

**JOHN C ERFURT
AND
ANDREA FOOTE:
THE WORK CONTINUES**



Jack Erfurt
1934-1992



Andrea Foote
1941-1995

“Pioneers in Employee Assistance Research”

**EAPA National Conference
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Jack Erfurt and Andrea Foote: The Work Continues

Just before her death on October 6, 1995, Andrea Foote stated emphatically that any tribute made to the work that she and Jack Erfurt carried out should not dwell on the past, but rather should look to the future and how worksite intervention strategies need to evolve to solve the problems of cardiovascular disease and substance abuse. With apologies to Andrea, the following spotlights the more than 20 years of innovative work by Erfurt and Foote, for those who may not be familiar with it. As we look to the future, an understanding and appreciation of the pioneering efforts of researchers such as Jack and Andrea are necessary so that we may stay on the developing path, and explore new paths, to our goals.

Coming from backgrounds in social science research and sociology, Jack Erfurt and Andrea Foote founded the Worker Health Program at The University of Michigan's Institute of Labor and Industrial Relations in 1973. In a series of path-breaking studies, they created, tested, and modified a systematic approach to using the workplace as the locus for addressing chronic health problems and providing long-term services with the ultimate goals of maintaining health, reducing relapse and preventing development of more serious health problems. With their unofficial motto of "Research—Dissemination—Utilization" vigilantly staring down from the office wall in large block letters, the pair labored to design research studies which would positively impact the lives of working men and women. Throughout the 1970s, along with their team of nurse-screeners and research associates, they designed, tested, and evaluated the effects of different blood pressure control interventions in auto plants¹, often working around the clock through three work shifts to reach workers.

In the 1980s, Erfurt and Foote took their findings and branched out into the employee assistance area with research examining the effects of long-term follow-up counseling on preventing relapse.² During the same period, the Erfurt/Foote team carried out a quasi-experimental research design in the area of cardiovascular disease, comparing the effects of various types of program interventions across different organizational locations.³ In the early 1990s, they conducted a major study in the area of substance abuse which looked at the effects of systematic client and family contacts on client relapse.⁴

Since 1993, a major study designed by Erfurt and Foote and funded by the National Institute on Drug Abuse has sought to merge two fields of research and health service delivery that have been conceptually and organizationally distinct—cardiovascular disease and substance abuse.⁵ The study addresses substance abuse problems by utilizing the various worksite intervention strategies that were developed and found effective in reducing CVD risks during more than 20 years of Erfurt/Foote research.⁶

In their two decades of collaboration, Erfurt and Foote developed health screening programs for many major corporations, including Ford Motor Co., General Motors Corp., Detroit Edison, and the United Auto Workers union. After Jack's death in September 1992, Andrea helped guide the University of Michigan's efforts in confronting the problem of student and employee substance abuse. Nearly 50 articles, chapters and monographs in the areas of employee assistance, blood pressure control, and worksite wellness programs resulted from their research.⁷ Two books on employee assistance programs in the mid-1970s were among the first to address the topic and fast became standard texts in the field.⁸ Their research in the area of hypertension control culminated in August 1995 with the publication of the manual for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' worksite cardiovascular programs.⁹

As we pay tribute today to the groundbreaking research of the team of John C Erfurt and Andrea Foote, let us also remember the researchers as people: Jack's offbeat sense of humor which led the pair to pose for a PR photo in lab coats as a sort of "New American Gothic", with stern expressions and a sphygmomanometer and blood pressure cuff replacing the pitchfork. And who can ever forget Jack's wacky vocal renditions at conferences, of old standbys such as "Thanks for the Memories", substituting appropriate wording related to employee assistance programming, sung in Jack's untrained, yet unforgettable voice? And Andrea's unwavering patience. Those of us who were lucky enough to call Jack and Andrea our friends remember well their love of socializing, Michigan football, and the warm and special home life they shared together with their beloved cats. And while we miss Jack Erfurt's and Andrea Foote's presence here today and their professional presence in the field of employee assistance research and programming, the evidence of the impact of their work and lives can be felt in the presentations made at this conference.

Their work does indeed continue.

Notes

¹"Cost-Effectiveness of Hypertension Control in the Work Setting", sponsored by the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute (NHLBI), 1978-81, and "Long-Term Effects of Worksite Hypertension Control: Maintenance of Treatment and Cost-Benefit", NHLBI, 1984-86.

²"Prevention of Relapse among Employed Substance Abusers Through Intensive Follow-up at the Worksite", National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, 1985-88.

³"Preventing Cardiovascular Disease Through Worksite Health Promotion", NHLBI, 1984-89.

⁴"EAP Client Follow-Up and Family Involvement", National Institute on Drug Abuse, 1990-95.

⁵"Prevention of Substance Abuse Through Worksite Wellness", sponsored by National Institute on Drug Abuse, 1993-98.

⁶See JC Erfurt, A Foote, and M Heirich, "Integrating Employee Assistance and Wellness: Current and Future Core Technologies of a Megabrush Program," *Journal of Employee Assistance Research* 1(1):1-31, 1992.

⁷For a complete list of Erfurt/Foote citations, see handout entitled "Publications Relevant to Wellness and Employee Assistance Programs", attached or available from the Worker Health Program, (313) 763-1187.

⁸JC Erfurt and A Foote, *Occupational Employee Assistance Programs for Substance Abuse and Mental Health Problems*, Ann Arbor: ILIR, The University of Michigan, 1977; A Foote, JC Erfurt, PA Strauch, and TL Guzzardo, *Cost-Effectiveness of Occupational Employee Assistance Programs: Test of an Evaluation Method*, Ann Arbor: ILIR, The University of Michigan, 1978.

⁹JC Erfurt, A Foote, MA Heirich, and BM Brock, *Worksite Wellness*, National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute, publ. #95-3043, August 1995.

**THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF JOHN ERFURT AND
ANDREA FOOTE TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE
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FIGURE 1
 FLOW CHART OF TYPICAL OCCUPATIONAL EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

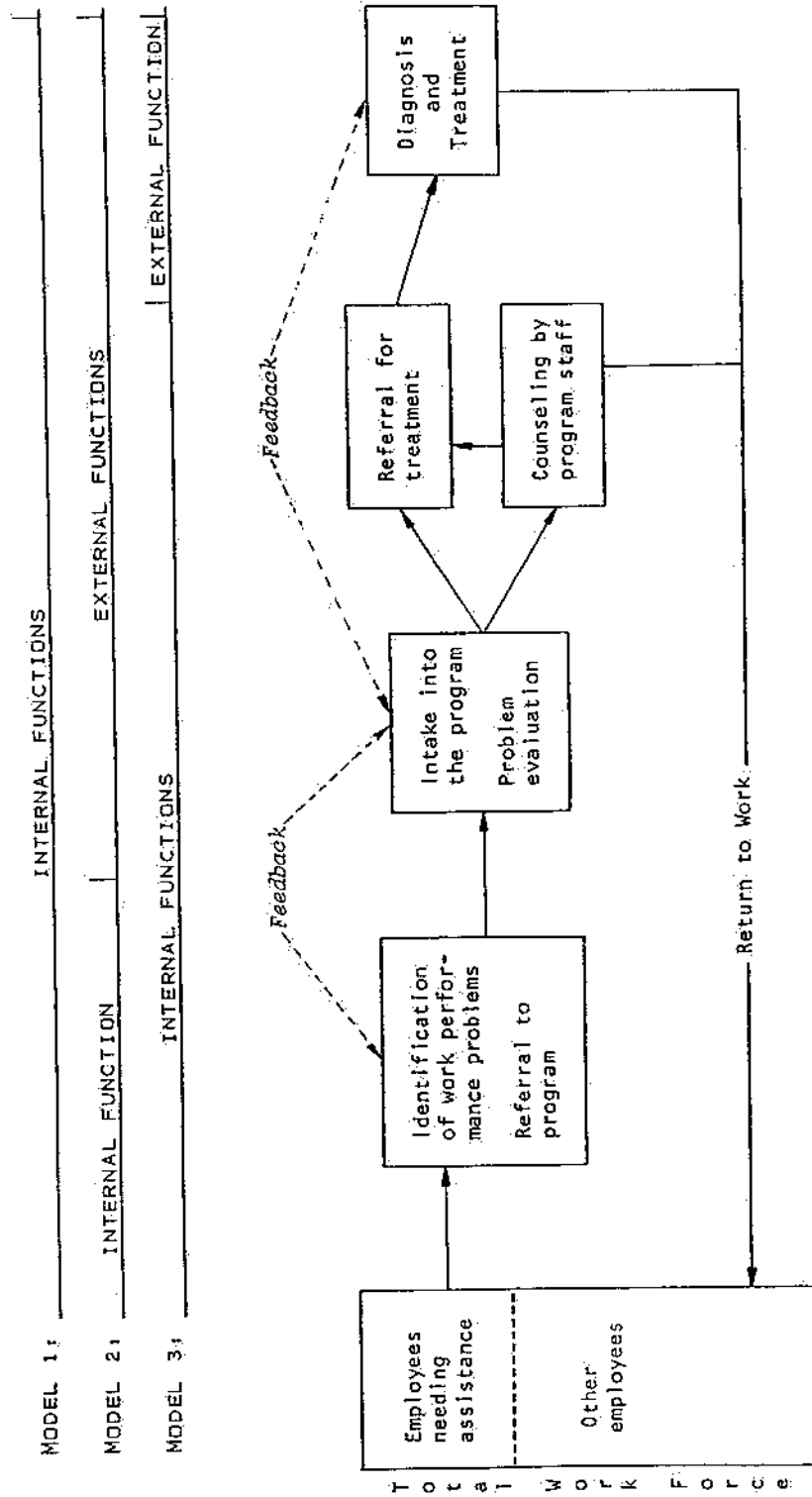
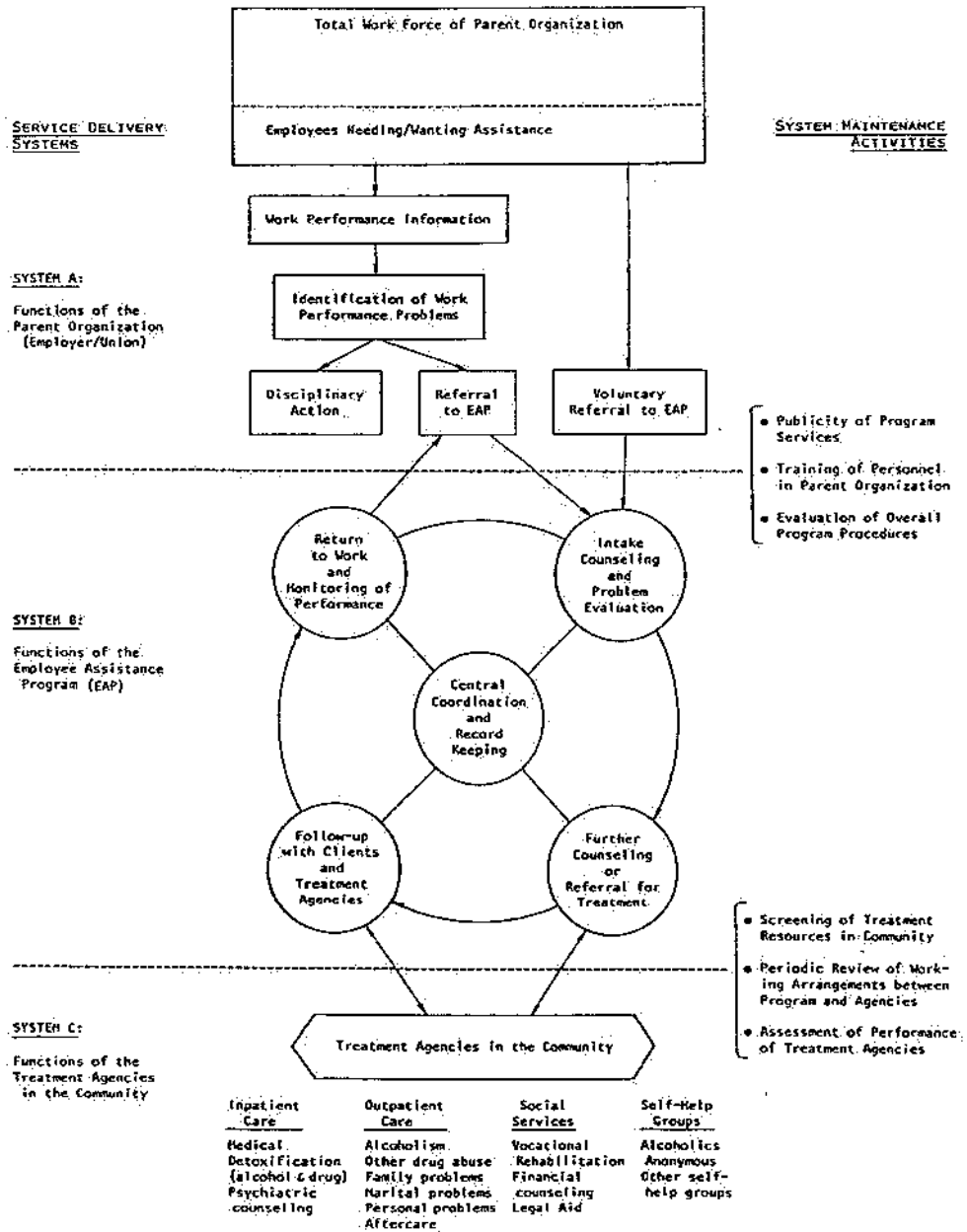


FIGURE 2

An Occupational Program: The Integration of Three Systems



Bibliography

Erfurt, J.C. & Foote, A.

1977 Occupational Employee Assistance Program for Substance Abuse and Mental Health Problems. ILIR: University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI.

Foote, A., Erfurt, J.C., Strauch, P.A., & Guzzardo, T.L.

1978 Cost Effectiveness of Occupational Employee Assistance Program. ILIR: University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI.