for position and intensity were, respectively, 310.0 and 27.1. The same variables as were entered for their association with social action behavior were entered for their association with position and intensity scores. Level of social action behavior was added to the list as an independent variable. Two of the characteristics were associated with position or intensity levels.

Peer expectations (Table 11). Chi-square analysis revealed a significant association (Chi-square=13.935, p=.030) of intensity scores and students' beliefs about the expectations of their peers. Students who were unclear how their peers expected them to think about the poor were associated with a low level of intensity. Also, 60% of the students who were unclear about the expectations of their

Table 11: Position/Intensity and Peer Expectations

How do you believe the majority of students in your program expect you to think about the poor		VERY FAVOR-ABLY	SOMEWHAT FAVORABLY	NEUTRAL	SOMEWHAT UNFAVORABLY	VERY UNFAVORABLY	THEY DON'T CARE	UNCLEAR WHAT THEY EXPECT ME TO THINK
POSITION $\chi^2_{(6)}$ = 11.964 p = .063	LOW	19	39	17	5	1	2	29
	HIGH	37	36	15	1	3	3	19
INTENSITY $\chi^2_{(6)}$ = 13.935 p = .030[2]	LOW	22	42	12	3	0	3	31
	HIGH	34	33	20	3	4	2	17

2 = significant at p=.05

peers, were low in position scores. Levels of attitude position approached significance (Chi-square=11.964, p=.063). Two-thirds of the students who believed that their peers expected them to think "very favorably" about the poor were high in attitude position and 60 % of the students who were "unclear what they expect me to think" were in the low position range.

Explanation for the Existence of Poverty (Table 12). The group of students who believed that, "we do not possess the necessary knowledge to eradicate poverty" were associated (Chi-square= 12.134, p=.033) with low attitude intensity scores. The group of subjects who thought that "powerful economic and political interests are fundamentally opposed to the solution of the problem of poverty" were the only group where the majority of students were high in either attitude position or attitude intensity scores.

Career Plan (Table 13). The association between attitude position and career plans approached significance (Chi-square=15.915, p=.069). The widest variation of scores occurred in medical social work and school social work. While 78% of the subjects a planning a career in medical social work were low in position scores, 82% of those planning to practice school social work were high in position scores. Also, 78% of those students planning to enter medical social work were low in attitude intensity scores.

Table 12: Position/Intensity and Explanation for the Existence of Poverty

Which explanations given for the existence of poverty most closely reflects your views		PEOPLE REPRESENTING DIFFERENT INTERESTS DO NOT SIT DOWN TO WORK OUT THE PROBLEM	POOR PEOPLE ARE NOT ADEQUATELY MOTIVATED	POWERFUL ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL INTERESTS ARE OPPOSED TO THE SOLUTION	WE DO NOT POSSESS THE NECESSARY KNOWLEDGE TO ERADICATE POVERTY	MULTIPLE ANSWERS
POSITION $\chi^2_{(4)} = 2.382$ $p = .666$	LOW	16	3	71	17	3
	HIGH	15	3	83	11	2
INTENSITY $\chi^2_{(4)} = 10.520$ $p = .033^1$	LOW	18	2	68	20	4
	HIGH	13	4	86	8	1

1 = significant at p = .05

Table 13: Position/Intensity and Career Plans

What are your career plans		ADMIN /POLICY	FAMILY AND CHILDREN SERVICES	GERONTOLOGY SOCIAL WORK	MEDICAL SOCIAL WORK	PSYCHO-THERAPY/ COUNSELING	PUBLIC WELFARE
POSITION	LOW	18	18	0	14	18	4
	HIGH	17	22	3	4	22	4
INTENSITY	LOW	16	21	0	14	17	2
	HIGH	19	19	3	4	23	6

What are your career plans (Continued)		RESEARCH	SCHOOL SOCIAL WORK	SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION	OTHER
POSITION $\chi^2_{(9)}$ = 15.915 p = .069*	LOW	5	2	20	12
	HIGH	8	9	18	7
INTENSITY $\chi^2_{(9)}$ = 12.134 p = .206	LOW	7	5	20	10
	HIGH	6	6	18	9

* = significant at p = .10

Interaction Effects

Interaction effects are the conditions that exists when the effect of one independent variable differs at different levels of the other independent variables. Closer scrutiny of the effects of the independent variables on the dependent variables can be obtained by analyzing interaction effects. A major goal of this study was to provide information which would be useful to social work educators. For this reason, all independent variables were tested for their interaction with the three levels of social work education. This allowed the three different levels of social work education to be compared with the different levels of each of the other 21 independent variables. This technique located statistically significant interactions among Level of Education and nine other independent variables. An extensive number of interactions investigated (276 in this case). The statistical program used in this study (SAS) does not perform all pairwise comparisons in MANOVA for interaction effects. Referring to the means of the interaction effects allows for interpretation of the levels at which the significant interaction likely occurs. In the following tables, the high and low means scores for the two dependent variables will be marked.

Explanations for the existence of poverty (Table 14; Figure 2; Figure 3). Statistically significant differences were detected (F=1.882, p=.006) on attitude intensity scores

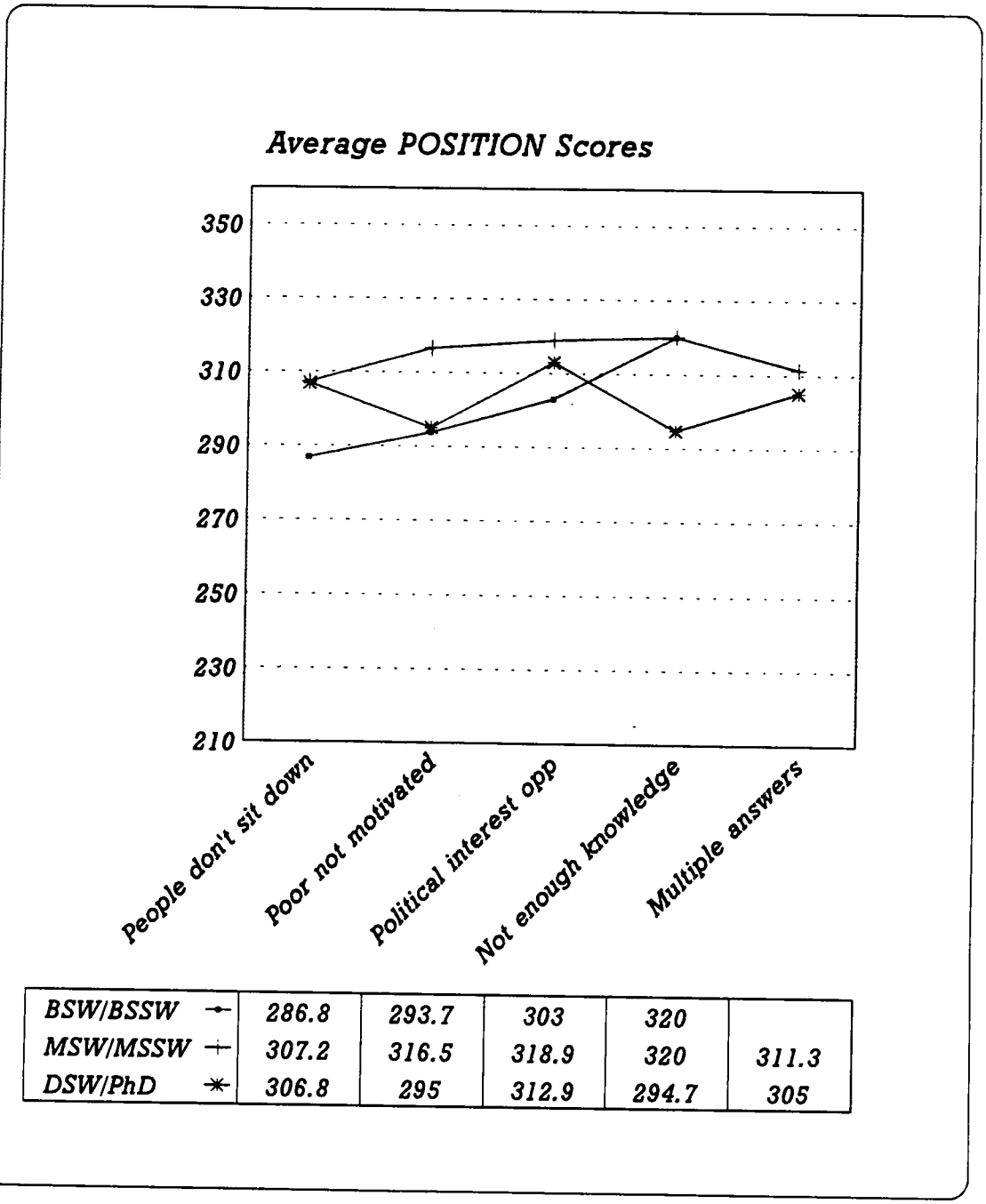
Table 14: Interaction of education and explanation for poverty

Variable Levels	BSW n	MSW n	PhD n	BSW Pos. Mean	BSW Int. Mean	MSW Pos. Mean	MSW Int. Mean	PhD Pos. Mean	PhD Int. Mean
group	13	13	5	287#	44	307	44	307	30
individual	3	2	1	293	108	316	31	295	115
structural	37	56	61	303	46	319	63*	313	56
technology	3	12	13	320	66	320#	43	296	26*

F = 1.882 **df = 210** **p = .0060**

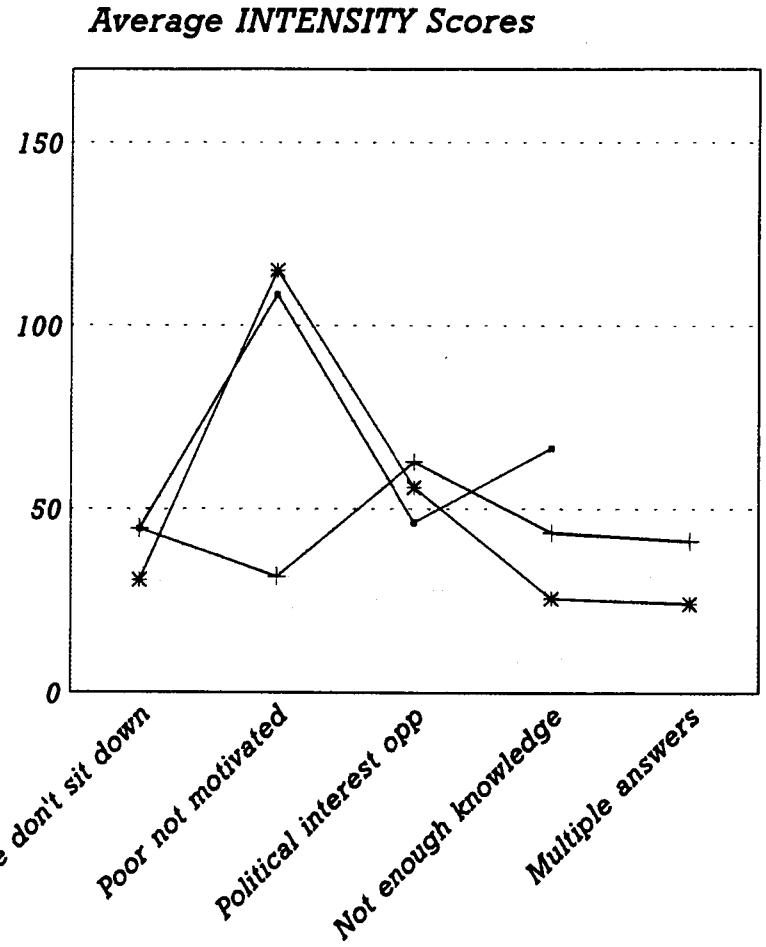
= high and low position scores

* = high and low intensity scores



BSW/BSSW	286.8	293.7	303	320	
MSW/MSSW	307.2	316.5	318.9	320	311.3
DSW/PhD	306.8	295	312.9	294.7	305

Figure 2: Attitude Position and Explanation for the Existence of Poverty



BSW/BSSW	44.6	108.5	46.2	66.5	
MSW/MSSW	44.6	31.5	62.8	43.5	41.2
DSW/PhD	30.5	115.2	55.8	25.6	24.1

Figure 3: Attitude Intensity and Explanation for the Existence of Poverty

between levels of education and the explanations students endorsed for the existence of poverty. The significant interaction likely took place between both the Masters (n=56) and doctoral students (n=61) who chose the structural explanation for the existence of poverty and doctoral students who chose the lack of technology reason (n=13). The two groups who chose the structural explanation were more intense in their attitudes toward the poor.

Years of paid employment in social work with the poor (Table 15; Figure 4; Figure 5). Over two-thirds of the students in the sample had 3 years or less of paid employment in social work with the poor and over one-half of the students had no paid employment experience in a social work job in which they worked with the poor. All BSW students in the sample were low (0-2 years) in years of paid social work employment with the poor. Three-fourths of the MSW student were in the low range of paid social work employment with the poor, 8% were in the medium range (3-8 years), and 16% were in high category (9 years or more). Doctoral students were much more diverse regarding their paid experiences in social work practice with the poor. Thirty-six percent of the doctoral students were in the low-experience category, 30% in the medium category, and 32% in the high range. All three ranges of paid social work experience with the poor were similar in their attitude intensity scores, with those in the low range being slightly

Table 15: Interaction of education and years of employment in Social Work with the poor

Variable Levels	BSW n	MSW n	PhD n	BSW Pos. Mean	BSW Int. Mean	MSW Pos. Mean	MSW Int. Mean	PhD Pos. Mean	PhD Int. Mean
low	54	66	30	299#	51	314	57*	305	45*
medium		7	25			326#	50	313	47
high		14	27			321	50	309	55

F = 2.187 **df = 216** **p = .0116**

= high and low position scores

* = high and low intensity scores

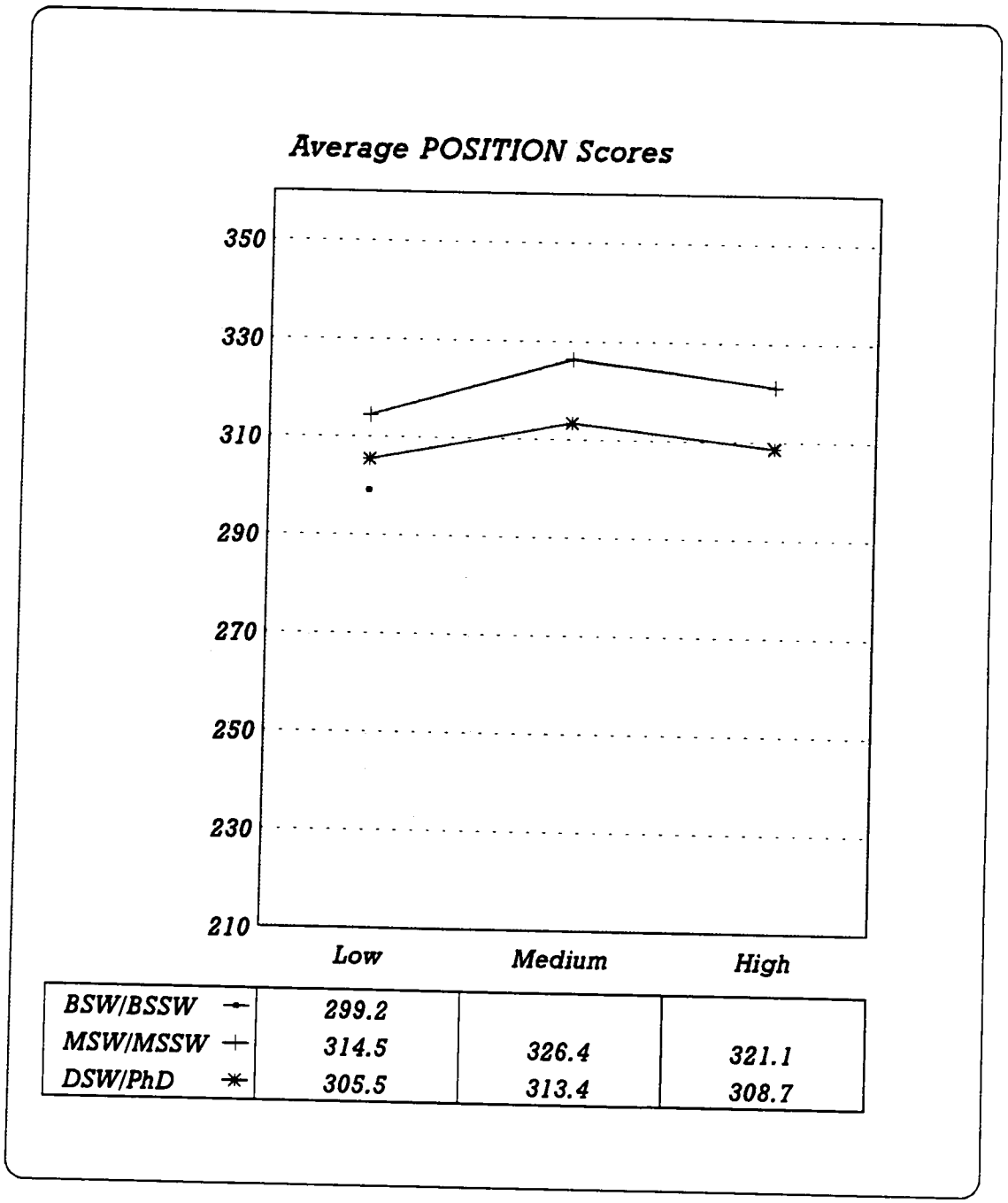
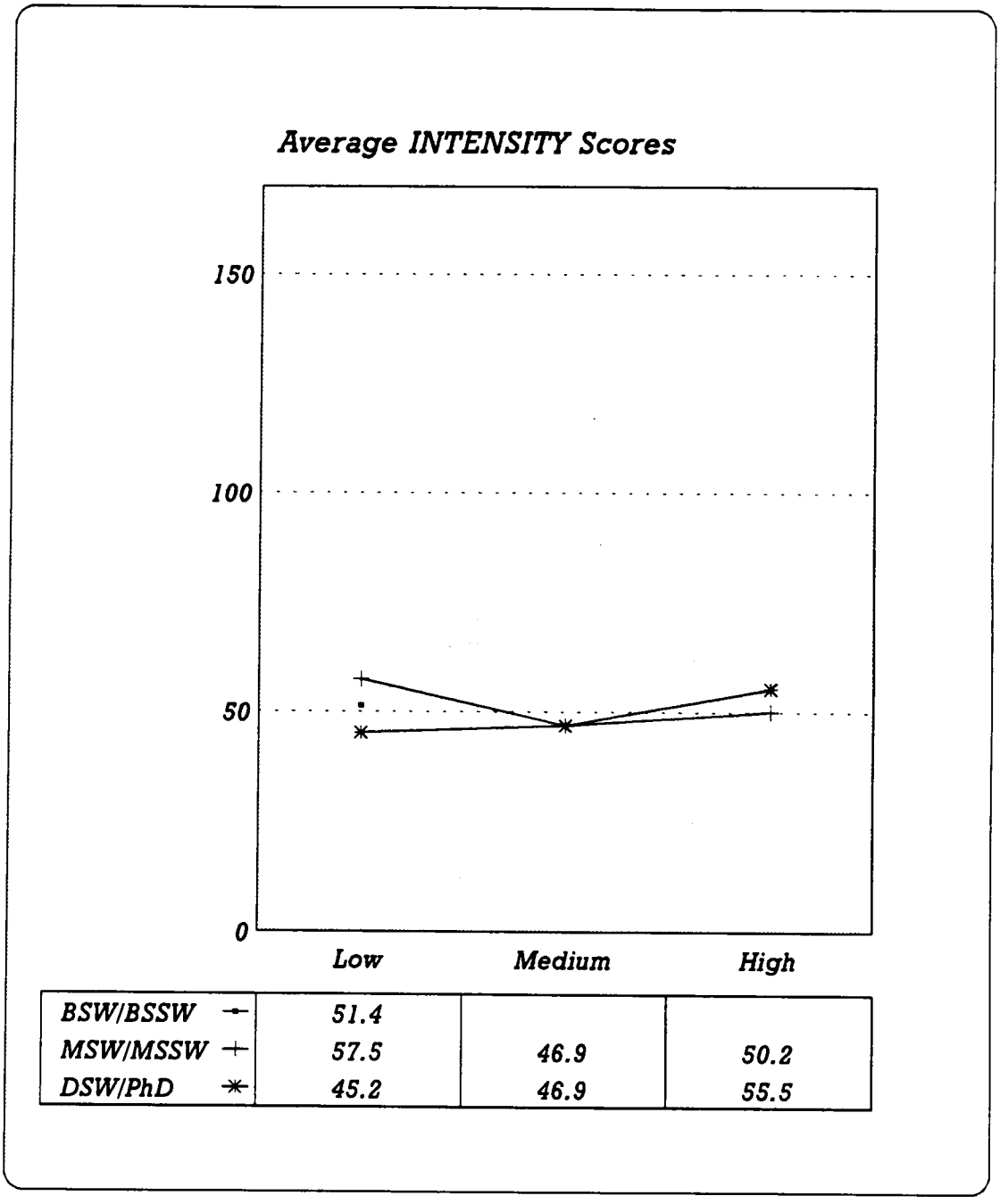


Figure 4: Attitude Position and Years of Paid Employment in Social Work with the Poor



BSW/BSSW	51.4		
MSW/MSSW	57.5	46.9	50.2
DSW/PhD	45.2	46.9	55.5

Figure 5: Attitude Intensity and Years of Paid Employment in Social Work with the Poor

highest. On attitude position scores, the students with medium or high levels of paid social work experience working with the poor were both higher than students with a low level of experience.

There were statistically significant (F=2.187, p=.011) differences in attitude position scores among levels of education and the level of paid employment in the field of Social Work with the poor. Bachelor students who had little or no employment experience with the poor (n=54) were less positive in their attitudes toward the poor than Masters students who had either a good deal (n=14), or moderate (n=7) employment experience in areas that dealt with the poor. In each level of social work education, those students who had little or no employment experience with the poor were lower in attitude position scores than students who had at least a moderate level of employment with the poor. This finding suggests that social work employment experiences with the poor are positively correlated with developing a favorable attitude toward them.

Years of Volunteer Service with the Poor (Table 16; Figure 6; Figure 7). Slightly under two-thirds of the students in the sample responded that they had three years or less volunteer service with the poor, and 19.5% had no volunteer experience working with the poor. In the BSW programs, 87.5% were in the low range of volunteer service with the poor, 9% had a medium level, and 2% were in the

Table 16: Interaction of education and years of volunteer service or field placement with the poor

Variable Levels	BSW n	MSW n	PhD n	BSW Pos. Mean	BSW Int. Mean	MSW Pos. Mean	MSW Int. Mean	PhD Pos. Mean	PhD Int. Mean
low	49	59	50	301	49	317#	53	307	46
medium	5	24	16	293#	36*	316	62*	313	47
high	1	3	14	274	188	315	53	308	58

F = 2.257 **df = 212** **p = .0037**

= high and low intensity scores

* = high and low position scores

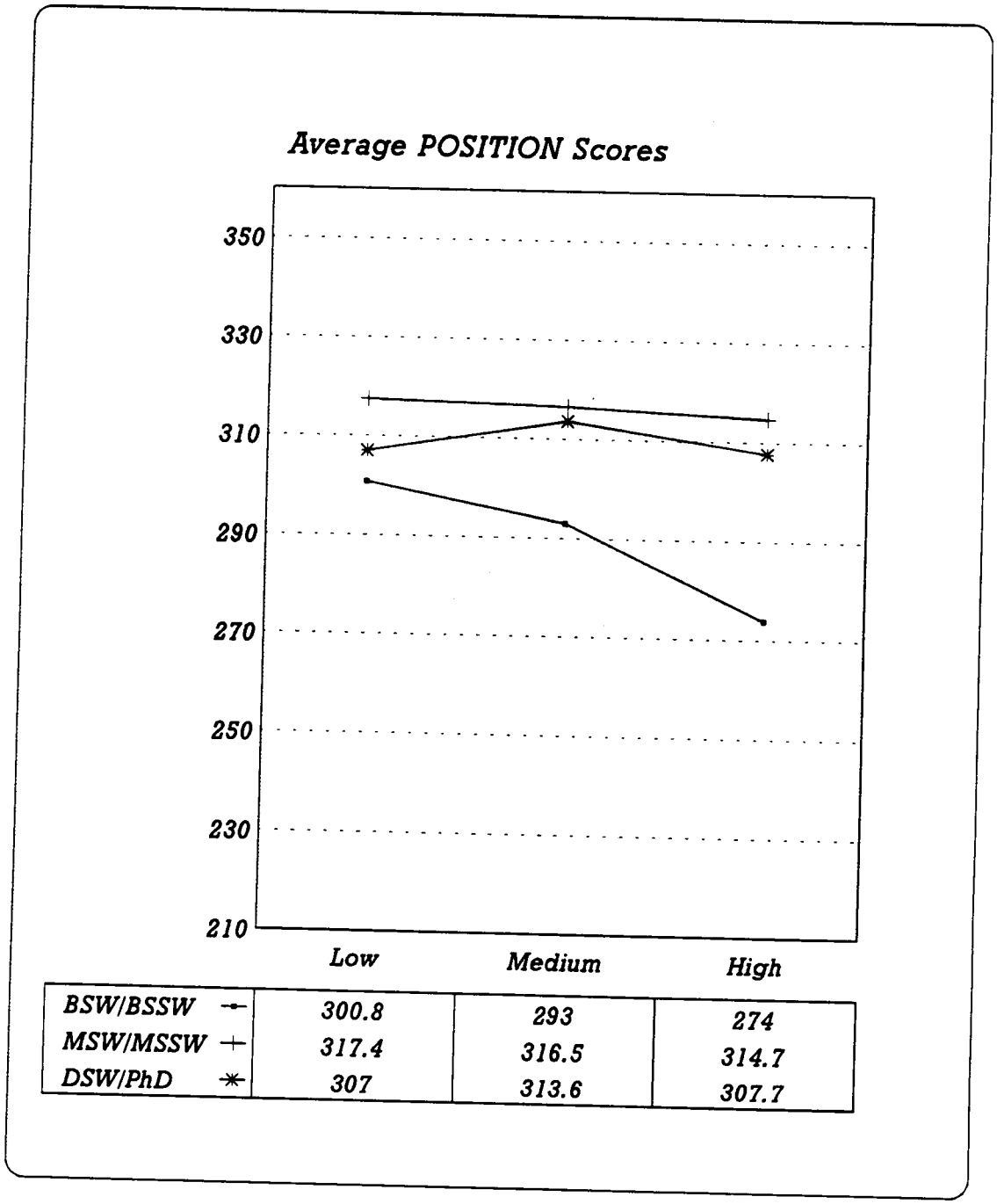
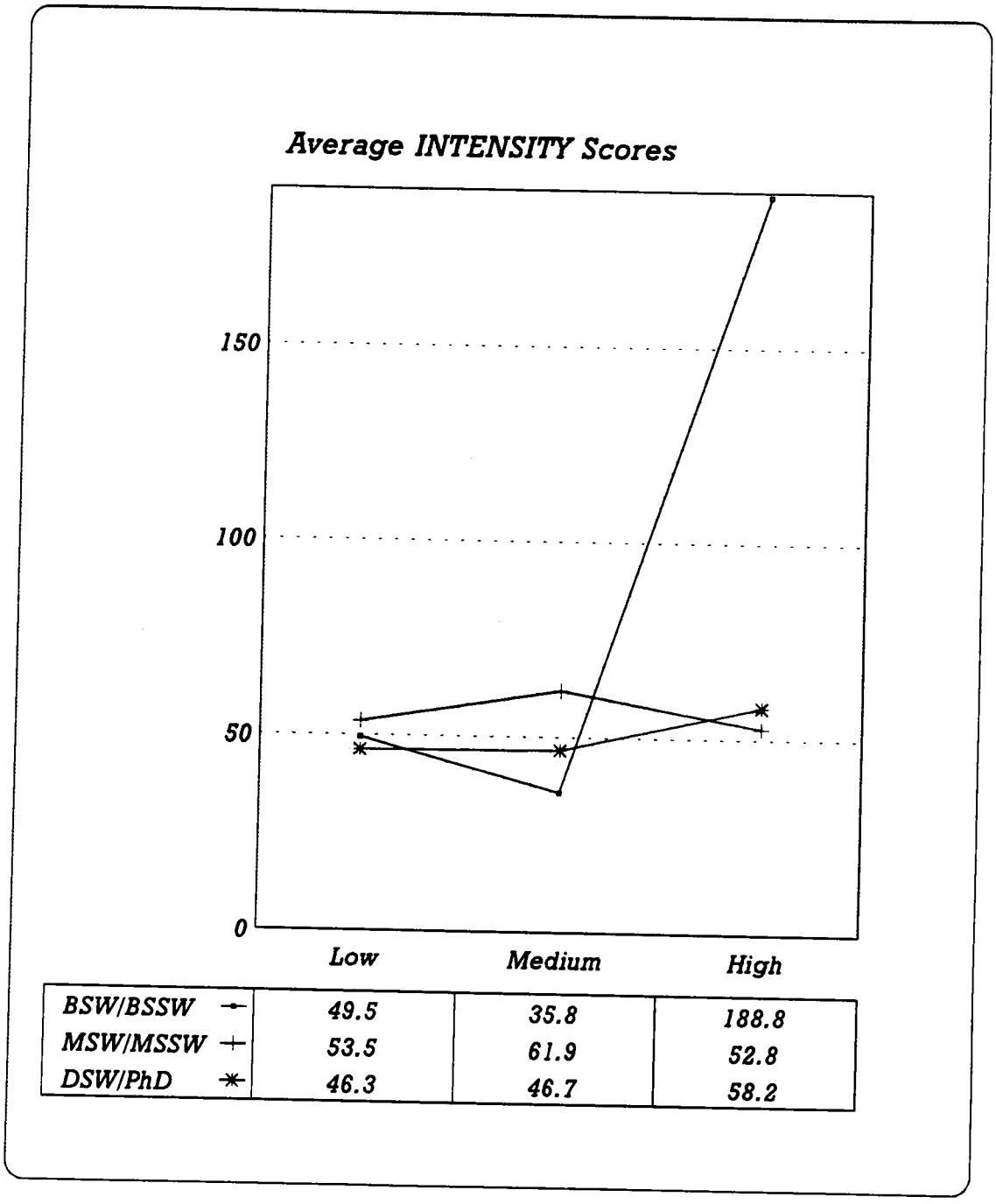


Figure 6: Attitude Position and Years of Volunteer Service or Field Placement with the Poor



	Low	Medium	High
BSW/BSSW	49.5	35.8	188.8
MSW/MSSW	53.5	61.9	52.8
DSW/PhD	46.3	46.7	58.2

Figure 7: Attitude Intensity and Years of Volunteer Service or Field Placement with the Poor

high category. Just under two-thirds of the MSW students were in the low category, 27% were in the medium range, and 16% reported a high level of volunteer service with the poor. Three-fifths of the doctoral students were low in their level of volunteer experience with the poor, 19% had a medium level, and 17% were in the high category. The attitude position scores of the three levels of volunteer service were close, with those students with a medium level being slightly higher. However, the students in the high range were clearly the most intense in their attitudes.

The interaction of level of education and years of volunteer service with the poor was statistically significant ($F=2.257$, $p=.003$) on intensity scores. Bachelors students who were in the medium range of years of volunteer service with the poor ($n=5$) were lower in attitude intensity than Masters students with the same amount of volunteer experience ($n=24$). This result is of minimal utility due to the low number of Bachelors students in the medium range.

Besides the Bachelors students in the medium range of volunteer service with the poor, doctoral students in the low and medium categories were the lowest in their attitude intensity scores. Interestingly, 63% of the doctoral students in the sample were low in their number of years of volunteer service with the poor and 36% were low in their number of paid employment with the poor. If experience

working with the poor is related to a commitment to their plight, doctoral students' lack of experience may account for their low intensity scores.

Social Work Ethics Classes (Table 17; Figure 8, Figure 9). Forty percent of the sample reported that they had not had a social work ethics class. One-third of the students had taken one ethics class, 15.5% had taken 2, and only 12% of the students had three or more social work ethics classes. In the BSW programs, 28% reported having no ethics classes, 37% had taken one course, 16% had 2 ethics classes, 12.5% had 3 or more. Over one-third of the MSW students indicated that they'd had no social work ethics classes, 31% had one ethics class, 16% had taken 2 ethics classes, and 12.5% had three or more ethics classes. Just less than one-half of the doctoral students had no ethics classes, 29% had taken one ethics class, 13% had two ethics classes, and 10%had three or more social work ethics classes. While the attitude intensity scores were very similar across each level of "social work ethics classes taken," the attitude position scores of the group of students who had no ethics classes were above any of the groups of students who had taken any number ethics classes.

Among each of the three levels of education, attitude intensity and attitude position scores were virtually the same regardless of the number of social work ethics classes the students had taken. The significant differences

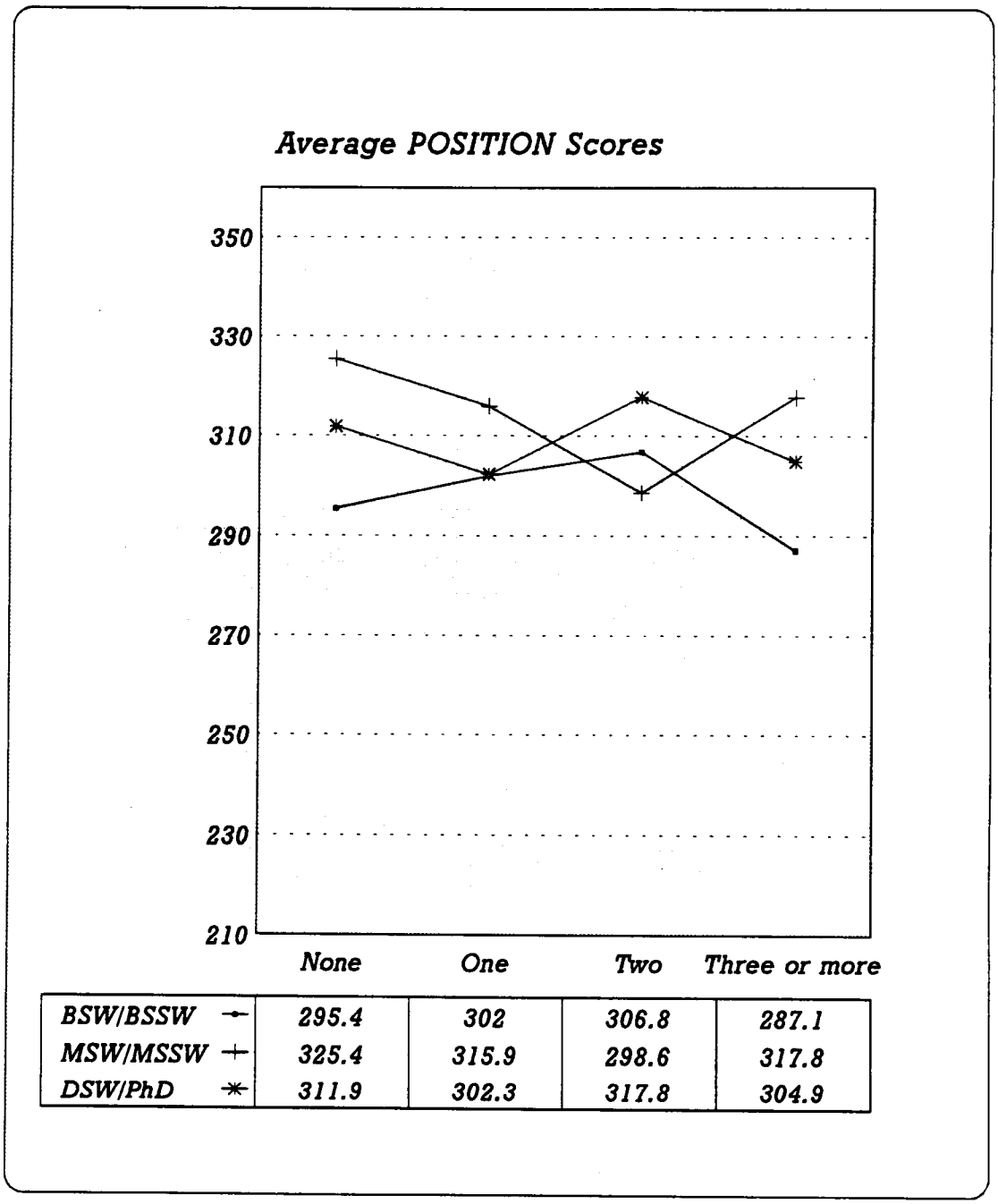
Table 17: Interaction of education and ethics classes

Variable Levels	BSW n	MSW n	PhD n	BSW Pos. Mean	BSW Int. Mean	MSW Pos. Mean	MSW Int. Mean	PhD Pos. Mean	PhD Int. Mean
none	16	33	39	295	56	325#	55	312	52
one	21	27	24	302	50	316	50	302	42
two	9	14	11	307	44	298	62*	318	52
three +	7	11	8	287#	30*	318	59	305	51

F = 1.773 **df = 208** **p = .0176**

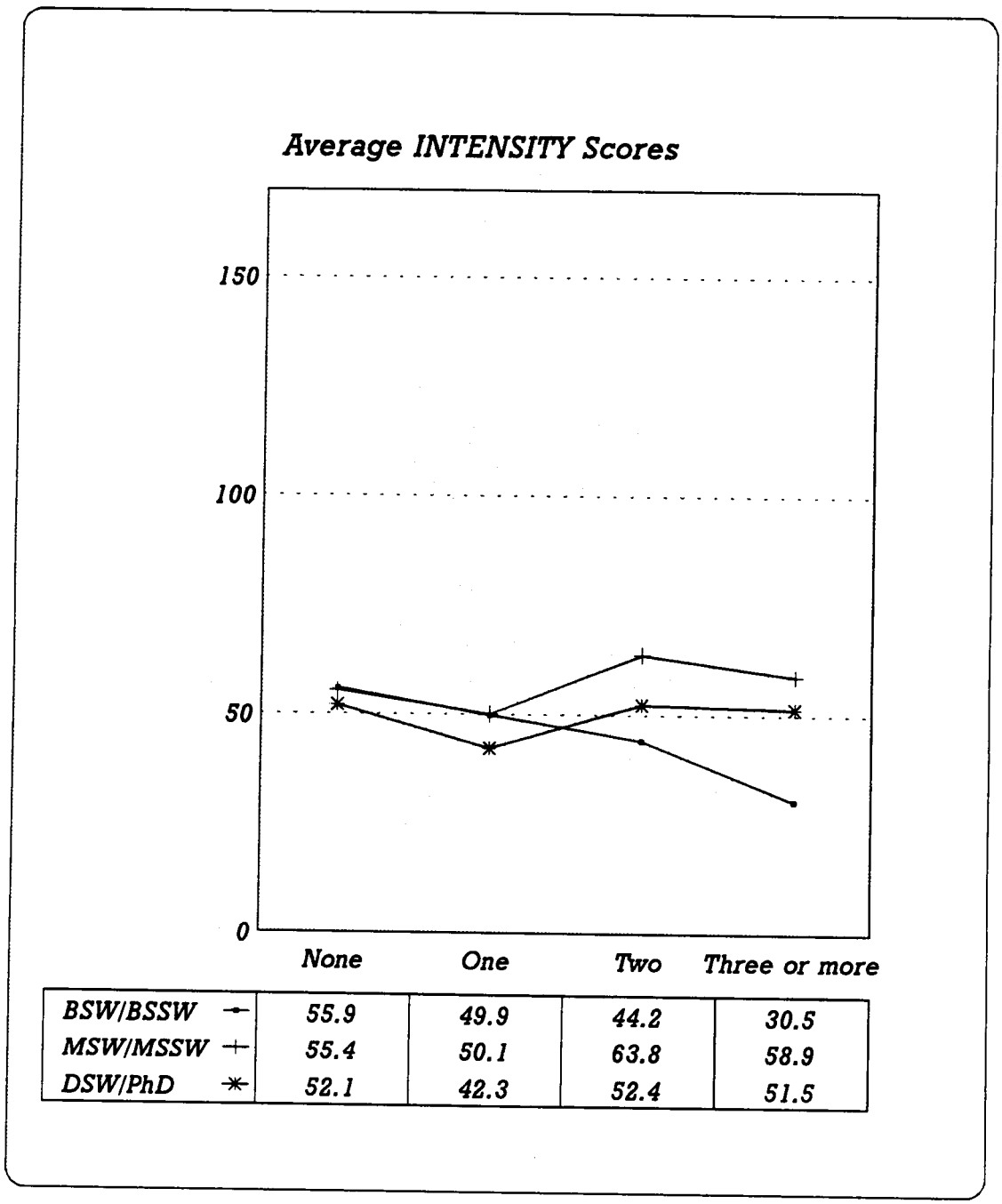
= high and low position scores

* = high and low intensity scores



	None	One	Two	Three or more
BSW/BSSW	295.4	302	306.8	287.1
MSW/MSSW	325.4	315.9	298.6	317.8
DSW/PhD	311.9	302.3	317.8	304.9

Figure 8: Attitude Position and Social Work Ethics Classes



BSW/BSSW	55.9	49.9	44.2	30.5
MSW/MSSW	55.4	50.1	63.8	58.9
DSW/PhD	52.1	42.3	52.4	51.5

Figure 9: Attitude Intensity and Social Work Ethics Classes

(F=1.773, p=.0176) that were found on position scores were likely between Bachelors students who reported that they had three or more ethics classes (n=7) and Masters students who had no classes (n=33). The Bachelors students who reported that they had a high number of social work ethics classes, were lower in their attitudes toward the poor than Masters students who had a low number of ethics classes. Also, this same group of Bachelor students who had a high number of ethics classes were less intense in their attitudes than Masters students who had taken two ethics classes (n=14).

Peer expectations (Table 18; Figure 10; Figure 11). There was a significant interaction (F=1.766, p=.006) within level of education and students' beliefs about how their peers expected them to think about the poor. Attitude intensity scores for doctoral students who believed their peers expected them to think very favorably about the needy were double the score of doctoral students who were unclear how their peers expected them to think about the poor. The mean attitude position score for BSW students who believed that their peers expected them to think neutral about the poor (297) was considerably lower than the mean position score of MSW students (323).

N.A.S.W. membership (Table 19; Figure 12; Figure 13). A significant interaction (F=2.501, p=.006) occurred between level of education and N.A.S.W. membership. MSW students who were members of N.A.S.W. were higher in attitude

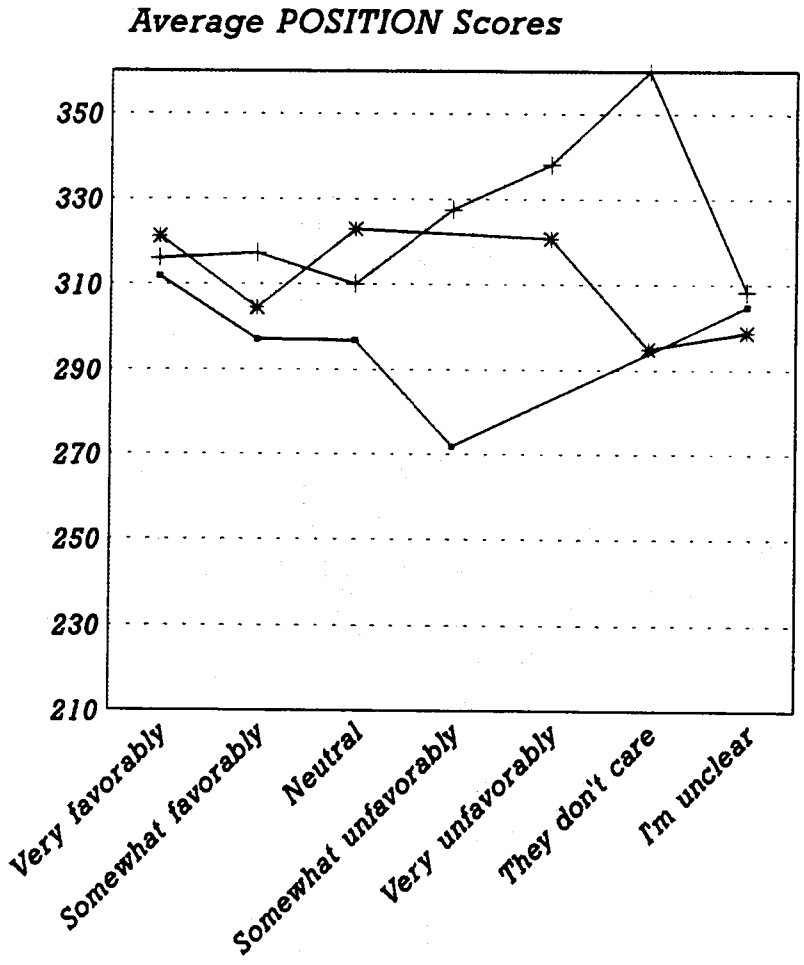
Table 18: Interaction of education and how do you think the majority of the students in your program expect you to think about the poor?

Variable Levels	BSW n	MSW n	PhD n	BSW Pos. Mean	BSW Int. Mean	MSW Pos. Mean	MSW Int. Mean	PhD Pos. Mean	PhD Int. Mean
very fav	8	26	22	312	63	316	59	321	70*
s-what fav	18	32	25	297#	46	317	48	304	40
neutral	10	15	7	297#	64	310	57	323#	55
s-what un	4	2		272	45	327	116		
very un		1	3			338	90	321	76
unclear	16	10	22	305	42	308	44	299	35*
don't care		2	3			360	71	295	37

F = 1.773 **df = 208** **p = .0176**

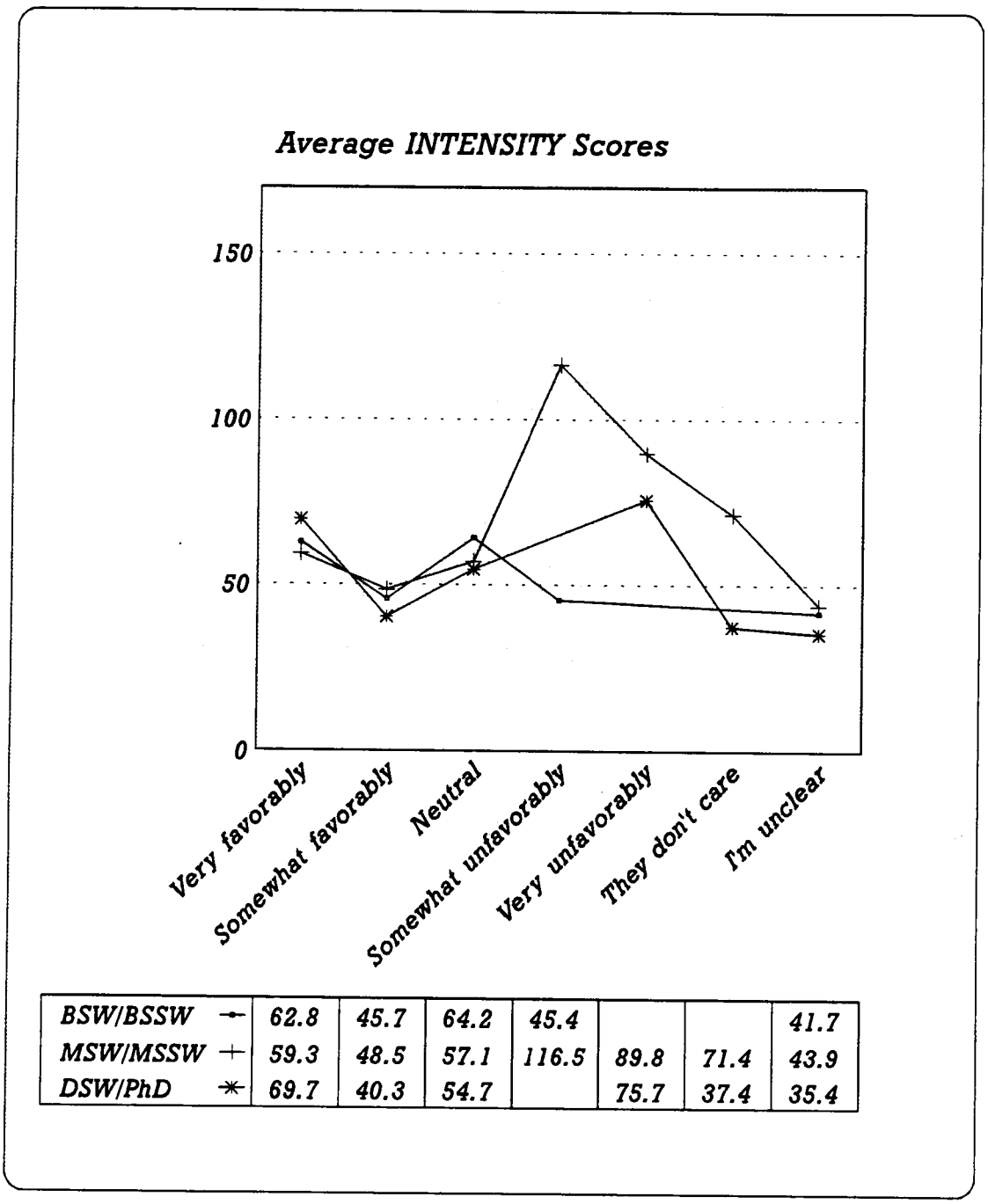
= high and low position scores

* = high and low intensity scores



BSW/BSSW	311.9	297.2	297	271.8			304.9
MSW/MSSW	316.1	317.3	310.1	327.5	338	360	308.3
DSW/PhD	321.2	304.5	322.9		320.7	295	298.8

Figure 10: Attitude Position and Peer Expectation



BSW/BSSW	62.8	45.7	64.2	45.4			41.7
MSW/MSSW	59.3	48.5	57.1	116.5	89.8	71.4	43.9
DSW/PhD	69.7	40.3	54.7		75.7	37.4	35.4

Figure 11: Attitude Intensity and Peer Expectations

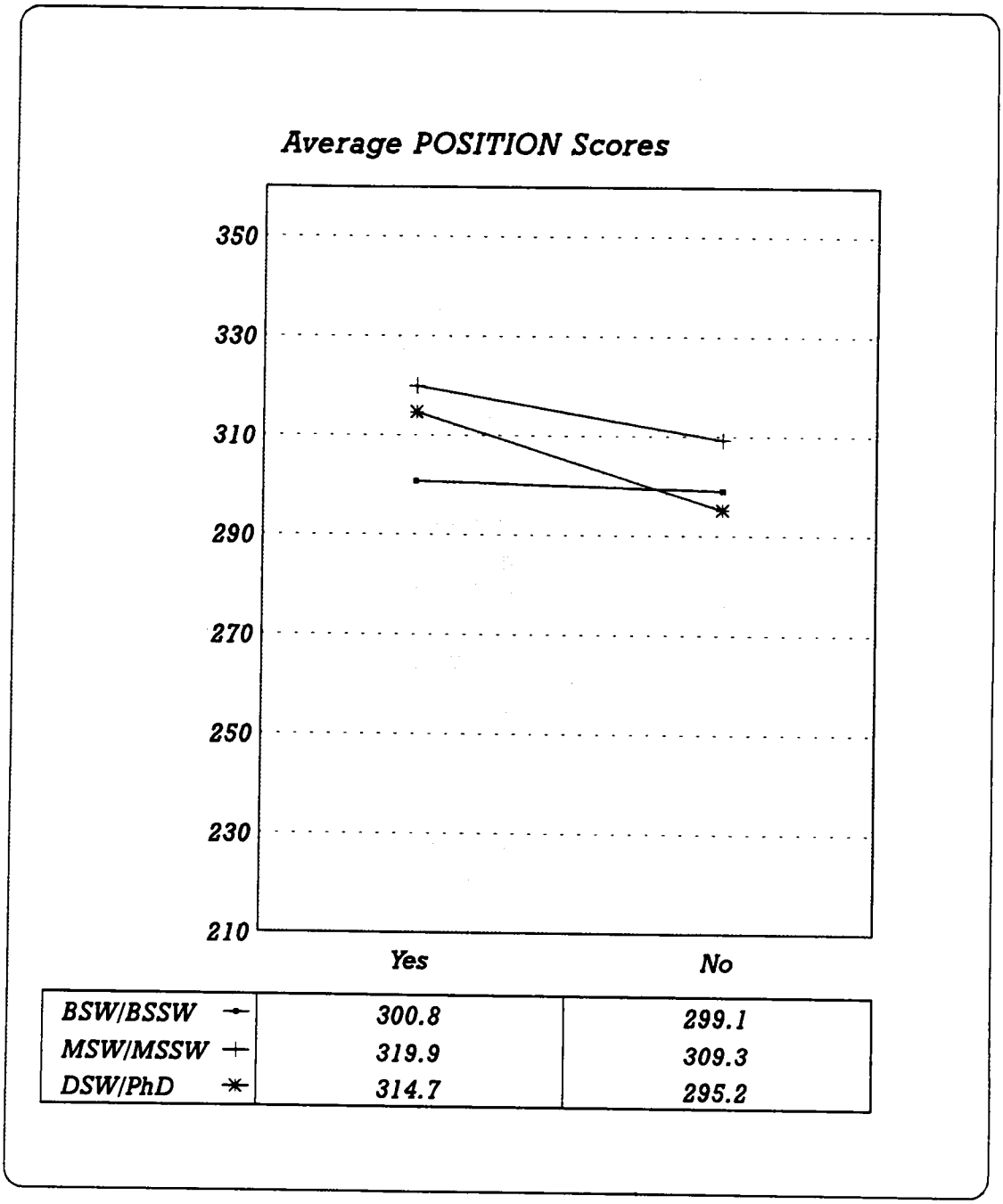
Table 19: Interaction of education and are you a member of N.A.S.W?

Variable Levels	BSW n	MSW n	PhD n	BSW Pos. Mean	BSW Int. Mean	MSW Pos. Mean	MSW Int. Mean	PhD Pos. Mean	PhD Int. Mean
yes	17	57	61	301	47	320#	58*	315	53
no	39	31	20	299	52	309	50	295#	39*

F = 2.501 **df = 219** **p = .0063**

= high and low position scores

* = high and low intensity scores



BSW/BSSW	300.8	299.1
MSW/MSSW	319.9	309.3
DSW/PhD	314.7	295.2

Figure 12: Attitude Position and N.A.S.W. Membership

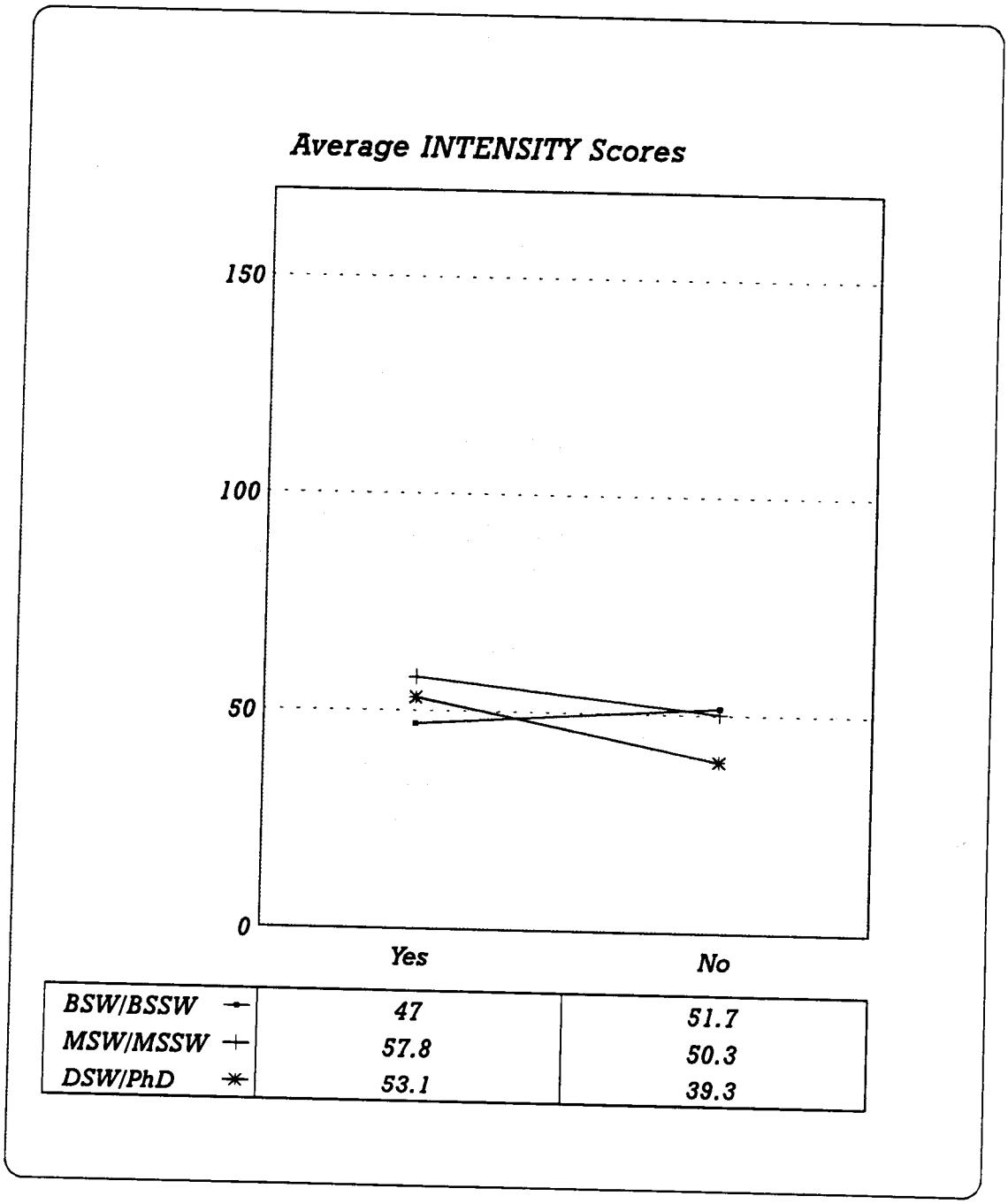


Figure 13: Attitude Intensity and N.A.S.W. Membership

position and attitude intensity scores than doctoral students who were not N.A.S.W. members.

Voter registration (Table 20; Figure 14; Figure 15). The vast majority of social work students in the sample were registered voters; 92% of the BSW students, 95% of the MSW students, and 87% of the doctoral students were registered voters. A significant interaction (F=2.009, p=.001) occurred among level of education and voter registration status. BSW students who were not registered voters were low in attitude position scores compared to unregistered doctoral students who were high in position scores. Registered MSW students were significantly higher in attitude intensity scores than unregistered BSW students. Because there were so few unregistered voters in the sample (n=18), these findings hold limited value.

Gender (Table 21; Figure 16; Figure 17). Consistent with C.S.W.E. statistics, most of the students in the sample were female (77%). Within BSW programs, 84% of the students were female, 81% of the MSW students were female, and two-thirds of the doctoral students were female. A significant interaction (F=1.919, p=.040) took place among level of education and gender. The male BSW students were the lowest group on attitude position scores and female MSW students were the highest group. On attitude intensity scores, the male BSW students were the most intense and female BSW students were the least intense.

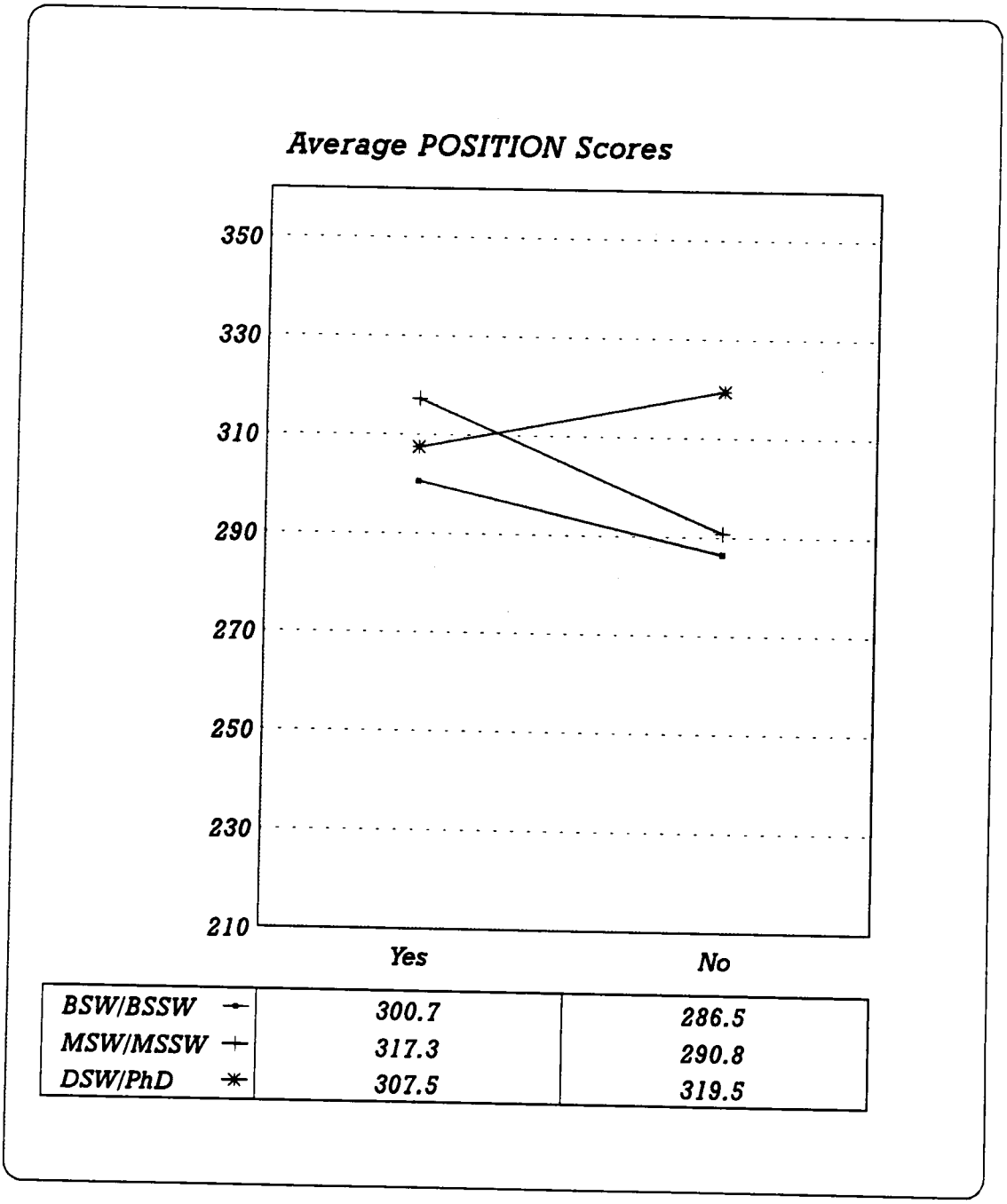
Table 20: Interaction of education and are you a registered voter?

Variable Levels	BSW n	MSW n	PhD n	BSW Pos. Mean	BSW Int. Mean	MSW Pos. Mean	MSW Int. Mean	PhD Pos. Mean	PhD Int. Mean
yes	52	84	71	301	52	317	54	307	48
no	4	4	10	286#	28*	291	81*	319#	53

F = 2.099 **df = 219** **p = .0016**

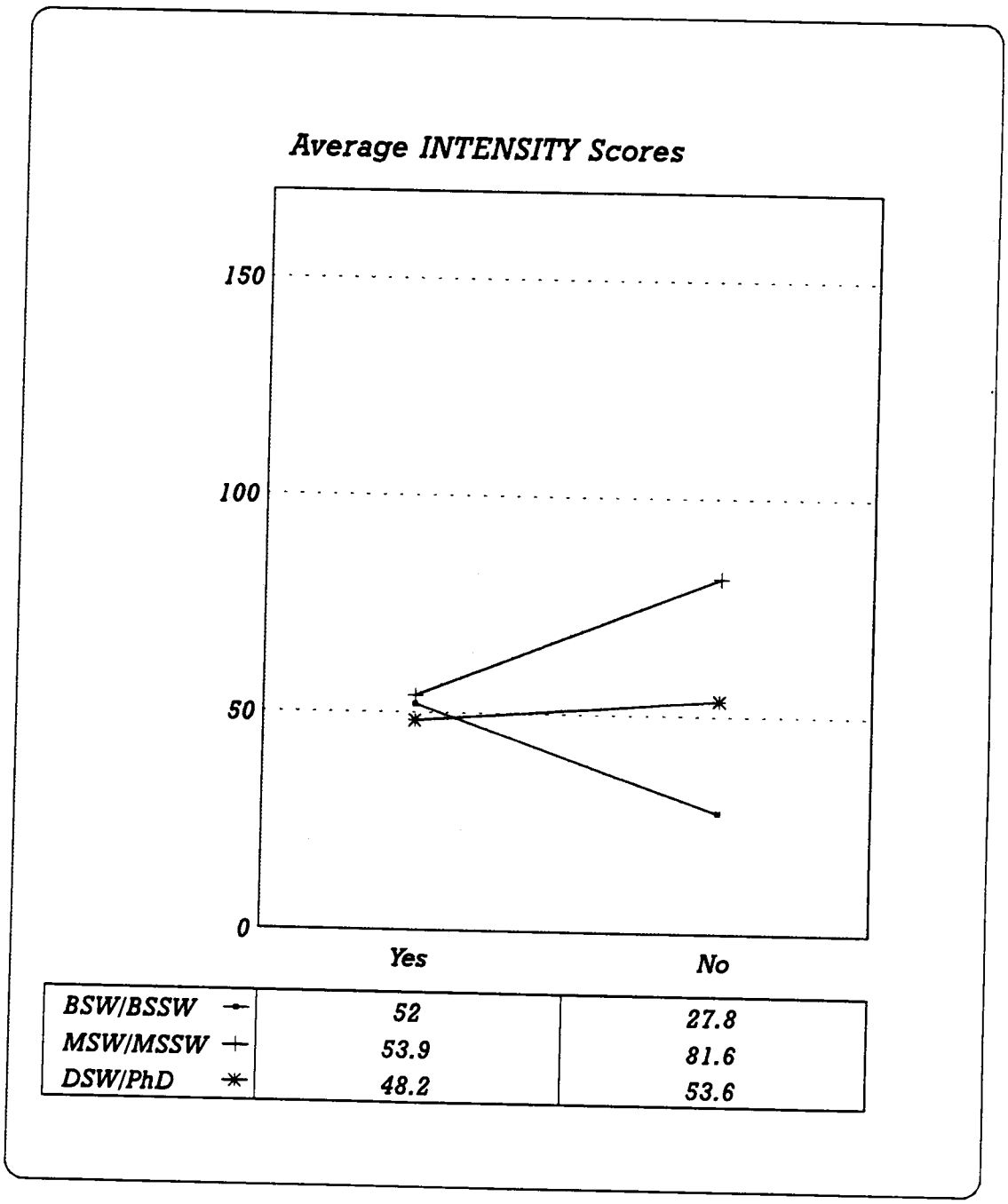
= high and low position scores

* = high and low intensity scores



BSW/BSSW	300.7	286.5
MSW/MSSW	317.3	290.8
DSW/PhD	307.5	319.5

Figure 14: Attitude Position and Voter Registration



	Yes	No
BSW/BSSW	52	27.8
MSW/MSSW	53.9	81.6
DSW/PhD	48.2	53.6

Figure 15: Attitude Intensity and Voter Registration

Table 21: Interaction of education and gender

Variable Levels	BSW n	MSW n	PhD n	BSW Pos. Mean	BSW Int. Mean	MSW Pos. Mean	MSW Int. Mean	PhD Pos. Mean	PhD Int. Mean
female	7	71	56	300	45*	316#	54	310	54
male	9	17	26	298#	76*	315	60	306	39

F = 1.919 **df = 220** **p = .0409**

= high and low position scores

* = high and low position scores

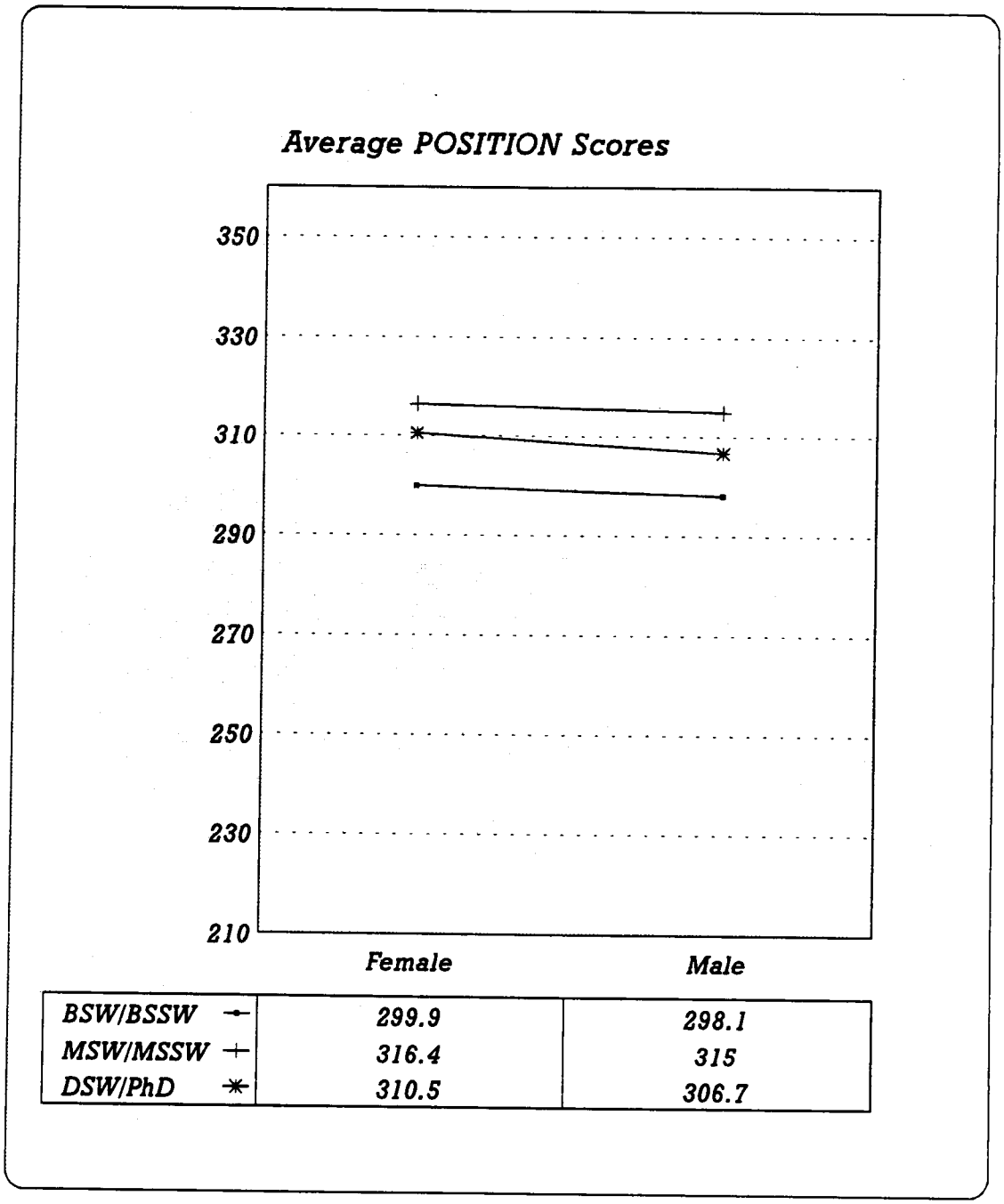
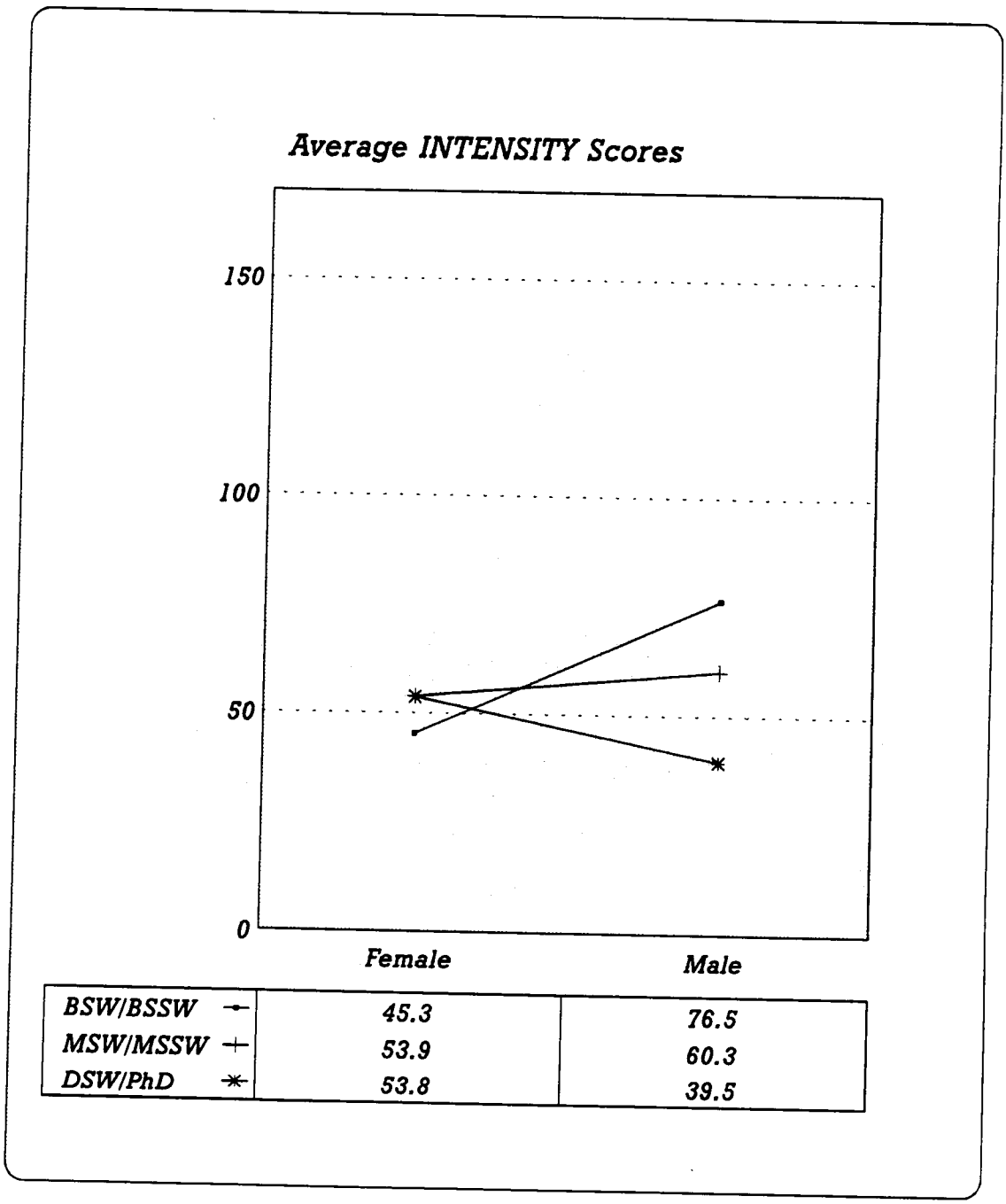


Figure 16: Attitude Position and Gender



	Female	Male
BSW/BSSW	45.3	76.5
MSW/MSSW	53.9	60.3
DSW/PhD	53.8	39.5

Figure 17: Attitude Intensity and Gender

Race (Table 22; Figure 18; Figure 19). There was a significant interaction (F=1.858, p=.013) between level of education and race. African-American doctoral students were the more intense in their attitudes toward the indigent than their white counterparts. Also, African American BSW students were less favorable in attitude position scores than white MSW students.

Descriptive Statistics

Relative poverty line in the United States (Table 22). One method of determining the poverty line in a society is to ask members about their opinions of what level of yearly income separates the poor from the nonpoor. Most such assessment efforts use the yearly income required by a family of four as the benchmark. Respondents are asked to indicate a monetary cutoff which would serve to determine whether a family was poor or not poor. In the United States in 1992, the official poverty line for a family of four was $14,350. In the study at hand, students were asked to select a level of yearly income, under which a family of four should be considered poor.

Only 29% of the students who participated in this research effort agreed that the government-set poverty line is an adequate standard for determining who is poor and not poor in the United States. Over 71% of the subjects indicated that a family of four required at least $17,500 to

Table 22: Interaction of education and race

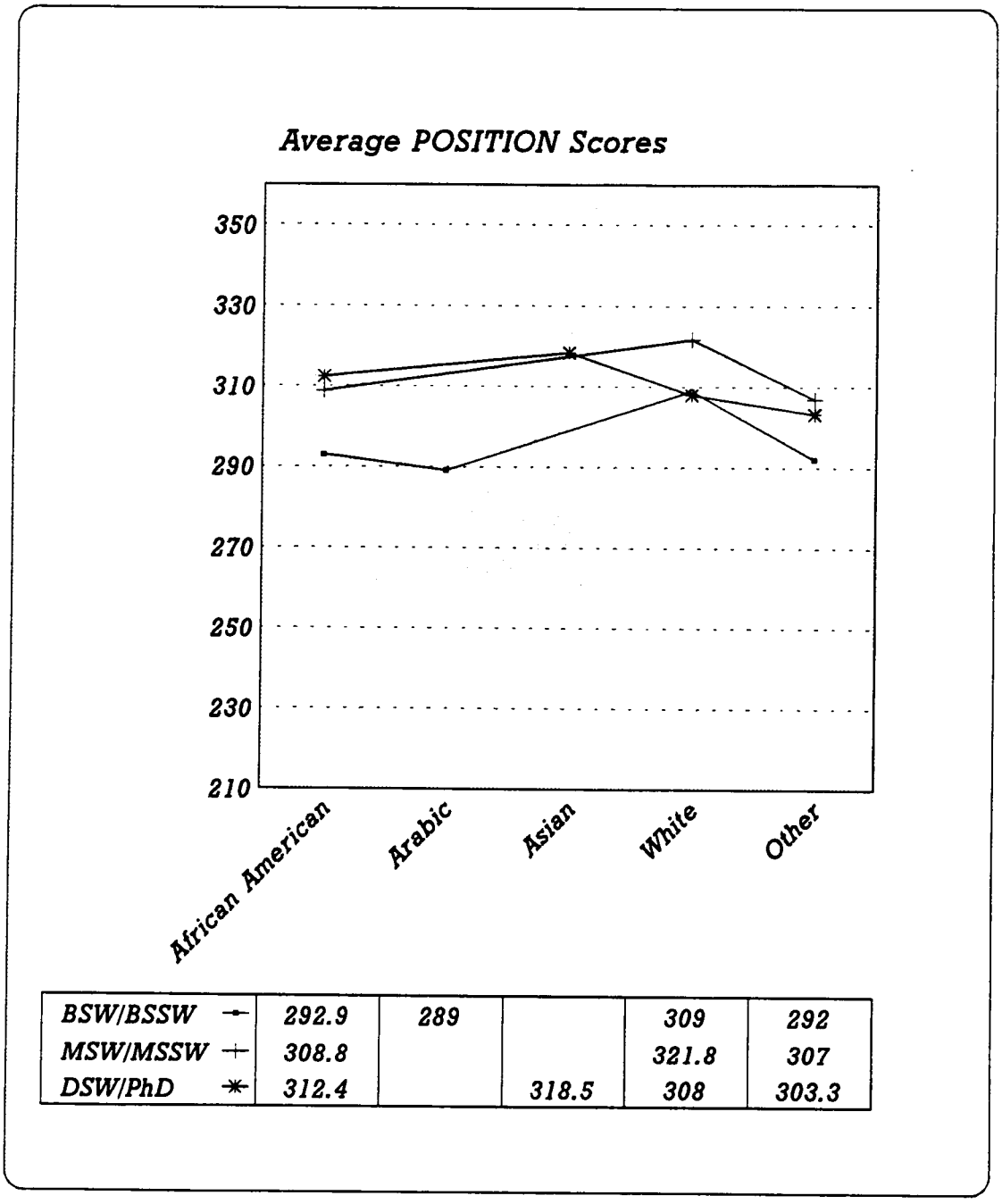
Variable Levels	BSW n	MSW n	PhD n	BSW Pos. Mean	BSW Int. Mean	MSW Pos. Mean	MSW Int. Mean	PhD Pos. Mean	PhD Int. Mean
Afr-Am	29	36	13	293#	51	309	56	312	71*
Arabic	1			289	31				
Asian			6					318	44
White	23	50	59	309	53	322#	53	308	45*
other	2	2	4	292	27	307	92	303	43

F = 1.858 **df = 214** **p = .0139**

= high and low position scores

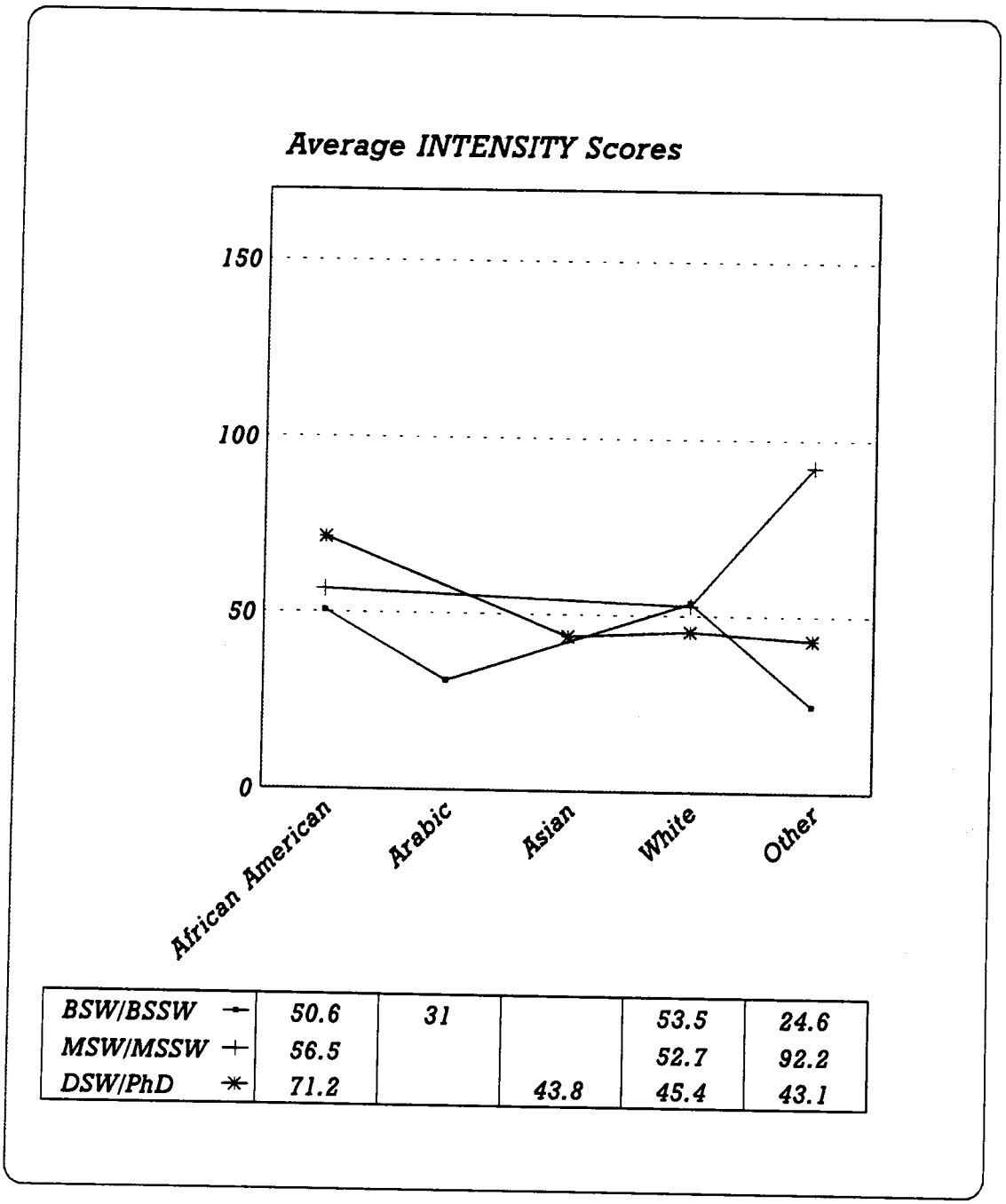
* = high and low intensity scores

x - poverty level for a family of 4 is $14,350.00



BSW/BSSW	292.9	289		309	292
MSW/MSSW	308.8			321.8	307
DSW/PhD	312.4		318.5	308	303.3

Figure 18: Attitude Position and Race



BSW/BSSW	50.6	31		53.5	24.6
MSW/MSSW	56.5			52.7	92.2
DSW/PhD	71.2		43.8	45.4	43.1

Figure 19: Attitude Intensity and Race

Table 23: I would say that a family of four should be considered "poor" if their yearly household income is under:

Variable Levels	n	Positive Mean	Intensity Mean
$2,500	3	314	84
$5,000	1	255	34
$7,500	3	305	23
$10,000	5	306	31
$12,500	20	309	46
$15,000	33	309	44
$17,500	22	314	54
$20,000	66	308	45
$22,500	10	304	65
$25,000	29	314	59
$27,500	6	305	63
$30,000	13	306	57
$32,500	4	320	49
$35,000	1	358	95
$37,000	5	300	87
Other	5	315	69

avoid being considered poor and 61.5% of the respondents believed $20,000 was necessary. These figures suggest that three-fifths of the sample believed the official poverty line in the United States was set at least $5,000 too low. The students who chose $15,000 as the relative poverty line were similar in their attitude position scores to those who chose $20,000. The attitude intensity scores for the students who indicated any level of income of $17,500 or over as the relative poverty line, were generally 15 to 20 points higher than those students who chose any yearly income level under $17,500.

Social work's main mission for the 1990s (Table 24). Students were asked to select from 9 profession-related goals, the one that most closely reflected their view of what social work's primary mission should be for the decade of the 1990s. The list of social work causes offered in the questionnaire included traditional (i.e., affecting social policy and advocating for equal rights for minorities) and more recent (i.e., training psychotherapists, improving hardware and software technology) social work endeavors. Improving direct social work practice and affecting social policy through legislation were clearly the two most popular choices for social work's main mission for the 1990s. These two social work goals accounted for 55% of the students' choices and were the most popular selection in each of the three levels of education.

Table 24: Which of the following cause most closely reflects your thoughts about what Social Work's main mission should be for the 1990s?

Variable Levels	n	Position Mean	Intensity Mean
Equal rights for minorities	13	302	44
Affecting social policy	55	316	59
Fighting discrimination/prej.	19	312	49
Improving direct practice	68	301	45
Improving computer/stats tech.	2	302	38
Improving the plight/poor	23	313	61
Increasing research efforts	11	306	41
Training psychotherapists	1	338	58
Other/multiple	33	315	51

Almost one-third of the students thought that improving direct social work practice should take priority and one-quarter of the subjects chose affecting social policy through legislation. Ten percent responded that improving the plight of the poor most closely reflected their view of what social work should concentrate on and 8% chose fighting discrimination. Only one of the 227 students thought that training psychotherapists should be social work's priority for the 1990s and only two students thought that improving hardware and software technology should be paramount for the profession.

The group of students who thought that social work should focus on affecting social policy through legislation were the highest in attitude position scores and the students who chose improving social work practice were the lowest. The students who believed that social work's main mission should be "improving the plight of the poor" were the highest in intensity scores, followed closely by the group of students who endorsed "affecting social policy through legislation." The group of students supporting increasing research efforts were the lowest in attitude intensity scores.

Ideological movement expected by the profession of social work (Table 25). Students were asked to consider their ideological position (conservative, liberal, radical) and asked to indicate which direction, if any, they believed

Table 25: With regard to your ideological position toward the poor, do you think the profession expects you to be:

Variable Levels	n	Position Mean	Intensity Mean
More conservative	18	311	55
More liberal	81	309	51
More radical	17	319	51
The same as I am	71	309	53
I'm unclear which direction	38	305	47

the profession expected them to move. Two other options were offered to students regarding their ideological position ("the profession expects me to be the same as I am" and "I'm unclear in which direction the profession expects me to move"). Less than one-third of the respondents believed that they currently held the professionally-desired ideological position. Nearly 44% of the students indicated that they believed the profession expected them to be more liberal or radical and only 8% believed social work expected them to be more conservative.

Looking at the three levels of education, less than 20% of the BSW students believed that they held the ideological orientation expected by social work and nearly one-half thought they were expected to be more liberal. In MSW programs, 40% of the students believed that the profession expected them to be more liberal and 31% believed the profession expected the students to be the same as they were. Nearly 40% of doctoral students felt that they held the profession-desired ideology, 23% believed they were expected to be more liberal, and 19% were unclear in which direction the profession expected them to move. While the attitude intensity scores were similar across all five levels of the ideological expectation variable, the group of students who believed the profession expected them to be more radical were clearly the most positive in attitude position.

Peer comparison (Table 26). Students were asked to compare their attitudes toward the poor with the majority of other students in their program. Most (55%) of the subjects believed that their attitudes toward the poor were about the same as their classmates. About 39% of the respondents thought that their attitudes toward the poor were more favorable than their social work peers and only 6.3% believed that their disposition toward the needy was less favorable than the majority of the other students in their program. The response "about the same" was the most popular

Table 26: Peer Comparison

Variable Levels	n	Position Mean	Intensity Mean
Much more favorable	25	314	64
Somewhat more favorable	62	310	53
About the same	123	308	49
Somewhat less favorable	12	312	48
Much less favorable	2	277	19

in each of the three levels of education. The students who believed that their attitudes toward the disadvantaged were much more favorable than those of their classmates, were correct. This group of students had the highest attitude position and attitude intensity scores.

Political affiliation (Table 27). Over two-thirds of the students indicated that they were affiliated with the Democratic Party. Ten percent of the students were Republican and 15% were independent. Three-fourths of the BSW students were Democrats and 9% were Republicans. In the MSW programs, two-thirds of the students were Democrats and 12.5% were Republicans. Most (63%) of the doctoral students

Table 27: Political Affiliation

Variable Levels	n	Position Mean	Intensity Mean
Democrat	113	309	53
Independent	33	314	48
Republican	22	302	36
Other	15	311	54

were Democrats and only 7% were Republicans. Of the three politically-affiliated groups of students, the Republicans were the least positive and least intense in their disposition regarding the underclass. The independent students were the most positive in attitude position scores and the Democrats were the most intense.

Marital status (Table 28). One-half of the students were single and 37% were married at the time. As may be expected, as the level of education increased, the percentage of married students increased and the percentage of single students decreased. In the BSW programs, 86% of the students were single and 9% were married. Over one-half

Table 28: Martial status

Variable Levels	n	Position Mean	Intensity Mean
Single/never married	113	309	55
Divorced/separate	25	307	50
Married	83	310	48
Widowed	3	321	52
Same sex/cohabitate	2	308	33

of the MSW students were single and one-third were married. One-fifth of the doctoral students were single and 59% were married. The percentage of divorced/separated students increased from 3.5% of the BSW students to 17% of the doctoral students. There was little variability in attitude position or attitude intensity scores among the levels of marital status.

Age (Table 29). In order to generate cells with sufficient numbers of students to make comparisons between cells, students were grouped according to the decade in which they were born. Two percent of the subjects were born

Table 29: In what year were you born?

Variable Levels	n	Position Mean	Intensity Mean
1930s	5	309	42
1940s	41	304	40
1950s	58	314	55
1960s	64	315	62
1970s	58	302	46

in the 1930s, 18% were born in the 1940s, 25% were born in the 1950s, 28% were born in the 1960s, and 25.5% were born in the 1970s. Three-fourths of the BSW students were born in the 1970s. Nearly one-half of the MSW students were born in the 1960s and 44.5% of the doctoral students were born in the 1950s. Students born in the 1950s and 1960s were similarly high in their attitude position and attitude intensity scores while students born in the 1940s and 1970s were similarly low in the attitude position and attitude intensity scores.

Family income (Table 30). The majority of the students were form low-income (28%) or low-middle-income (42%)

Table 30: What was your family's approximate income while you were growing up?

Variable Levels	n	Position Mean	Intensity Mean
Low (0-$20,000)	59	306	44
Low-middle ($20,001-$40,000)	90	310	52
Middle ($40,001-$60,000)	41	312	53
Upper-middle ($60,001-$100,000)	16	309	44
Upper ($100,001 and more)	7	310	68

families. Only 11% were from upper-middle-income families and 3.3% were from upper-income families. The students from low-income families were the least favorable and least intense in the attitudes toward the indigent. Attitude position scores of students from families in any of the other four income levels reflected only minor variability. The attitude intensity scores for the students from upper-income families were the highest, but the attitude intensity scores for students from upper-middle-income families were almost as low as those of the students from low-income families.

CHAPTER VII

DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION

This chapter will be devoted to the findings presented in Chapter VI. The findings will be identified as they relate to the hypotheses. Conclusions and implications for social work education and the profession of social work are discussed.

Review of Findings

Level of Education. The relationship of attitude position and attitude intensity to level of education was not linear as was hypothesized. For the BSW and MSW programs, students' mean attitude position and attitude intensity scores increased with the level of education. However, this peaked at the MSW level. The attitude intensity scores of the doctoral students were the lowest among the three levels of education, and attitude position scores for doctoral students were higher than those of BSW students but lower than the attitude position scores of MSW students.

Doctoral students may be less intense than BSW or MSW students because they are more removed from poverty-related coursework and direct-contact experiences with the less fortunate. Doctoral students normally concentrate on psychotherapy, research or some combination of the two. Content on poverty is minimal in most doctoral programs, but most BSW and MSW programs feature poverty-related courses such as Social Problems, Cultural Diversity, Race and Ethic Relations, Social Work with Oppressed Populations, and Social Work with Black Families (University of Tennessee, 1994) which expose students to the problems of poverty. Also, field placements in BSW and MSW programs offer students opportunities for direct contact with disadvantaged client groups, whereas most doctoral programs do not include field placements.

Educating students regarding how to teach in schools of social work is the focus of only one doctoral program: The University of South Carolina (Wolock, 1990). Because of this, most doctoral students receive no training in teaching poverty-related content, yet the majority of graduates from doctoral programs take teaching positions in schools of social work (Shore, 1991). Recent doctoral graduates usually take entry-level teaching positions in BSW or MSW programs, and they bring with them into the classroom their level of commitment toward helping the poor and their attitudes toward the needy. Schools of social work which

are recruiting doctoral graduates cannot assume that these graduates have assimilated the profession-desired commitment to the plight of the indigent through their studies, nor that they will competently teach poverty-related material. Information from this research project regarding doctoral students' attitudes toward the poor is significant because no other study has addressed this topic.

Perhaps the low position scores among BSW students were a result of inadequate handling of the subject of poverty in the classroom by educators. BSW students' position scores may have been affected by teachers who are low in their emotional involvement with the poor. Ideally, an educator committed to helping the disadvantaged should teach poverty-related content. Students' incorporation of the appropriate social work attitudes and values into their own professional identity is important because this will impact their involvement in the social work's struggle to alleviate the misery caused by poverty. The views of the teacher can impact the amount of time, content of material, and enthusiasm with which the issue is handled. An educator lacking the proper orientation toward the poor could have a negative effect on students. A teacher's disinterest in the problem of poverty could blunt students' energies in that area. This may be damaging to social work's involvement with the poor because students' professional attitudes, values, and emotional involvement (developed in schools of

social work) will be carried into the field after students have graduated. Social work, and society at large, can ill afford failure on the part of social work education to transmit the proper professional value base.

Compared to other studies which used the AATP, the students who participated in this research were the most intense in their attitudes toward the poor (Grimm & Orten, 1973, Orten, 1981, Baggett & Orten, 1991). Also, the attitudes position scores of the MSW and PhD students who participated in this research were higher than those of other studies. The three studies with which the results of the current research are being compared and the current study gathered data roughly seven to eight years apart (1971, 1978, 1986, 1993). The findings from the project at hand suggest that social work students have become more emotionally involved with the poor and that graduate students held a more favorable perception of the poor than graduate students in previous studies.

Career Plans. A major finding of this research is that students planning to enter medical social work were less favorable and less intense in their attitudes toward the poor than students planning to work in other areas of social work. There is some evidence that compared to other professions, physicians hold less favorable attitudes toward the poor (Heisler, 1970). Moffic, Brochstein, Blattstein, and Adams (1983) found that the social work students were

more favorable in their attitudes toward the poor than psychiatry residents. The Moffic et al. study included a training model designed to address the attitudes toward the poor of health providers. These investigators concluded that, "social work students seemed to possess or be able to develop attitudes relevant to a prominent role in primary health care" (p. 17). It is possible that the social work students in the study were less favorable toward the poor than their social work colleagues, but still more favorable than physicians.

The assertion that social work students hold attitudes toward the destitute that are conducive to their taking positions in other helping professions (such as health care) is not surprising. The data from this study, however, suggest that those social work students who actually plan to take positions in health care do not hold the same favorable disposition toward the less fortunate as their peers who plan to work in other areas of social work. Students planning to go into medical social work may have oriented their attitudes about those in need with the prevailing attitudes of the medical profession. Also, medical social work may attract students who are less favorable in their orientation toward the poor and less interested in working with the poor.

One implication of this finding is that students interested in medical social work should be taught courses

that emphasize content on social work's basic mission and its values. Developing the appropriate social work value base in medical social workers is important because in the medical setting, social workers are often in the position of deciding what services the poor shall receive and who shall provide the services. Unfavorable attitudes toward the poor could result in the needs of the poor being neglected or mismanaged. It may be helpful to arrange field placement experiences of medical social work students so that they have exposure to the poor. This arrangement may be particularly significant in light of another finding of this study: social work students with at least three years of employment experience or volunteer service with the poor were more positive in their disposition toward the poor than students who were exposed to the poor in a social work setting for less than three years.

Students planning careers in areas such as family and children services, public welfare, and school social work most likely expect more contact with the poor than students planning careers in areas such as medical social work, psychotherapy, research, and social work education. It was hypothesized that students planning careers in areas which deal with the poor would be more favorable in their attitudes toward the needy and more committed to helping them than students planning careers in areas which do not typically serve the poor. Butler (1992) reported that

"students who placed greater importance on helping the most disadvantaged people in their community were less likely than any other group to enter private practice" (p. 47). In the study at hand, students planning to go into school social work were associated with a favorable disposition regarding the poor, and students planning to go into medical social work were associated with an unfavorable disposition toward the poor. Otherwise, there were only minor variations in the attitude position and attitude intensity scores between those students who plan their careers in areas in which they may expect to have contact with the poor and students in areas which typically serve the nonpoor.

Private Practice Psychotherapy as a Career Choice. Over the past ten years, several studies have focused on the increasing number of students entering schools of social work who seek specialized training. The authors of these studies have voiced the concern that social work may be abandoning the poor in favor of careers with client groups which offer a higher income and more prestige. The primary field of specialization which has attracted students is psychotherapy. This trend among students (particularly Masters students) toward an interest in psychotherapy was reviewed earlier in this dissertation. The following section will compare the results and conclusions of previous studies regarding social work students' career plans with the results of this study and offer conclusions.

West, Gaffney, Allen, and Barboza (1988) commented that the interest in psychotherapy is a major factor influencing the rise in the number of students seeking a MSW degree. Rubin and Johnson (1984) reported that 86% of the MSW students in their sample wanted to enter private psychotherapy practice, and 82% wanted to do so within five years. The authors suggested that students entering social work to become psychotherapists "have little commitment to social work's mission, dual focus, or distinctive functions and clientele" (p. 5). Butler (1992) found that two-thirds of the MSW students in her study planned to enter the field of private psychotherapy practice, and 57% planned to do so in the next ten years. Butler suggested that MSW students were attracted to private practice because of their interest in treatment modalities and client groups which were typically served in the private practice setting. In an earlier study, Butler (1990) concluded that only a small portion of MSW students had no commitment to the plight of the poor. She argued that most MSW students who planned a career in psychotherapy were also committed to social work's mission and involvement with helping the needy.

Falck (1984) and Specht and Courtney (1994) have expressed the concern that the movement of students toward an interest in private psychotherapy practice has left decreasing numbers of professional social workers to work with the indigent. Austin (1984) cautioned that the trend

toward psychotherapy in schools of social work has left fewer students planning for a career in administration and policy. Saleeby (1991) argued that social work's fading concern for the poor is a symptom of the profession's press for increased technology. Abell and McDonell (1990) suggested that reports of MSW students' flight from traditional social work values into private psychotherapy practice have been overestimated and that the majority of the students entering social work are "highly committed to the concept of involvement with the disadvantaged" (p. 63).

In the study at hand, nearly 18% of the sample planned to pursue a career in psychotherapy. This group was second only to school social work in attitude position scores among the ten areas of social work which students planned to enter. Aspiring psychotherapists had higher average intensity scores than those students planning a career in any other area. Also, students planning careers in psychotherapy were significantly more positive and more intense in their attitudes toward the poor than students planning careers in medical social work. Within MSW programs, 28.4% of the students were planning to enter psychotherapy as a profession. These students were more positive and more intense in their attitudes toward the poor than students planning to enter either of the other two most popular choices for MSW students' career plans (family and children services and administration and policy).

The data from this study suggest that psychotherapy is one of the most popular areas of interest among social work students. However, even among MSW students, the percentages of students planning a career in psychotherapy did not approach the findings of previous studies. One reason for this inconsistency may be that this study asked only about the student's primary area of intention and did not consider those planning to go into private psychotherapy practice on a part-time basis. Other possibilities are that students' interest in psychotherapy may decline during the educational process (Rubin, Johnson, DeWeaver, (1986) or that the appeal of psychotherapy as a career plan has decreased in recent years.

The favorable position scores and elevated intensity scores among aspiring psychotherapists suggest that this group of students are drawn to psychotherapy for reasons other than a lack of concern about the poor. Jayaratene, Siefert, and Chess (1988) conducted a national survey of social workers and found that those in private psychotherapy practice had a higher income and greater job satisfaction than social workers in other settings. Frisman (1986) found that having small children at home influenced private practice decisions because private practice offered flexibility. Butler (1992) reported that "students who placed great importance on being their own boss, earning a good income, and having flexible work hours were more likely

than other social work students to plan to enter private practice" (p. 47).

Rubin and Johnson did not measure level of commitment to the poor in their studies, but instead based their conclusions on their interpretations of students' career plans. In the study at hand, students' level of commitment was assessed. The social work students included in the current study who are planning to pursue a career in psychotherapy possessed the attitudes and levels of commitment which lend themselves to working with the poor. Unfortunately, the settings in which they will work typically serve the nonpoor. These properly oriented professionals should be brought together with the consumers whom they are well equipped to help. Professions such as law and medicine have already established public clinics where professionals donate their time and energies to help individuals and families who could not otherwise afford their services. This writer recommends that social work educators begin orienting psychotherapy students toward providing one or several hours of counseling per month to the poor for no charge or at reduced rates.

Explanations for Poverty. Social work students who agreed that the primary reason poverty exists is a lack of technology necessary to solve the problem were least intense in their commitment to the poor. Their position scores were second highest among the four explanations; however, the

intensity scores of those who believe that society does not possess the techniques to eradicate poverty were significantly lower in their emotional involvement with the poor. This finding indicates that students who believe that society doesn't possess the techniques to eradicate poverty may have a favorable view of the needy, but do not feel strongly about the poor. This may be a defense mechanism. If the problem cannot be solved, there is no benefit in feeling strongly about it.

Feagin (1972) surveyed 1,107 randomly selected American adults regarding their beliefs for the existence of poverty. Nearly one-half of the respondents chose individual explanations for poverty, and 42% chose structural explanations. Furnham (1982) questioned 200 adults in England and found that the conservative voters in the sample were most likely to endorse individual explanations for poverty. Reeser and Epstein (1987) compared social workers in 1968 with social workers in 1984 regarding the reasons they gave for the existence of poverty. They found that social workers in 1968 were more likely to endorse individual explanations for poverty. In the 1968 sample, 26% of the social workers endorsed individual explanations, and 40% endorsed structural explanations. In 1984, only 10% of the social workers gave individual reasons for poverty, and 53% gave structural reasons.

Macarov (1981) surveyed mixed groups of BSW and MSW students in Australia, Israel, and the United States. The American and Australian groups gave structural reasons for the existence of poverty and the Israeli students endorsed individual explanations. Roff, Adams, and Klemmack (1984) compared BSW and MSW students and found no differences regarding their beliefs about why poverty exists. In a 1991 survey of BSW students, Schwartz and Robinson found that structural explanations were the most popular choices for why poverty exists, and individual explanations were the least popular.

In the present study, only 6 of 227 subjects (2.6%) chose the individual explanation for the existence of poverty. Across each educational level those students who chose the structural explanation had both higher attitude intensity scores and higher attitude position scores than students who chose one of the other three explanations for the existence of poverty. Altogether, 68% of the respondents selected the structural explanation for the existence of poverty. These findings suggest promising information about social work education: (1) that students in schools of social work possess a profession-desired understanding of the reasons poverty exists, (2) that those who endorse structural explanations for the existence of poverty also hold the profession-preferred disposition toward the poor and are most emotionally committed to their

plight, and (3) that compared to previous studies about social work attitudes toward the poor, the students in 1993 were the least inclined to support individual explanations for poverty. Schools of social work have apparently been successful in transmitting a belief in structural explanations and a distancing from individual explanations among students. This is important because, as the history of social welfare has revealed, beliefs about what causes poverty have led to the choice of methods that are initiated to combat poverty and alleviate the resulting misery. Social workers who support structural explanations are more likely to support efforts which alter discriminatory forces in society and unequal distribution of incomes. Social work educators who currently teach course material which covers the various reasons proposed for the existence of poverty should continue to do so, and those who do not teach such material may want to consider doing so.

N.A.S.W. Membership. This finding suggests that social work students who are members of N.A.S.W. hold the professionally desired attitudes toward the poor. Perhaps N.A.S.W. attracts students who are interested in basic social work priorities such as improving the plight of the poor. These members may be positively influenced by the organization's journals, newsletters, and training programs which, facilitate an awareness of social problems and enable its membership to be informed of professional activities and

agendas. Social work educators should consider the potential value of students' exposure to a professional organization. Getting students involved in professional associations may well produce more committed and well-rounded social workers than may be expected among those students who do not ally themselves with professional organizations.

Years of Social Work with the Poor (Table 31). Through professional, volunteer, and field placement experiences, students gain exposure to the poor. Some research has indicated that contact with a group involved in a struggle facilitates sensitivity to the plight of that group. Also, exposure to a group provides information about them. Social work students with medium and high levels of exposure to the needy were expected to be more positive and more committed to the poor than students with a low level of exposure to the indigent. It was hypothesized that exposure to the less fortunate would shape students' attitudes in the profession-desired direction.

None of the three groups (number of years spent in a paid social work position, years in a paid social work position with the poor, and years of volunteer service or field placement with the poor) were associated with high or low attitude position or attitude intensity scores. Table 30 presents the cross-tabulated tables with a chi-square measure of association for the number of years in social

Table 31: Years of Social Work and Social Work with the Poor

How many years of paid employment in the field of SW have you worked		LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH
POSITION $\chi^2_{(2)} = 1.422$ $p = .491$	LOW	63	14	34
	HIGH	67	18	27
INTENSITY $\chi^2_{(2)} = 1.941$ $p = .379$	LOW	61	15	35
	HIGH	69	17	26

How many years of paid employment in the field of SW did you work with the poor		LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH
POSITION $\chi^2_{(2)} = .047$ $p = .977$	LOW	74	16	21
	HIGH	76	16	20
INTENSITY $\chi^2_{(2)} = 1.772$ $p = .412$	LOW	70	18	23
	HIGH	80	14	18

How many years of volunteer service or field placement have you worked with the poor		LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH
POSITION $\chi^2_{(2)} = 1.429$ $p = .489$	LOW	78	20	11
	HIGH	80	25	7
INTENSITY $\chi^2_{(2)} = 2.201$ $p = .333$	LOW	83	18	9
	HIGH	75	27	9

work and in social work with the poor.

In MANOVA, there were no significant differences on attitude position or attitude intensity scores among students with low, medium, or high levels of social work or social work with the poor. In each of the three variables which addressed social work experiences (paid or volunteer), the students in the medium range were the most positive. This finding may suggest that either a lack of experience or extensive experience are less conducive to favorable attitudes toward the poor than is moderate experience. The hypothesis that favorable attitudes toward the poor and emotional involvement with the poor would be associated with the degree of exposure to the poor through professional and volunteer experiences was not supported.

Social Action Behavior. Favorable attitudes toward the poor and an emotional involvement with their plight may be of little value to the poor if they do not result in action on the poor's behalf. This study sought to identify which student characteristics were associated with levels of social action behavior and which levels of student characteristics differed from one another. The indices of social action behavior were adapted from the work of Epstein (1969) and Reeser and Epstein (1990). They included four types of social action behavior:

1. Institutional social action behavior - "gave service to an agency committee involved in social action," "made

efforts in a professional capacity to influence opinion among the general public," and "wrote a letter to a public official."

2. Noninstitutional social action behavior - "joined a protest."
3. Electoral social action behavior - "contributed money to a political campaign" and "signed letters or petitions supporting a candidate."
4. Professional social action behavior - "participated in social work lobbying for legislation."

Students were asked to indicate which social action behaviors they had participated in over the past two years. Significant associations were discovered among three areas of student characteristics. (1) Students primarily studying in the concentrations of administration and policy, counseling/psychotherapy, and research had a high level of social action behavior. (2) Deciding to pursue an education in social work after graduating from an undergraduate program, but before entering a graduate program, was associated with a high level of social action behavior. (3) Students planning their careers in administration and planning were associated with a high level of social action behavior.

Participating in a high level of social action behavior seemed to be related to favorable attitudes toward the poor. Students who indicated engaging in at least five social

action behaviors were consistently positive in their attitudes toward the poor. The scores varied among those engaging in fewer than five activities. The attitude intensity scores were consistently near the median for students with fewer than five social action behaviors, but varied considerably among the levels of students who had engaged in five or more social action activities.

Reeser and Epstein (1990) reported the findings of a comparison of the social action behaviors of professional social workers from samples in 1968 and 1984 (Epstein, 1969, Reeser and Epstein, 1987). They reported that significantly more social workers in the 1984 study (68%) had contributed money to a political campaign than those in the 1968 study (36%). In 1984, significantly more subjects had participated in social work lobbying for legislation (33%) than had done so in 1968 (12%). Based on their overall findings, the authors concluded, "we see a clear movement toward active involvement in institutional and socially accepted forms of political behavior and away from noninstitutionalized, socially disapproved, conflict based strategies." Reeser and Epstein also suggested that community organizers in both the 1968 and 1984 studies were more involved in social action behaviors than caseworkers or group workers.

In the present sample, 73% of the students responded that they had given service to an agency committee involved

in social action, 51% made efforts in a professional capacity to influence opinion among the general public, and 44% had written a letter to a public official (institutional social action behaviors). Joining a protest was the only noninstitutional social action listed on the questionnaire, and 37% of the subjects reported that they had done so. Regarding electoral social action activities, 46% contributed to a political campaign, and 65% had signed letters or petitions supporting a candidate. Twenty-six percent of the respondents participated in the professional social action behavior which was listed, "participated in social work lobbying for legislation."

One impressive indication of this research was that most social work students were involved in some form of social action behavior. Consistent with previous studies, those involved in traditional social work areas such as community organization and administration and policy were significantly high in their level of social action behavior. Also, a high level of social action activity was related to favorable attitudes toward the poor. These findings suggest that social work educators should encourage students toward social action behavior and consider means to motivate the students' involvement.

Major Area of Concentration. Students who choose primary areas of study which deal with the poverty and the problems of the poor spend more time on related content than

students who study areas which do not deal with poverty or the poor. Clinical students focus on psychological disorders and therapeutic interventions. Students in gerontology deal primarily with the problems of the elderly. Research students study research methods and statistical applications for data analysis. Those students preparing for medical social work will most likely work in hospitals or for home health agencies. Referrals for medical social work services mostly come from doctors or nurses, often for clients with insurance coverage. For students studying social work education, emphasis is on preparing for the classroom.

Students in several other areas of concentration can expect to deal with poverty and the poor. Students studying public welfare, family and children services, and school social work prepare for work with the poor and study related problems. Administration and policy students study decision-making and policy practices which affect the underclass. It was anticipated that students in primary areas that deal with the poor would hold more favorable attitudes toward the poor and be more committed to their struggle than students who were in primary areas that focused on populations other than the impoverished. For the most part, this hypothesis held true; medical social work students and those studying social work education were the least favorable and intense in their attitudes toward the

poor, and students studying school social work, administration and policy, and family and children services were among the most favorable and intense. However, there were exceptions. The major deviation from the expected results was among clinical students. They were among the most positive and most intense toward the poor.

Social Work Ethics Classes. The Hastings Center (1980) report on higher education recommended that professional ethics be presented in a course to all students. The CSWE Curriculum Policy Statement requires that professional ethics and values be taught. Previous research has produced mixed results regarding the effectiveness of social work education in transmitting social work ethics and values to students. Sharwell (1974) and Merdinger (1982) concluded that students moved in the profession-desired direction as a result of social work education. Judah (1979) and Schwartz and Robinson (1991) indicated that social work education was unable to affect students' ethics and values in desired directions. Hayes and Varley (1965) and Varley (1968, 1975) reported students either did not move or moved in undesirable directions as a result of social work education.

There is confusion among social work educators regarding the teaching of social work ethics and values. Two particular questions deal with how ethics and values should be taught. Should ethics and values be the focus of a discrete course, offered as part of another course, or

integrated throughout the curriculum? Should courses on ethics and values be required of all students or be offered as an elective for those who are interested?

Joseph and Conrad (1983) compared the effectiveness of two models for teaching social work ethics and values. One model was a discrete course on social work ethics, and the other integrated ethics content throughout the entire curriculum. They reported that students who were exposed to a discrete ethics course "were significantly more prepared to deal with ethical content and to utilize the components of the ethical model than those who were not exposed to the course" and suggested that "schools of social work develop curricula that explicitly integrate content as well as provide opportunity for ethical reflection and systematic analysis" (p. 67). Joseph and Conrad concluded that the discrete course was superior over the practice of integrating ethics into the curricula.

The present study considered that the various schools of social work may offer a discrete ethics and values course, may integrate ethics content into the curriculum, may instruct ethics as part of another course, or may utilize some combination of these methods to communicate ethics and values to students. Because of this consideration, students were asked to indicate how many ethics "classes" they had been exposed to rather than the number of ethics "courses." The purpose of structuring the

question in this fashion was to allow responses from students who had been exposed to any of the above-mentioned means of teaching ethics and values. Those students who had been exposed to ethics content through other courses could indicate the number of classes which focused on ethics and those who had an ethics course could indicate having a large number of ethics classes.

An alarming 40% of the sample reported having been exposed to no social work ethics classes. Given the recommendations of the Hasting Center and the mandate of CSWE, this finding raises a concern for social work education. This finding suggests a lack of attention to the matter of introducing ethics content by faculty. Perhaps educators are preoccupied with the various emerging areas of specialization, rather than instruction regarding social work's foundation. Social work educators should not assume that students come to schools of social work with the profession-desired ethical orientation or that students absorb such ethics and values as a result of the education process.

The intensity scores among the levels of ethics classes students were exposed to were similar, and the position scores were the highest for the group of students who reported having no ethics classes. One must conclude that social work ethics courses had no affect on students' attitudes toward the poor.

This conclusion leads to several recommendations for social work education:

1. Schools of social work should assess the student's attitudes, values, and knowledge of ethics to evaluate the need for injecting related material into the curriculum.
2. All social work programs should require a discrete course that focuses on social work ethics and values. Basic social work ethics and values would be communicated at the BSW level. Course content would progress in the graduate programs to include ethical concerns of decisions and practices that affect clients groups. This would cover disciplines such as social work, government, and economics. The classes would provide opportunities through role-playing, decision-making exercises, class presentations, and group discussions for students to explore their values as they apply to areas of social work.
3. Faculty should periodically evaluate the effectiveness of their strategies for transmitting the proper professional ethics and values to students.

Social Work's Main Mission for the 1990s. A quarter of the sample believed that affecting social policy through legislation should be social work's main mission for the 1990s. This is a promising implication for the poor because social work's most powerful mechanism for positively

affecting the masses of the poor lies in affecting social policy. The poor have limited power and look to social work to advocate in their behalf. By being involved in social policy decisions, social workers can help shape social policies that affect the poor.

Social workers are often looked to by the public and legislators to bring their unique orientation and insights into the social policy arena. A substantial number of students in the sample seemed to perceive value in and support social workers taking leadership roles in promoting social policies to accomplish social goals. This finding holds promise for the profession's involvement in social policy decisions; however, if social workers expect to competently compete in the area, it is critical that they are equipped with the skills. It is the author's impression that training in policy practice skills such as legislative advocacy, social policy analysis, social action, and reform through litigation is not routinely provided in schools of social work. Often, if these skills are provided, instruction is targeted only to those students already interested in this area.

Many students besides those studying administration and policy believed that affecting social policy was paramount for the profession in this decade. Broadening the scope of students receiving training in policy practice skills could lead to increased competence and participation in social

policy among social workers in the future. This would facilitate a stronger power base for the profession, enabling more effective input into policy decisions.

In the sample of students who participated in this research, those who chose affecting social policy over the other nine choices of what social work's main mission for the 1990s should be had the most favorable attitudes toward the poor. Based on this and the above-mentioned implications for social work and the poor, schools of social work should stress the importance of affecting social policy. Social work programs should provide a foundation in policy practice skills and also include training specific to the area and clientele with which the students will work.

Peer Expectations. Believing that their peers expected the student to think favorably toward the poor appeared to be related to a favorable attitude toward the poor and a commitment to the poor. Being unclear about how one's peers expected the student to think about the poor was related to less favorable attitudes toward the poor and a lack of emotional involvement with the poor. The students who thought that their peers expected them to think very favorably about the poor were the most favorable in their attitudes toward the poor, and this group was significantly more intense in their attitudes toward the poor than the group of students who were unclear about how their peers

expected them to think about the poor. This finding suggests that the educational process should facilitate an environment where students discuss their attitudes toward the poor and communicate their expectations to one another.

Time Decided to Pursue an Education in Social Work. There were no significant differences in attitude position scores among the various levels of the time in the students' lives that they decided to pursue an education in social work; however, the students who decided to pursue an education in social work before they entered high school were the lowest group in intensity scores. In previous studies, students who decided to pursue an education in social work before graduating from high school were more positive in their attitudes toward the poor (Grimm & Orten, 1971) and significantly more intense (Orten, 1979) than students who decided to upon social work at sometime later in life. This finding suggests that contemporary social work students who made up their mind early in life to pursue an education in social work were different than their predecessors in their emotional involvement with the poor.

Orten (1979) noted that social work has historically attracted persons who felt compelled to reform the poor. Peterson and Fox (1967) asserted that some who have come into social work may have not particularly liked the poor, nor were they committed to their plight; rather they have been motivated to do something "to" the poor instead of

"for" them. The findings from the present research indicate that modern social work students were not drawn to the field because they have "always wanted to work with the poor." A clear majority of the students (79%) made the decision to pursue an education in social work after they had already entered an undergraduate program. Those who decided to enter social work later in life appeared to come in with the profession-desired attitudes and levels of social action behavior. Further research should consider the reasons students are drawn to social work and what factors influence students to pursue social work education later in life.

Ideological Movement Expected by the Profession. Less than one-third of the subjects believed that their ideological position toward the poor matched that expected by the profession, and 17% were unclear in which direction the profession expected them to move. This finding indicates that the majority of the students in the sample were aware of the profession-desired ideological position toward the poor, but this position was not their own.

Considering social work's radical roots, social work students have become more conservative over time. Nearly 44% of the students believed that the profession expected them to move toward the "left," and only 8% thought that the profession expected them to be more conservative. That social work students have generally become more conservative is consistent with the findings of a study that suggested

that American college students as a whole have become more conservative over the past two decades. With the absence of a generational crisis such as the draft or the Vietnam War, students are focusing on more immediate issues in their personal lives - their own hopes and plans (Staff, 1988, p. 9). Should the trend toward conservatism among social work students continue, the profession will likely further distance itself from traditional social work goals.

Race. African-American students were more intense in their attitudes than White students, but White students were more positive in the attitudes toward the poor. This finding is consistent with those of Orten's 1979 study. As Orten pointed out, "part of the explanation for this relationship must be in the fact that blacks as a group have experienced more poverty than whites" (p. 128). It appears that intellectually, Whites have a more favorable attitude toward the poor, but feel less strongly about it.

Limitations

Ensuring that the instrument used in the research measures what it intends to measure is important to achieve internal validity of the design. The AATP was developed from the work of Sherif, who developed a valid instrument to assess attitudes toward African-Americans. As mentioned in Chapter 5, the AATP successfully distinguished between known pro-poor and anti-poor groups, and the reliability of the

AATP has been established. Also, the "disguised" nature of the AATP increases the likelihood of a valid assessment by making the instrument less sensitive to socially desirable response sets.

Most threats to internal validity were minimized by the design. The threat of "instrumentation" was not an issue because the instrument remained the same through each administration and the same researcher coordinated the survey process in a uniform manner for each school and program. "History" concerns were minimal because the instrument was administered to students during the same semester (Spring, 1993). The threats of "maturation" and "mortality" were relatively small. The short period of time required to complete the instrument reduced the chances of boredom or fatigue which could affect the subjects' performance on the instrument, and only 3 students (1.3%) began, but did not complete the instrument. The threat of "testing" was minimized by the disguised nature of the instrument. The subjects had not seen the instrument prior to the administration, and the potential for their sensitivity to the researchers' wants or expectations should not have prevented a valid performance.

The "selection" threat was the most substantial concern regarding the internal validity of the design. Only those students in the population which attended a major university that offered a Bachelor's, Master's, and Doctoral degree

were considered for involvement in the research. It may be that students from small urban universities in the population differ from students in big urban universities in some ways. There might be pre-existing differences among the two groups of students which would affect their attitude position scores and attitude intensity scores. Although students from rural and urban universities were not compared, this selection threat to internal validity places limitations on the ability to generalize the results to the entire population of American social work students.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to identify which educational, personal, and professional student characteristics were related to favorable and unfavorable attitudes toward the poor and which characteristics were related to various degrees of emotional involvement with the poor. A total of 243 BSW, MSW, and PhD students from six major universities in the Mid-Atlantic and Southeastern United States participated in the study. The Disguised Structured Instrument for the Assessment of Attitudes Toward the Poor measured students' attitude position and level of attitude intensity. A 33-item questionnaire gathered information regarding the independent variables selected for use in the research.

A review of significant findings reveals that the hypothesis regarding attitude position and attitude intensity scores increasing as does the level of education was not supported. Master's students were the most favorable toward the poor and most committed to their plight. Bachelor's students were the least favorable toward the poor. Doctoral students were the least intense in their attitudes toward the poor, raising concerns about their impact on BSW when doctoral graduates take teaching positions.

Students whose primary interests and career plans included administration and policy, mental health/psychotherapy, research, social work education and school social work were the most favorable groups toward the poor and those in administration and policy and school social work were the most intense. Future medical social workers were low in both attitude position and attitude intensity, and those studying social work education were low in attitude intensity.

Two-thirds of the student chose the structural explanation for poverty, and only 2.7% chose individual explanations. The group who chose the structural explanation were favorable and intense in their attitudes toward the poor. Students who were members of the National Association of Social Workers were significantly more positive in their attitudes toward the poor than students

who were nonmembers. Students who believed that their peers expected them to think favorably about the poor were significantly more intense in their attitudes toward the poor than students who were unclear how their peers expected them to think about the poor.

Administration and policy students and research students were associated with a high level of social action behavior. Those students who decided to pursue an education in social work after they had graduated from an undergraduate program, but before entering a graduate program, were also associated with a high level of social action activity.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

Consent Letter For Study Participation

CONSENT LETTER FOR STUDY PARTICIPATION

I am conducting a survey of social work students in the mid-eastern and southeastern United States. The purpose of the survey is to provide information that will improve areas of social work education. I am collecting this information from undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral social work students.

All information given by the social work students will be treated in a highly confidential manner. No names of those individuals who complete the questionnaire will be reported or included in published results. Only myself will have access to the names of participants. This information will be stored in my office at my home, until completion of the study, at which time it will be destroyed.

I am requesting your participation in the study by completing the attached questionnaire. Your participation is completely voluntary and no one will be informed of your decision to participate or not to participate. If you do decide to participate, you may omit answering any questions that you do not wish to answer or discontinue participation at any time.

If you decide to participate, please sign the statement below. If you have any questions about the study or your participation in the study, please contact me at (615) 694-9138.

Sincerely,

Paul D. Baggett, L.C.S.W.
Doctoral Student in Social Work
The University of Tennessee
318 Henson Hall
Knoxville, TN 37996-3333

I agree to participate in the study described above. I understand that my responses will be kept completely confidential and that the names of those who complete questionnaires will not be reported in any manner.

Signature_____ Date_____

Name (print)_____ Phone(___)_____

APPENDIX B

Cover Letter for Doctoral Students

Paul Baggett
9211 Millstone Lane
Knoxville, TN 37922

Dear Fellow Doctoral Student,

This letter is to request your participation in research I'm doing for my dissertation. I can relate to how busy you must be and would appreciate your taking the time to complete the enclosed instrument. The instrument is two-part. In the first component are 40 statements about the poor which you are asked to judge. The other part is a questionaire asking some of your social work experiences and some of your thoughts about poverty. It takes about 30 minutes.

A sample of students from the undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral social work programs at The University of Alabama, Clark Atlanta University, Florida State University, The University of Georgia, Howard University, and Virginia Commonwealth University are involved in the effort. The dean and the director of your doctoral program have your participation in the study.

Your responses will be kept completely confidential. Upon receipt of questionaires in Knoxville, the letter of consent will be separated from the answer sheets. This ensures names and responses cannot be matched.

I'd very much value your participation. If you are willing to be part of my study, please complete the instrument and return it to me in the envelope provided. There is an one dollar bill stapled to the last page. Please detach and keep it. If, for some reason, you are not willing to complete the instrument, please return it to me in the envelope. Call me collect at 615-694-9138 if you have any questions.

Thanks,

Paul Baggett
Doctoral Candidate, Social Work
The University of Tennessee

APPENDIX C

Instrument for the Assessment of Attitudes Toward the Poor

Instructions for "Statements About the Poor" Section

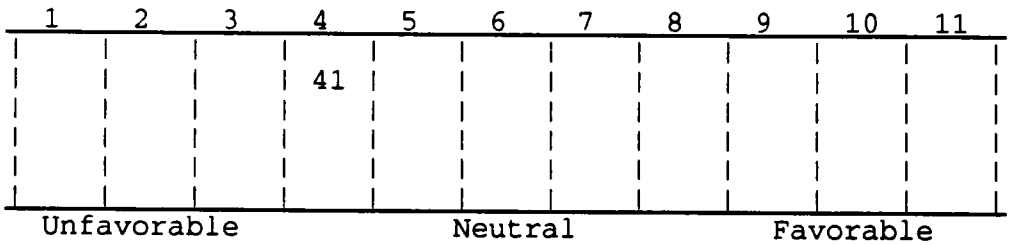
On the following two pages are 40 statements about the poor. The purpose of this project is to judge whether these statements are **favorable** or **unfavorable** toward the poor.

You will find it easy to decide whether some of the statements are "true" or "false." Please note that this is **NOT** what is being asked. You are asked to judge each statement on whether it represents a **favorable** or **unfavorable attitude toward the poor.** It is sometimes useful to imagine you are at a party and you over-hear each of these statements, in turn, made by a person you have never seen. On the basis of each statement alone, try to decide whether the person making it has a **favorable** or **unfavorable attitude toward the poor.**

The next page is the answer sheet. Use it to record your responses along a dimension from **"1"** to **"11"** where **"1"** means that the statement represents a very **unfavorable attitude the poor**, **"6"** a **neutral attitude toward the poor** and **"11"** represents very **favorable attitude toward the poor.** For example:

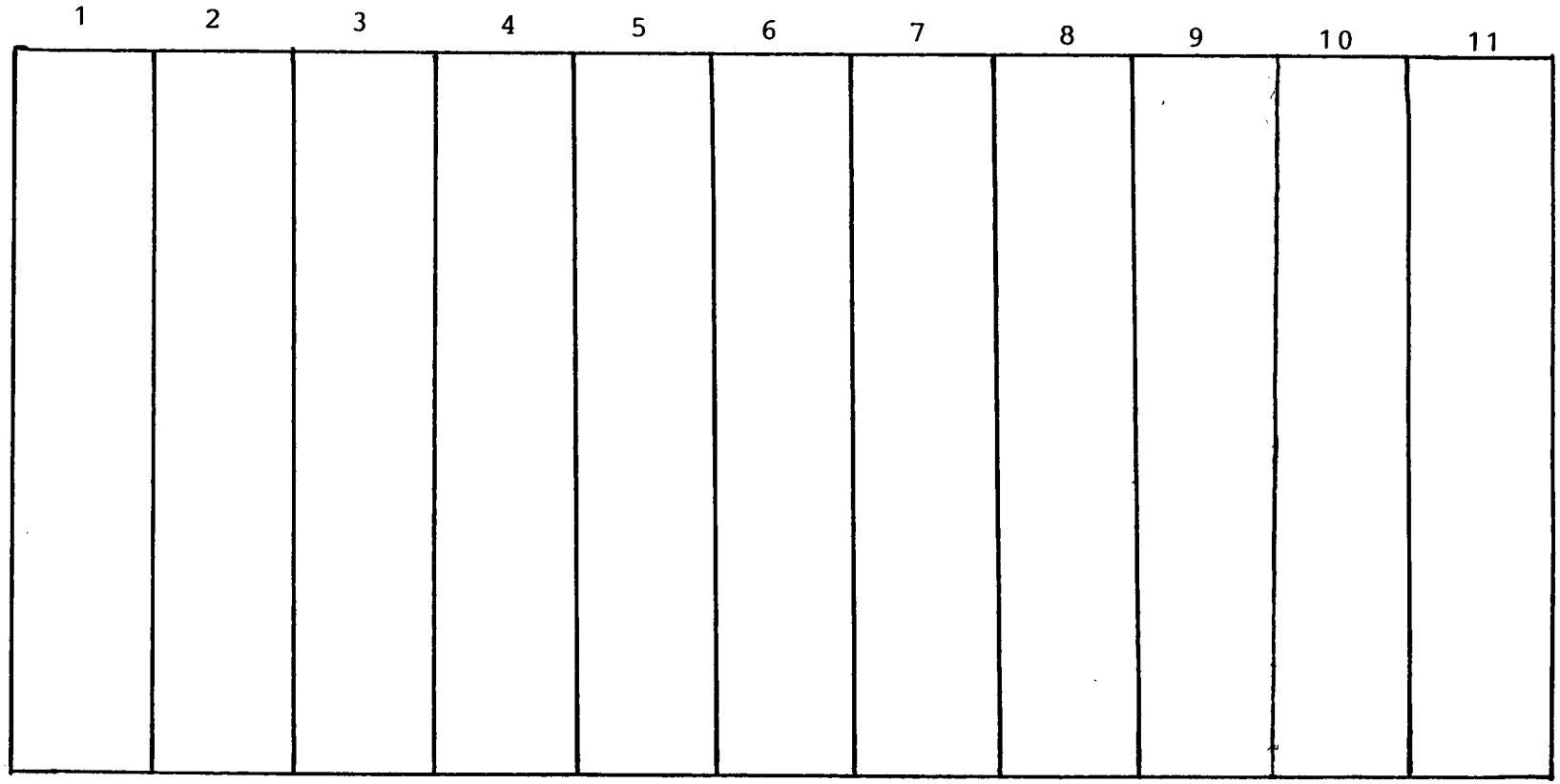
41. The poor buy steak with food stamps.

If you think statement #41 represents a somewhat **unfavorable attitude toward the poor**, you would place the number 41 in box 4 or 5 on the answer sheet. If you think statement #41 represents a **very unfavorable attitude toward the poor**, you would place the number 41 in box 1 or 2 on the answer sheet. As well, if you think statement #41 represents a **favorable attitude toward the poor**, you would place the number 41 in one of the boxes from 7 to 11. If you think it represents a **neutral attitude toward the poor**, place the number 41 in box 6.



* the student felt that statement #41 represented a somewhat unfavorable attitude toward the poor.

You may use as many boxes as you need and as many times as you need to accurately reflect your judgements of the attitude represented by the individual statements. Some boxes will have more numbers than others, so please space the numbers in the boxes in such a way that they are distinguishable.



ANSWER SHEET

STATEMENTS ABOUT THE POOR

STATEMENTS ABOUT THE POOR

1. The poor care little if anything about their own families.
2. The poor should be brought into the main current of society for the good of all concerned.
3. Poor people always laugh and sing and never seem to have a care or worry.
4. The poor are hungry for a bigger share in the American plenty.
5. Poor people are merely lazy people.
6. The poor have their own way of doing things are generally wish to keep it.
7. The poor are morally right in their cause, and equality can not and should not be denied.
8. Most poor people would not know what to do with higher pay.
9. There should be no legal restrictions on physical and social contacts of the poor with others.
10. All poor people should be treated in about the same way because they are members of one class.
11. The main difference between the poor and others is a way of life or cultural difference.
12. The general population must protect itself from the potentially degrading influence or the poor.
13. Many poor people can honestly say that they have never encountered crude forms of discrimination.
14. The homes of the poor should be segregated from the rest of the community.
15. Poor people have few recreation places and these are not adequate nor well-equipped.
16. Public schools should be attended strictly in terms of the area in which a family lives.
17. Poverty is a result of moral weakness.
18. There is no conceivable reason why poor people should not be integrated into our society.
19. A person who wants to work can find a job.
20. When a poor person needs money, a business man or banker will loan it to them.

21. The poor people want to own things; they have no feeling for people.

22. There are a few poor people who would not know what to do with higher pay if they had it.

23. There is one thing about the poor; they know their place and keep it.

24. Poor people can be counted on to be good, trusted friends.

25. The poor are pushing too hard and want too much too soon.

26. Poor people are treated like second-class citizens because all too often that is what they are.

27. The poor are kindly, honest people who only want to lead their lives without interference from others.

28. If the poor seem backward, it is because they have not taken advantage of their opportunities to advance.

29. The poor, too, have obligations to uphold.

30. It is up to the poor to take advantage of the opportunities around them to become real equals.

31. The poor are as a familiar a part of the city as buses and street lights.

32. Most poor people have no sense of obligation or responsibiity.

33. The poor insist on special privileges, yet they wish to be treated as equals.

34. The poor do not want their children to learn to speak properly.

35. Poverty is the result of a lack of intelligence.

36. Family life and morals among poor people are both different and lower than among the wealthy.

37. It is only right that the poor should enjoy country clubs and other facilities along with the wealthy.

38. The poor stubbornly refuse to give up their way of life, and yet are willing to give their lives to protect their country.

39. The arguments for and against subsidized housing for the poor in middle-class neighborhoods are about equal.

40. Poor people would not know what to do with higher pay.

APPENDIX D

Questionnaire

QUESTIONS ABOUT YOU AND YOUR IDEAS

please print the most appropriate number in the blanks

1.___ Program you're in:

(1) B.S.W./B.S.S.W.
(2) M.S.W./M.S.S.W.
(3) D.S.W.
(4) Ph.D.
(5) other_____

2.___ Year of study in program in current program:

(1) first
(2) second
(3) third
(4) fourth
(5) fifth
(6) sixth
(7) seventh
(8) other_____

3.___ Major area of concentration in program:

(1) administration/policy
(2) family and children services
(3) gerontology
(4) medical social work
(5) mental health/psychotherapy
(6) public welfare
(7) research
(8) school social work
(9) social work education
(10) undeclared
(11) other_____

4.___ When did you decide to pursue an education in social work?

(1) before high school
(2) during high school
(3) after graduating from high school, but before entering an undergraduate program
(4) during undergraduate program
(5) after graduating from undergraduate program, but before entering a graduate program.
(6) during graduate program
(7) other_____

5.___ Which of the following causes most closely reflects your thoughts about what social work's main mission should be for the 1990s?

(1) advocating for equal rights for minorities
(2) affecting social policy through legislation
(3) fighting discrimination and prejudice
(4) improving direct social work practice
(5) improving hardware and software technology
(6) improving the plight of the poor
(7) increasing research efforts
(8) training psychotherapists
(9) other_____

6.___ Below are 4 explanations given for the existence of poverty. Which one most closely reflects your views regarding reasons for the existence of poverty?

(1) People representing different interests do not often enough sit down together to work out the problem.

(2) Poor people are not adequately motivated to take advantage of existing opportunities.

(3) Powerful economic and political interests are fundamentally opposed to the solution of the problem of poverty.

(4) We do not possess the necessary knowledge and techniques to eradicate poverty.

7.___ I would say that a family of four should be considered "poor" if their yearly household income is UNDER:

(1) $2,500	(5) $12,500	(9) $22,500	(13) $32,500
(2) $5,000	(6) $15,000	(10) $25,000	(14) $35,000
(3) $7,500	(7) $17,500	(11) $27,500	(15) $37,500
(4) $10,000	(8) $20,000	(12) $30,000	(16) other $_____

8.___ What are your career plans?

(1) administration/policy
(2) family and children services
(3) gerentological social work
(4) medical social work
(5) psychotherapy/counseling
(6) public welfare
(7) research
(8) school social work
(9) social work educat.
(10) other_____

9.___ How many years of paid employment in the field of social work have you worked? (please put the # in the blank)

10.___ How many years of paid employment in the field of social work did you work with the poor? (ex. DHS, AFDC)

11.___ How often do you currently have direct contact with the poor in a paid or volunteer experience?

(1) everyday
(2) four or five times a week
(3) two or three times a week
(4) once a week
(5) twice a month
(6) once a month
(7) once every other mo.
(8) twice a year
(9) never
(10) other_____

12.___ How many years of volunteer service or field placement have you worked with the poor?

13.___ How many social work ethics classes have you had?

Please indicate whether you have taken any of the following actions in the past two years.

please use this scale to answer items 14 through 21

0 = NO
1 = YES

14.___ contributed money to a political campaign

15.___ gave service to an agency committee involved in social action

16.___ joined a protest

17.___ made efforts in a professional capacity to influence opinion among the general public (ex. public speaking, preparation of informational material)

18.___ participated in social work lobbying for legislation

19.___ signed letters or petitions supporting a candidate

20.___ wrote a letter to a public official

21.___ other_____

22.___ In relationship to the majority of students in your program, do you think your attitudes toward the poor are:

(1) much more favorable
(2) somewhat more favorable
(3) about the same
(4) somewhat less favorable
(5) much less favorable

23.___ How do you believe the majority of students in your program expect you to think about the poor?

(1) very favorably
(2) somewhat favorably
(3) neutral
(4) somewhat unfavorably
(5) very unfavorably
(6) they don't care what I think
(7) I'm unclear what they expect me to think

24.___ With regard to your ideological position toward the poor, do you think the profession expects you to be:

(1) more conservative
(2) more liberal
(3) more radical
(4) the same as I am
(5) I'm unclear in which direction the profession expects me to move

25.___ Are you a member of NASW? (1) yes (2) no

26.___ Are you a registered voter? (1) yes (2) no

27.___ What is your political affiliation?

(1) Democrat
(2) Independent
(3) Republican
(4) other_____

28.___ Your sex? (1) female (2) male

29.___ Your current marital status?

(1) single/never married
(2) divorced/separated
(3) married
(4) widowed

30.___ In what year were you born? (ex. if you were born in 1967, please enter 67 in the blank)

31.___ Your race?
(1) African American
(2) Arabic
(3) Asian
(4) Hispanic
(5) White
(6) other_____

32.___ What was your family's approximate income while you were growing up?

(1) under $5,000
(2) $5,001 to $10,000
(3) $10,001 to $15,000
(4) $15,001 to $20,000
(5) $20,001 to $25,000
(6) $25,001 to $30,000
(7) $30,001 to $35,000
(8) $35,001 to $40,000
(9) $40,001 to $50,000
(10) $50,001 to $60,000
(11) $60,001 to $100,000
(12) over $100,000

33.___ How many siblings do you have?

*****Thank you for your time and effort*****

VITA

Paul David Baggett was born in Bangor, Maine on November 17, 1957. He grew up in Williamsport, Pennsylvania where he attended elementary schools in the Williamsport Area School District and graduated from Williamsport Area High School in June, 1975. The following September he entered Lock Haven State College in Lock Haven, Pennsylvania and in December, 1981 received the degree of Bachelor of Social Work. He entered The University of Georgia, Athens in June, 1982 and in August 1983, received a Master of Social Work degree. In August, 1988 he entered The University of Tennessee, Knoxville and in August, 1994 received a Doctor of Philosophy degree in Social Work.

He is presently employed part-time as a psychotherapist with several organizations in the Knoxville area. He plans to pursue a career as an educator on the university level.