Projects Explore Old Age Myths and Facts

Old age. Horrible, frightening words to most of us. With the American way of life seemingly geared to the young and vigorous, old age is unfortunately looked upon too often as nothing more than a gloomy twilight replete with a deteriorating body and a shell of dimming memories.

Dr. Nancy Lohmann of the Knoxville Branch of the UT School of Social Work is currently involved in several research projects dealing with the elderly. By showing that old age can be a time of great personal fulfillment, she is attempting to puncture the belief that we automatically slip into low gear upon turning 65.

"Gerontologists are especially sensitive to societal 'myths' about life ending at 65," according to Lohmann. Funded by a University of Tennessee post-doctoral fellowship, one of her present projects shows that many people 65 and older exhibit strong future orientations.

"The average life expectancy of someone who lives to be 65 is another 14.8 years," Lohmann said. "Thus, the individual who lives to retire at 65 has at least another decade and one-half to plan for."

Orientations among the aged that Lohmann has isolated include financial plans for an extended period of time, plans for living status and housing, interest and involvement in political affairs, and interest in and continued awareness of other current affairs.

Another aging project that Lohmann is currently advising is an evaluation of the Knox County Foster Grandparent Program. This program employs older low income persons to work with disadvantaged children and presently has 55 people working at city and county Head Start programs, special education programs, the Knoxville Sunshine learning center and local Boys and Girls clubs.

Directed by UTSSW alumnus Ellen Netting, the program provides the foster grandparents with the chance to gain useful learning experiences while aiding the handicapped and disadvantaged children. UTSSW students Linda Busby and Marcia Adams presently have field assignments with the program.

The evaluation of the program entails interviews and questionnaires to determine the project's effectiveness in dealing with the emotional needs of both the children and the grandparents. Interviews with the children's teachers every three months help determine the amount of progress made as a result of the grandparents' interaction. Changes in the grandparents are also pinpointed through the administration of a questionnaire every three months.

Evaluation of the project will help specify the impact on both the children (continued on Page 7)
Non-Credit Opportunities

NATIONAL

NATIONAL COUNCIL ON FAMILY RELATIONS -
Annual Meeting: August 23-28
San Diego, California

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR MENTAL HEALTH -
Annual Meeting: October 23-28
Washington, D.C.

LUTHERAN CONFERENCE ON SOCIAL CONCERN -
Biennial Forum: October 30 - November 2
Minneapolis, Minnesota

NASW PROFESSIONAL SYMPOSIUM -
Biennial Forum: November 19-22
San Diego, California

REGIONAL

OFFICE OF CONTINUING SOCIAL WORK
EDUCATION FALL SYMPOSIUM - September, 1977
A series of 15 workshops offered state wide
Detailed information available this summer.

HUMAN SERVICES TRAINING CONFERENCE -
November 7-9
Gatlinburg, Tennessee
(see story on this page)

OCSWE Offers Training Conference

A conference on training in the human services will be presented November 7-9, 1977, at the Sheraton Inn in Gatlinburg, Tennessee, by the Office of Continuing Social Work Education, the University of Tennessee School of Social Work.

The conference, which is intended as an exchange of practice and ideas on the state of training in the human services, will offer explorations on the topics of needs assessment, design of program and materials, evaluations, and modes of delivery. The conference will also offer the opportunity for participants to discover and share the work of colleagues in such fields of interest as aging, child welfare, mental health, corrections, rehabilitation services, family services, and other similar areas.

The first two days of the conference will be devoted to generic design issues, as well as exchange in content areas, while the third will feature a fair at which all participants can review materials developed by colleagues and display their own products.

Persons interested in attending the conference should contact the Office of Continuing Social Work Education, 2012 Lake Avenue, Knoxville, Tennessee, 37916, or call (615) 974-3175.

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA OFFERS FOSTER CARE VIDEO TAPES

The University of Minnesota Office of Continuing Education in Social Work is now offering a series of video tapes dealing with issues of foster care. Produced by the Media Resources, Continuing Education and Extension, Rarig Center, and the Department of Continuing Education in Social Work, School of Social Work, the tapes are available for preview, rental, and/or purchase.

Titles of the video tapes include:
NEW DIRECTIONS, TEAM APPROACH I & II,
SHARED PARENTING, CHILD AND THE COMM-
UNITY, BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT, SEPARATION
AND GRIEVING, AND CULTURAL DIFFERENCES.

For further information, contact:
Susan M. Antikainen, Coordinator
Foster Care Education Program
338 Nolte Center
315 Pillsbury Drive, S.E.
University of Minnesota
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455

or call: (612) 373-5831
Pilot Program Offers Cancer Patient Counseling

Cancer patients are generally considered to be the sole concern of medical authorities, but a pilot Oncology (study of tumors) Counseling Project by a professor at the Memphis Branch of the UT School of Social Work has shown the desirability of a social work intervention program for patients and their families.

Operating primarily from Baptist Memorial Hospital, the project was conducted by Lou McCullough in an attempt to demonstrate the need for such counseling services. Patients were referred into the project by hospital staff physicians.

Patients, their families, and selected medical personnel at the hospital were surveyed by means of a questionnaire, but according to Ms. McCullough, "there was also allowance for a more subjective narrative evaluation." Other than the evaluation of the program, information on the patients was collected at the project's beginning and end.

Patients and families were offered a series of comprehensive services over a period of 10 months. During this time 70 patients were referred into the program by 19 physicians. McCullough found that she was able to utilize several different intervention procedures in dealing with the cancer patients.

"Individual treatment was the method most frequently employed, but family therapy was possible and appropriate with many patients," McCullough writes. "Often, patients were seen individually and these one-to-one sessions were combined with family treatment." Another approach that also proved effective was "a group approach with five patients and family members participating that was conducted for an eight weeks period of time."

Even though the main thrust of the project was on the hospitalized patients, other forms of intervention and counseling were also used. These included follow-through visits in physicians' offices, Ms. McCullough's office, and on occasion in the patients' homes. McCullough also found that the hospital's cooperation aided in the success of the program.

"In-patient status gave people access to the hospital's Nurse Liaison Department, an established discharge planning and community resource linkage service provided by the hospital," according to Ms. McCullough.

She was pleased with the outcome of the project, finding that "the counseling service was utilized by recipients in a positive way." Changes that were noted in the functioning and emotional outlook of patients and families were substantiated by positive feedback from patients and relatives. "Only a minority of persons indicated their disapproval of the service," McCullough found, as only three persons requested cessation of the help offered. A few families "resisted the service even though the patient himself was receptive."

"...NEED FAR EXCEEDS CAPACITY..."

Other indications of positive feedback about the program included enthusiastic responses by cancer specialists at the hospital, requests for visits from people in the project, their positive comments, and a continued utilization of the counseling services by the patients and their families.

"The program's acceptance substantiated the need for readily available psychosocial intervention for the cancer patient," McCullough determined. "Such a service would of necessity have an active outreach component until well established and known." She also predicts that "in time, screening techniques or selective criteria would have to be established as the need far exceeds the capacity of a newly implemented program's available personnel."

With the Baptist Memorial Hospital alone diagnosing 2,500 new cases of cancer a year, McCullough feels that "social work intervention for cancer patients is a top priority concern."
Of Human Interest

SHARON A. KELTS, a student at the Nashville Branch of the UTSSW, has been awarded a University of Tennessee Hilton A. Smith Graduate Fellowship. The award is named for the retired UT Vice Chancellor for Graduate Studies and Research.

DR. HARRIET WILSON, on the faculty of the Knoxville Branch, will be the guest speaker at the annual "Social Worker as Psychotherapist" Institute sponsored by the New Jersey Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers. The 1977 Institute will be in Trenton on October 28.

MARGARET FERNEA, a former UTSSW faculty member, is currently serving as president of the Tennessee Chapter of the Society for Clinical Social Workers. Headquartered in Nashville, the Chapter is affiliated with the National Federation for Clinical Social Workers, Inc.

LYNN ABBOTT and JEAN CAPOWSKI, 1976 graduates of the Nashville Branch, have had an abstract accepted by the NASW Symposium on "Humanizing Social Work Skills." The paper is based on a seminar report on religion and social work treatment presented in a Treatment Relationship class in the Fall of 1975.

DR. MAUMMER CETINGOK, on the faculty of the Memphis Branch, will be leaving this summer after teaching of the Accelerated Program. Dr. Cetingok is returning to his native Turkey for 18 months of military service.

DRS. ROGER and NANCY LOHMANN, of the Knoxville Branch, will not be returning to the UTSSW in the fall. Both have accepted positions with the School of Social Work at West Virginia University in Morgantown, West Virginia. The move means a promotion for Nancy to Associate Professor and the couple, who have strong interests in aging research, will be joining a faculty that contains five individuals with an interest in social gerontology.

New UTSSW Faculty

Fall 1977 will see the addition of three new members to the faculty of the University of Tennessee School of Social Work. Drs. Carl Wilks and Arelius Knight will teach at the Memphis Branch and Dr. Denzel Johnston will be in Knoxville.

Completing his Ph.D. in Educational Psychology and Counseling at the University of Kentucky, Johnston is a former Chief of Social Services for the Casa Blanca Convalescent Centers in San Diego, California. A native of Yale, Oklahoma, he moved to Kentucky in 1970 as an assistant professor and director of the Family and Children's Teaching Center.

Wilks, a native of Springfield, Missouri, comes to UT from St. Louis University where he is presently chief social worker in the Child Development Clinic. He received his Ph.D. from St. Louis U. in 1974, in 1972 and 1975 appeared in Outstanding Young Men in America, and in 1975 was named to the first edition of Who's Who in Black America.

Knight, completing his Ph.D. under a National Fellowship from the Ford Foundation at the University of Pittsburgh, is a former Deputy Director of the Urban League of Rochester, New York. He has also been an assistant professor of sociology at Mankato (Minnesota) State College and a visiting lecturer at Bryn Mawr (Pennsylvania) College's Graduate School of Social Work and Social Research.

Stimulus

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STIMULUS is a quarterly publication of the UT School of Social Work. Submit letters or other material to STIMULUS, UT School of Social Work 2012 Lake Avenue Knoxville, TN 37916
Retention Level of Helping Skills Examined

Interpersonal Helping Skills (IHS) can effectively determine how well a social worker interacts with a client. The ability to project an empathetic attitude toward the client, to communicate a feeling of openness, to communicate warmth, and yet to maintain a stance of objectivity is an invaluable tool for social workers.

Social workers are hopefully armed with these IHS while in school, but it is often difficult to determine how well they may have been initially learned and retained over a period of months or years. Professors at the Nashville Branch of the UTSSW are now taking steps to alleviate this shortcoming through the development of a model IHS program that will allow a valid evaluation of the amount of retention of these skills by graduate social work students.

Jointly conducted by Drs. Eldon Marshall, David Kurtz, and Robert Holloway, the project has as its purposes (1) to develop a model IHS training program and (2) to examine the acquisition and long term retention of interpersonal helping skills by both trainers and trainees.

"Other than the subjective judgement as to the degree to which participants like the program, evidence of learning is rarely examined," according to Marshall, who adds that "another concern is that many training programs are not based on validated learning principles but rely on unfounded theories and personal styles of delivery." Instructors of IHS sometime use a straight lecture format, which, according to Marshall, "are based on the assumption that the participants will learn certain competencies as a result of the movement of air produced by the speaker's vocal cords."

Previous studies have attempted to determine how well students learn and retain these skills, but these projects have been riddled with shortcomings. The follow-up period for the retention testing has varied from four weeks to one year, methodology has been unclear, and the studies fail to indicate whether subjects knew the purpose of the study or how well they knew the trainers.

"All of these factors might tend to inflate the level of skills maintained," Marshall writes, but he agrees that "despite these issues there does appear to be an overall decrease in skill level after training."

To hopefully alleviate these shortcomings, the Nashville Branch study will include testing of four different student groups: second year students who have received IHS training from faculty; a similar group, but presently enrolled in an advanced class; second year students who have had the faculty IHS training, are also enrolled in the advanced class and who will serve as trainers themselves to the fourth group, the entire first year class of approximately 70 students.

In the fall of 1977 the students as trainers will be given an intensive review in the use of IHS and instructions in how to be trainers. They will then train the first year students in a series of seven three-hour workshops. Each student trainer will be assigned to between 6 and 8 trainees and will follow a series of planned learning activities, culminating in a series of ten-minute simulated helping interviews. These will be audio recorded, two observers will collect data from the tapes, the data will be coded and stored in a computer and the principal investigators will evaluate the responses and determine the level of acquisition and retention of the interpersonal helping skills.

Marshall, Kurtz, and Holloway predict that the study, which will be completed by the end of 1977, will show that the use of the student IHS trainers will help to raise the level of competency in interpersonal helping skills among all the groups. The first year students will be able to learn more than from faculty instruction, and the student trainers will be more competent than those merely taking the advanced skills course.

However, the professors also predict that after the faculty training "the use of IHS will not be maintained at the same

(continued on Page 7)
Regional Committees Advise on Continuing Education

The Office of Continuing Social Work Education counts on valuable planning input from continuing education advisory committees in the several geographic regions of the state. If you, your agency, or professional group have suggestions for programs that would contribute to the professional development of social service workers, please share your ideas with the chairperson of your area advisory committee. The list of advisory group leaders below is for your present and future reference.

**UPPER EAST TENNESSEE / SOUTHWEST VIRGINIA**
Mr. Jim Brown - Bristol Mental Health Center, 26 Midway Street, Bristol, TN 37620 - (615) 764-3101

**EAST TENNESSEE**
Ms. Del Buckner - Overlook Mental Health Center, 5908 Lyons View Pike, Knoxville, TN 37919 - (615) 584-1561

**SOUTHEAST TENNESSEE**
Ms. Tommie Brown - UTC Division of Human Services, Chattanooga, TN 37401 - (615) 755-0133

**MIDDLE TENNESSEE**
Mr. Dave Alexander - Council of Community Services, 1815 Parkway Towers, 404 James Robertson Parkway, Nashville, TN 37219 - (615) 254-8352

**NORTHWEST TENNESSEE**
Mr. Barry Cournoyer - Jackson Mental Health Center, 238 Summar, Jackson, TN 38301 - (901) 424-8751

**WEST TENNESSEE**
Mr. Sam Rutherford - 3719 Wilshire Drive, Memphis, TN 38111 - (901) 323-0091

**OCSWE To Conduct Statewide Survey**

As part of NASW's current effort to encourage the development and maintenance of sound and equitable salary, benefit, and personnel practices for social workers, the Knox Branch Tennessee Chapter NASW and the Office of Continuing Social Work Education conducted a pilot salary and benefit survey in the East Tennessee area during the spring of 1976.

The survey instrument used has been refined and modified after testing with the pilot group and will be mailed this spring to all Tennessee social workers on OCSWE's mailing list, including the group involved in the pre-test. If this study is to be statistically valid and of practical use to NASW, a high return rate of the survey forms will be required.

Tennessee social workers are encouraged to participate, bearing in mind that their individual input will help to provide a realistic picture of statewide social work employment practices and conditions—an area that is relatively unexplored on a scale this large. Summary results of this study will appear in the STIMULUS during the next academic year.

Available June 30, 1977

**SOCIAL WORK IN RURAL AREAS**
**PREPARATION AND PRACTICE**

This volume of 30 papers collects the best offerings from a young field. Washington rural figures and established rural social work specialists are represented, as well as many new faces. Authors include Clay Cochran, N.J. Demerath, Leon Ginsberg, Joanne Mermelstein, Paul Sundet, and Frank Tsutras. *Paper cover, plastic spine, approx. 450 pp., $8.95. Order from OCSWE, 2012 Lake Ave., Knoxville, TN 37916*
and the grandparents. Changed behavior in the children is noted, as well as the program's effect on the older people's life satisfaction, financial well-being, and health status.

Nancy Lohmann presently teaches two courses on aging at the Knoxville Branch: Institutionalization and the Aged (with her husband, Dr. Roger Lohmann) and Social Gerontology. Her interest in the specific problems associated with aging began during her academic career, and her doctoral dissertation at the Graduate School for Advanced Studies in Social Welfare at Brandeis University entailed examination of seven measures of life satisfaction and the use of the results of a factor analysis of the measures to develop a new and more valid scale.

As yet another facet of her aging research, Lohmann is continuing work in this area with (1) intercorrelations reported in the January 1977 Journal of Gerontology, (2) the results of the factor analysis to be in a future issue of the International Journal of Aging and Human Development, and (3) this and other data will be included in a future book on measurement in aging, compiled by the Midwest Council for Social Research in Aging at the University of Missouri, Kansas City.

Helping Skills

level by students during subsequent quarters despite the fact that students are working in agencies two days per week and it is assumed that they are continuing to use the skills." They also hypothesize that "despite the fact that students are working in community agencies during Winter and Spring terms and typically not working in a social work capacity in their summer vacation, there will be no significant difference in their use of IHS after Spring quarter and summer vacation."

Successful completion of the study will not only give information on the amount of retention of IHS, but will also produce a method for on-going evaluation of the school's IHS training program. In addition, the publication of articles on the subject should have an impact on the methods presently used to train personnel.

WE'D LIKE TO KNOW YOU BETTER
If you will fill out and return the form printed below it will help us know more about who our readers are—and help us, hopefully, to serve you better.
Guest Editorial: A Change in Perspective

The response of the faculty, administration, staff, and alumni to the UTSSW Minority Affairs Committee during the 1976-1977 year has been positive and varied. The Minority Affairs Committee has been established within each Branch, as well as on a schoolwide level, and has as a focal point activities pertaining to the recruitment and retention of Black and other minority group students, faculty, and staff.

There is some basic question, however, as to the role of Black faculty in helping the school fulfill its commitment vis-a-vis minority affairs concerns. Some Black faculty have indicated to me that they are expected to carry an enormous amount of responsibility for minority recruitment and retention and, at the same time, they are expected to teach effectively, conduct research, publish, and be involved in university and public service.

This concern should be taken seriously for while Black faculty feel that they are interested in minority affairs, they also have an intrinsic interest in research, teaching, and scholarly pursuits. Moreover, they are acutely aware that these latter areas weigh heavily in promotion and tenure considerations.

Taking into account the preceding view it becomes apparent that there may be a need, therefore, for a reexamination and perhaps reorientation of approaches with respect to minority affairs. It is acknowledged that not all will agree with the goals of minority affairs or the methods for fulfilling them. Additionally, it becomes evident that such a commitment may evoke conflicts, disagreement, and problems. While recognizing this possibility, I think that faculty members, alumni, and staff will agree that bringing Black and other minority groups into UTSSW and retaining them enriches our educational environment and, ultimately, benefits the social work profession and the total society.

If the assumption can be made that the school's commitment to recruit and retain Blacks and other minorities is indeed a sincere one, the question then becomes how we can best fulfill this commitment. I believe that a concerted effort needs to be made by all. Likewise, to retain the persons recruited, faculty, administrators, staff, and students may wish to be involved in the alleviation of those attitudes, behavioral patterns, policies, practices, and priorities that tend to subordinate Black and other minorities and work against their continuing in graduate social work education at UTSSW and/or their obtaining jobs and opportunities.

Perhaps the most pressing need is for each of us within UTSSW to ask ourselves whether a change is needed in our perspective if we plan to fulfill the school's commitment to minorities.

- Betty J. Cleckley, Ph.D.
Assistant Dean